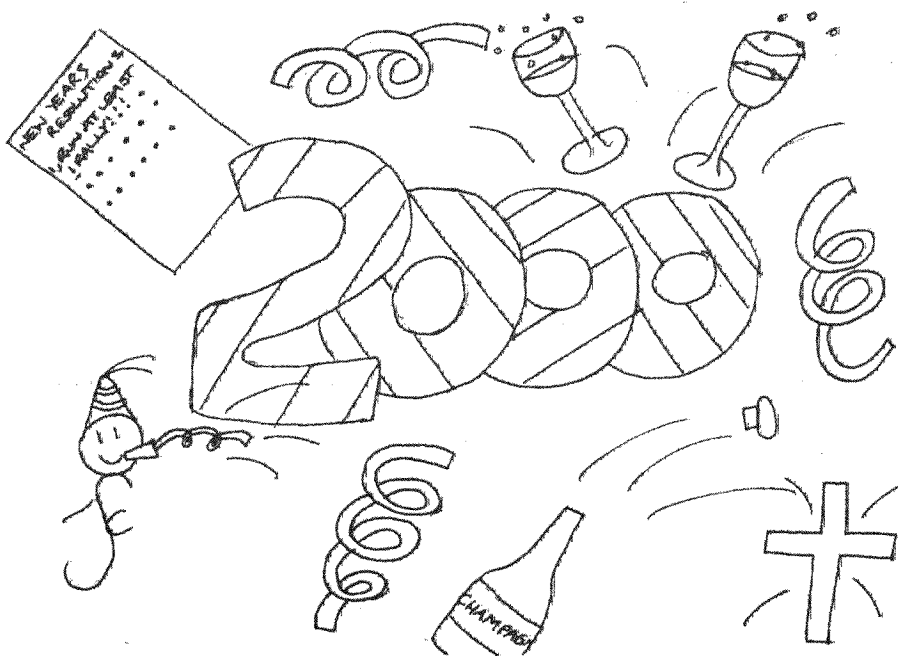


**AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS' CLUB
Millennium**



**NEWSLETTER 136
JANUARY 2000**

Hello.

I am very pleased to announce that a volunteer has come forward to take over the task of editing what is, I hope, your favourite monthly reading matter. *Ian Day*, from Harrogate, has now been co-opted on to the Committee and will stand for election proper at the AGM next year. Not only that, a second volunteer, in the shape of *David Mayne*, has also stepped forward although he would not be able to take on the post until at least eighteen months from now. I have given them both "The Gospel according to *Harry*" to give them some idea of how I produce your Newsletter and I thank them both for volunteering.

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Levelling Blocks

We read *Doris & David Nunny's* letter and are pleased to advise that we did get back the levelling blocks that we left behind. *Beryl & Don Walker* saw us drive off without them and *Don* chased after us waving his arms but we didn't see him. They reported the find to the Rally Marshal who asked them to take them as his van had no more space. He added that the losers would probably put a request in the Newsletter. When their Newsletter arrived they phoned and we arranged a suitable time to collect them. This we have done and we gave our thanks and had a super chat over a cup of tea. But once again, many thanks, *Beryl & Don*.

Jeanne & Mike Hall

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A light Coffee Table

While my wife and I were travelling in our new Pollensa we wanted to somewhere to put our teacups without the need to extract the main table from behind the settee. After considerable discussion we came up with this design that can be hooked on to the same rail as the main table but is easily and safely stowed behind the rear-facing seat in the dinette whilst travelling.

Materials

A piece of veneered 12mm plywood, 20" x 12" (bought at the C & C Rally)

2 latched table hooks

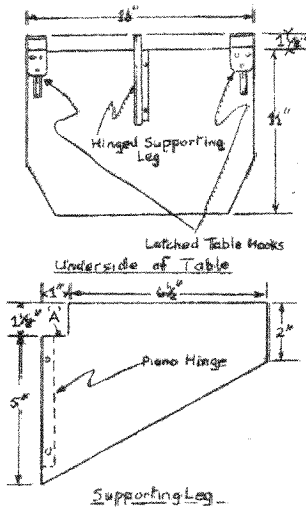
- 4 1/2" of piano hinge
- 7" of self-adhesive Velcro
- 1/2" and 3/4" countersunk No.6 chipboard screws
- Tester pot of emulsion paint to tone with the upholstery.

Instructions

Using a fine bladed Tenon saw, cut out the table top and supporting leg as shown in diagram and carefully sand paper the cut edges smooth. Attach the table hooks to the outer edges of the table using the 3/4" screws. Fixing at the outer edges gives maximum stability. Using 1/2" screws first fix the piano hinge at right angles to the hooked rear edge of the table so that the unfolded supporting leg will be in the middle of the table. Next attach the leg to the hinge, pressing the leg firmly on the table so that the edge 'A' of the leg is carefully aligned with the rear edge of the table. Carefully stick the soft half of the Velcro onto the leg where it will come into contact with the upholstered van wall. Finally paint the exposed sanded edges of the table and leg, taking care not to get paint onto the veneer since it can be difficult to get off.

With best wishes to all in ASOC.

Beryl & David Davis



Ravenna problem

After driving for about a mile I can hear a relay 'chattering' for a few seconds from the area where the Boxer's relays are mounted behind the dashboard, passenger side. I have checked that the relays are in their sockets OK and no apparent loose connections. It doesn't seem to affect the running and I'm still investigating. Has anyone else experienced this noise or can you tell me which relay might be constantly operating at this time? Please ring me on 019 0831 3475 if you have any suggestions.

Sally & David Folwell

This is part of a longer epistle which I hope to reproduce later.

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Another Tale of Two Tyres

Peter Durrant's tale prompts me to mention our two experiences, also on a French Autoroute, A.71 near Bourges. Except that the incidents were separated by two years and two successive Harmonies. Two years ago we were on our way home via the ferry from Dieppe. At about 5.30pm the previous day I was overtaking a van at around 80mph when I heard a loud bang. A rear tyre had left a lump of rubber on the road and a hole in the tyre the size of a fist. I walked to the nearest assistance phone to ask for someone to come and change the wheel. Half an hour later we were on our way again with the spare wheel and lighter by 156 francs which, fortunately, I was able to pay in cash and which I subsequently claimed back on insurance. We called at the next motorway services and bought two new Michelin tyres at considerable expense because the spare was not suitable. We then spent a night at a camp site near Vierzon and we caught the ferry at Dieppe the next day without any difficulty.

This year, also on our way home, in our K reg. Harmony bought a year and a half ago (and changed because it had diagonal rear seat belts), on the motorway near Millau my wife was driving and began to notice some vibration on the steering wheel. We stopped and checked pressures (which were correct) and later stopped for the night near Clermont Ferrand. The following day the vibration was much worse and on the same A71 near Bourges

my wife decided to pull in at a picnic site and seek assistance. There were no assistance phones and no staff there but in the telephone box a notice explained that for assistance it was necessary to contact the police who alone could give permission for a garage to come on to the motorway. It was soon after noon and we prepared to eat some lunch when a large transporter drew up. The mechanic drove our van once round the car park and told us to wait while he loaded up another vehicle, a car and trailer, which was also on the same site. We followed him out of the picnic area through a gate and a mile or two into the outskirts of Bourges. We paid the call out charge plus the motorway toll of 44FF, a total of about 450 francs. We then followed the driver to another garage where he changed the wheel and showed me that the tyre had a bulge in the side. This time the spare was OK and we were again on our way to Dieppe and waited till we got home to change the tyres. The spare and the tyre which had caused the vibration were both originals and the latter had done 36,000 miles, though the treads were still good. I asked to see the defective tyre and was shown a long slit in the wall of the tyre. It was a front tyre, it could have burst or even shed the tread as in *Peter Durrant's* case. It was very fortunate that we responded to the vibrations and changed the wheel in time.

In both cases we successfully claimed the charges on the Caravan Club's Red Pennant insurance. It does help to know enough French to be understood even if one doesn't always understand the replies. Neither the police nor the mechanics spoke any English.

There must be something about Bourges...

David Matthews

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More Tyres

Further to the letter in September from *Joan Joselyn*, I had 6 ply rated Uniroyal tyres fitted to our 1990 Legend. Within 1,000 miles, three tyres suffered partial wall failure (distortion). After inspection by an engineer from Continental Tyres (who make Uniroyal) they were replaced, free of charge, by Continental 'Vanco 8' which are 8 ply rated. These have been in use for 18

months now and have proved excellent under all conditions. I understand that some tyre manufacturers may phase out 6 ply rated tyres as they now favour the latest designs in 8 ply, such as the 'Vanco 8' and Goodyear 'G28' which use a higher degree of silicon in the rubber compound, making the tyre more supple and improving road holding. Certainly, the larger 'vans and all coachbuilts should now be on 8 ply rated tyres. Do I know what I'm talking about? Probably not, even though I've been a motor engineer for the past 35 years!

We hear more and more of tyre failures on motorcaravans (and caravans) so a little more care is obviously called for. For any vehicle that is not being used regularly, it is wise to replace all tyres every five years regardless of their visual condition. Also it is unwise to leave a vehicle parked in one position for long periods as this puts too much strain on one section of the tyre. Another wise precaution is to protect tyres as much as possible from UV light. I use "Silver Screen" wheel covers but I do not recommend driving with these in place as they tend to remove themselves, undamaged, within a couple of hundred yards! When observed crawling on hands and knees under hedges, parked vehicles etc., while searching for them, you can expect odd looks from passers-by! Not that I have personal experience of this, you understand!!

Alan Chennells

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Caravan Club National Rally

This will take place next year at Cornbury Park, near Charlbury, Oxfordshire 26th - 30th May 2000 (four nights). The rally is open both to members and non-members of the Caravan Club. ASOC members are most welcome to join us in Norfolk Centre Lines. If you wish to join us, please write NOW asking for details and a booking form to Events Department, Caravan Club, East Grinstead House, East Grinstead, RH19 1UA. They should send details from 4th February 2000. Completed booking forms together with the correct remittance should be sent to reach us at 21 Elcar Rise, Eaton, Norwich, NR4 6HR no later than Friday, 25th February and you must give **NORFOLK** as your "Centre Lines". Cheques must be made payable to the **Caravan Club**.

We shall send all forms received by that date in one envelope so that all ASOC members will be pitched together. Booking acknowledgements will be sent direct to you by the Caravan Club.

Barbara & Ray Whiley

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Clutch Problems

We read with interest in October about problems with the gear change/clutch on a 1994 VW T4. We bought our Topaz with 22,000 miles on the clock in 1996 and within a few months had a similar problem. With the pedal fully depressed the clutch was 'dragging' a little and, after a cold start, or after a long run in fourth or top gear, it was difficult to change gear. Our local VW agent diagnosed the trouble purely on our description (we got the impression that it was not uncommon) and the clutch slave cylinder was changed. We then realised that the clutch should disengage fully long before the pedal reaches the floor! We had driven an automatic for some years prior to this and had forgotten what a properly operating clutch was like! Since then we have done 14,000 miles (the Topaz is our 'every day' vehicle) without a hitch, touch wood. Have we got only about 8,000 to go before a repeat performance, or, as was suggested, was the cause a 'passing' O-ring fault? We will look forward to more on this.

Mary & David Doswell

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Payloads

We have owned an Amethyst based on the Ford chassis for three years from new and have been delighted with its comfort, reliability and performance. However, the payload is fairly limited so we have always had to be careful about what we carry in order to stay within legal limits. When the new up rated model with a limit of 3,500 kg. instead of 3,300 kg came out, a friend (who also owns the same model) and I decided we needed to act. But should we change vans? Or could we upgrade our existing vans? We first contacted A-S and discussed the problem with Denzil Brunning. He put me in contact with Paul Lewis of Bristol Street Motors who has worked closely with A-S over upgrading other vans. After investigating the options Paul put us in contact with Gareth Marsh

of SvTech. Gareth worked on the problem with the help of Ford, and came up with an acceptable solution for all parties.

To enable the extra payload to be carried the following modifications have to be undertaken:

- Tyres must be 8 ply. (To carry the extra weight)
- Rear brake cylinders up rated. (To increase the braking efficiency)
- Aeon uprate rear Suspension kit to be fitted. (To take the extra load)
- Additional VIN plate fitted as near to the existing plate as possible. (Showing new higher weights)

This modification is simple and effective. It can be done by your local garage, yourself or SvTech. The cost is dependent on who fits the parts, but as a guide less than £600.00 plus the cost of the tyres. (It took us 4 hours to do one van.) If you get your local garage to carry out the work or you do it yourself then the parts, VIN plate and certificate can be sent direct to your home address. The modification has, after 2000 miles, been a great success. The van performs as before with the added bonus of not rolling as much on corners and we have now been able to utilise some of the additional load carrying capacity to fit useful extras such as a solar panel. (It also allowed us to bring a lot more wine back from France.) If any of you are in the same dilemma as we were, then this is an affordable solution if it is carried out when your tyres are due for replacement. The above modification will work on Fords with the I50 chassis used on the Amethyst/Legend/Excelsior etc. Contact Mr Gareth Marsh of SvTech Ltd., 5B Talbot Road, Leyland, Lancashire, PR5 1ZJ, Tel 017 7262 1800 for further information.

Nelson Lacey & Ken Hobbs

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Noises Off!

We are not alone! We thought that the strange and annoying phenomenon that we had experienced with our Symphony was entirely unique and would be of no interest to other owners.

However, in the August Newsletter we have read of Pat and Terry Hammond's experiences with their Symphony and the strange noise emitted about three minutes after a start from cold. Our Symphony also made this noise (a short rapid burst of ticking from below the glove compartment where electrical relays are situated) and it has taken a year to get it resolved. We realised that the noise always occurred just as the temperature needle started to rise and with this information we expected the Peugeot agent to be able to identify the source and cure it. After several abortive visits to the workshop and much inconvenience and wasted time, we mentioned our frustration to our son, an amateur car mechanic and kit-car enthusiast. "It is obviously a faulty temperature sender unit", he said. (This was a diagnosis by telephone from one hundred miles away!) We went back once again to the Peugeot agent and said, "Could it be a faulty temperature sender unit?" "Ah", said the man, "There are two temperature sender units" and he tested them with a meter and guess what he found? Now that the faulty one has been replaced, the funny noise no longer occurs. I hope this may be of interest to anybody else who has suffered with this niggling problem.

Hope we are not too late to offer our sincere thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make the Club & Company Rally so enjoyable. This was our first Rally and we really appreciate the hard work that it entailed. Many thanks to you all.

Pamela & John Hasling

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From a far-flung Corner of the north-east

By no way are we new to motor caravanning, not even new A-S owners, we bought our Legend in 1996, with the help of Nick Markl and Steve Cant. "Join the Club" they said, "They have a great Club Rally each year". Well, we finally got round to joining this year. Nothing impulsive about us Northerners, we like to think things over before taking big decisions! So, we found ourselves attending our first Club rally at the Northern Motorcaravan Show a few miles down the road from Chez Nous. Now, we're not really the rallying type we told each other (Her - the navigator, Him - the Engineer) much prefer to be off in a corner on our own. We'll have

to socialise and I bet they have coffee mornings where everyone knows everyone else and we'll hover around at the edge trying to look as if we're not novices at this kind of thing and then we'll slink away as soon as we can. Make our hello, smiles all round, given an envelope with info in, shown to our pitch.....don't know the pitching etiquette so the Engineer parks with peg to the middle of van and is kindly invited to re-align with passenger side on peg! That's it! Our first faux pas. Pitch, pour the essential G & T's, open the envelope... ..not just the dreaded coffee mornings ahead of us but there's an introductory coffee evening tonight and oh goody! we're just in time for it. Might as well get it over with then we can comeback and chill out as the kids say. Approach apprehensively, join the queue, get the coffees, retreat to back of the chattering group, ready to slink off except people start to chat to us!

Trouble is they say "If you nip round the corner you can get in for nowt tonight." (Think about it!) Two minutes later, there we were still drinking coffee, staring at Nu Ventures and V8 ex ambulances without hoards of natives getting in t'way. I should explain. For the last 4 years we have arrived in the gloaming on Fridays and were marshalled to a pitch just north of the Watford gap. Next day, packed for the route march (we always just missed the red Tranny) it would be getting on for high noon before getting through the southern portal of York's holy grail. This was going to be a whole new experience.

OOPS, Faux pas II, our new-found friends knew we were there but we had deserted them. The shiny bits over the wire had grabbed us. Must do better! (teacher speak). It got better. Ten minutes later country music, clear as a bell came down the roof lights. The penny dropped. This clear and we don't have to buy tickets for the Supremes. Anyway to cut what could become a very long story short, we thoroughly enjoyed our first ASOC rally, mostly due to the friendly ASOCers that we met. A special thanks to the rally marshals, can't be easy ensuring that a meet like York goes smoothly, there must be lots of gremlins lurking to leap out and try to cause havoc! Also thanks to the folks with the new Legend who shared their idea of fixing the ladder extension to the



January 2000

Rally Supplement

Happy New Year



When completing a Rally Slip please complete BOTH sides.

Please remember that only Club members are allowed to attend our rallies.

A guide for new ralliers will appear next month as will a VAT guide.

N.B. The Dutch Bulbfields Rally, 9th -14th April is fully booked.

If you are going to the NEC Show in February why not combine it with a rally?

21st -24th February(3 nights). Hollyfast Caravan Park, Wall Hill Road, Allesley, Coventry.

Site tel.No. 01203 336411 (Emergency calls only from 8.00p.m. to 8.00 a.m..)

Rally Marshals: Pauline & Neil Rogers.

Site Fee: £8.50 per night.(includes access to room at night). Electricity:£2.00 per night.

Rally Fee:£2.00 (couples),£1.00(singles).

Booking slips to:N.C. & P. Rogers,3 Appleby Close, Aldbrough St. John,Richmond, North Yorks.DL11 7TT Tel.No. 01325 374 540.Cheques payable to N.C. & P. Rogers.

Attractions: There should be hardstanding for all plus all the usual facilities.

Approx 10 minutes away from the National Boat, Caravan & Leisure Show at the NEC.(Tickets are cheaper if booked in advance, see m'van magazines). Three pubs for food, Coventry & Birmingham close by.

N.B. New Directions:From A45 round Coventry take the A4114 s.p. Allesley & Browns Lane Plant (Jaguar).Follow Brown & White Caravan signs to site.

Report to site office upon arrival.

Early booking would be appreciated. Rally commences at 2.00p.m.

*Then why not follow on with this rally? **RALLY NOW FULL***

24th -27th February(3 nights).Grouse & Claret, Rowsley, Nr.Matlock, Derbyshire.

Site Tel.No. 01629 733 233 (Emergencies only, Landlord).

Rally Marshals: Nora & Ven Venables assisted by Sheila & Ivor Barnett.

Site Fee: £6.00 per night Electricity included. Rally Fee:£2.00(couples),£1.00(singles).

Booking slips to:Mr. & Mrs.V. Venables, 15 Langley Gardens, Merry Hill, Wolverhampton, West Midlands.WV3 7JN Tel.No. 01902 332 105.Cheques payable to Mrs. N. Venables.

Attractions: Use of clubroom, bar meals in Grouse & Claret **New** Retail Outlet next door to site. Chatsworth Park & Garden Centre? Farm shop. Mill & Craft centre. Bus stop outside site buses to Matlock & Bakewell. The area is a walkers paradise. Extra nights can be arranged with the landlord.

Please bring your own indoor games for evenings. (for mixed company!)

Directions:On A6 between Matlock & Bakewell.

Rally commences after 2.00p.m. On Thursday Limited to 29 vans.
THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL

Advance Notice. Pre A.G.M. Rally
2nd -4th May. (2 nights Tues.-Thurs.) Clare Priory, Suffolk.

Site tel.No. 07775 693 533. Marshal's mobile.

Rally Marshals: Stella & Ian Ross.

Site Fee: £5.00 per night. NO ELECTRICITY. Rally Fee: £2.00. GREEN FIELD.

Booking slips to: Mrs.S.Ross, 33 Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster, Essex. RM14 1DL

Tel.No. 01708 228 075. Cheques payable to Mrs.S.Ross.

Midweek Pre A.G.M. Rally, only about 40 miles from Banham Zoo, where the A.G.M. commences on Friday 5th May. A quiet green field site in the grounds of Clare Priory, a few minutes walk easy walk into the village of Clare. Can arrive from 9.00a.m. Tuesday, rally must end Thursday 2.00p.m. Borders on to Clare Castle Country Park. Fish/Chicken & Chips, outside weather permitting, on Wednesday evening. £3.00 per person, state choice and send payment with rally slip. The rally is also open to members not going to the A.G.M. Directions: 10 miles west of Sudbury. A1092 Clare/Haverhill Road. Turn Left ¼ mile from Clare S.P. Priory, Site on left in 300yds. Ignore Brown Signs in centre of Clare -pedestrian access only. **LIMITED TO 36 VANS**

Advance Notice. National Motorhome Rally, Peterborough 14th -16th April. Details & special Club prices next month.

Do we have any volunteer marshals to run the rally at The Motorcaravan Fair to be held at Stratford Racecourse 9th -11th June?

Will Rally Marshals please send to me the information to insert in the Newsletter for their rallies as soon as possible please. This will enable me to give the rally plenty of publicity.

If you are thinking of running a rally please contact me or the area assistants. Please think ahead, good advance publicity is essential for a successful rally. Please remember to check the availability of dates with me **BEFORE** booking with a site. New or possible rally marshals should contact me, or the area assistants, for further information or advice on running rallies. It can be fun.

Please note that **ALL** information concerning rallies, dates, booking of sites 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
E-Mail. ncr@thisisthenortheast.co.uk

Local assistants: Jerry Haxton (01 483 223 476) Woking, Surrey.
Jeff Worley (01 935 424 049) Yeovil, Somerset.

E. & O. E.

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes No
Number of people in your van: Adults..... Children.....

Names of Adults.....

Names of Children (including ages).....

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:-

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

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes No
Number of people in your van: Adults..... Children.....

Names of Adults.....

Names of Children (including ages).....

Extras: Please indicate which you would like, **if available:**
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Have you any special needs? Yes No If Yes please specify:-

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

Rally : Date:

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

..... Post code:.....

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

Membership No: Day/Time of arrival.....

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

Name Phone No.....

Please complete both sides of the form!

f

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

..... Post code:.....

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Rally : Date:

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..... Post code:.....

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

Membership No: Day/Time of arrival.....

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

Name Phone No.....

Please complete both sides of the form!

ladder on the van (we normally leave it at home and then have a huge stretch to access the ladder when we want to go on the roof - actually that's the Engineer's job and his short legs have a bit of struggle.) Thanks are also due to the chap from Middlesborough who finally solved something that had been bugging us all weekend, we just couldn't fathom out what the black stick figure on the back of some vans represented, it looked like a man skipping but what country could that represent????? We came up with some hilarious and ridiculous ideas. Now you ASOCers who have been to Spain, and "have the knowledge" are reading this with a smug grin on your faces, "fancy not knowing that" you say to each other. But don't forget we're new to this ASOC life and all its surrounding mysteries. Eventually all will be revealed to us and we shall become as you!

Jan & Mike Senior

For the benefit of other, lesser, mortals who have no idea of the "black stick figure" it is better known as "Rita's Little Man". It originated when *Rita Daley*, one of our Founder Vice-Presidents, who has produced most of the cover pictures for the Newsletter to date, was doodling with the letters A S O and C and the little man appeared. And here he is, yet again!



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Chairman's Chat

With not only the dawn of a New Year, a new decade, a new century and a new millennium the difficulty for those of us that try to make an achievable resolution for the new year which milestone do we do we choose to attach



our hopes to? Decisions, decisions! My own thoughts are that I will do my best to enjoy whatever life throws my way. 'Always look on the bright side' is the maxim to live with. I find it helps me, no matter how dismal or destructive the situation.

Shortly we shall be distributing the details of the AGM and one change we have made for this year is using a venue, which is a fully-fledged site with all the usual facilities and more. How? The site is also a Zoo! So if you wish to throw me to the lions then you won't have far to go! This time also we have arranged a follow-on rally at the site arranged for us by *Barbara & Ray Whiley*. I have it on good authority that there is a rally preceding the AGM close by. The thinking being that for those who are in the position to spend a week or so in the area it is better value, taking the cost of fuel into account.

I shall make the usual plea to those who will spend most of the winter in warmer climes please book early, before you depart or at least let us know of your wish to attend. As usual it is far easier to cancel a booking than it is to accept a late application. The site has many facilities and attractions such as a shop/newsagent, a baker, an excellent restaurant, cider makers and others. On the Sunday the largest car-boot sale in Norfolk is held adjacent to the site for those of us who can't resist searching for those bargains we never knew we wanted until we found them. As I said earlier, we have attempted to make an interesting enjoyable break that is good value so get those applications in as soon as you can or let us know.

Betty and I will have spent Christmas and the New Year with our daughter in France. Christmas in France is only a one-day holiday so it feels very strange to find there is no Boxing Day with most of the shops and offices open. Our two grandchildren think it is natural for them to understand, speak and read both English and French and also to have a good understanding of German and a little Italian. I wish I had that competence and ability. Emily, aged 4, makes me smile when asked if she speaks English will reply 'Is that what we are speaking now, granddad?' I have to smile at that simple reply.

Because I am writing this piece in mid-November there are a number of items that the Committee will deal with at our meeting on 11th December 1999, apart from the AGM details. We had a small, independent, sub-committee of members looking at various issues such as revising the numbers of committee members who seek re-election each year. As it stands now half the committee seek re-election each year. This could lead to management problems if all six stood down or were voted out. For example: *Harry Henthorne* our Newsletter Editor has let us know that he will not seek re-election next year; likewise *Janet Sutterby* our Minutes Secretary. I thank them both for all the hard work and huge commitment they have given to the Club, they really have done us proud. Thank you *Harry and Janet*. We also have accepted the resignation of *Brian Smith* and thank him to for all his help. If any one wishes to join the Committee, or would like information, all you need to do is speak to *Ray Whiley* or myself or any member of the Committee. Your Club needs you! We certainly need a few volunteers so come on, have a go, you may enjoy yourself! I shall leave my contribution at that for now, except to wish you all a happy, healthy New Year, decade, century and millennium. Travel safely and smile as you go.

Andrew Entwistle

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BATTERIES

I bought a new 2.4D Trident in June. After driving the 55 miles home I tried to start it a week or so later and found the battery was flat. After charging the battery I took it to the local VW van agent as the dealer informed me that VW would not let them touch the base vehicle. I was informed that the electrics were all in order so I charged the battery fully. However after a few days the battery was again at red! After a second visit to the agent I was told it was a 'dud battery' which was replaced. However after another few days the battery again went flat. The third time I took the van to the agent I was told to leave it for some time. After a week they said that the problem was the radio being incorrectly wired and was draining the battery even when switched off! After charging, the

battery retained the charge for a much longer period and I was able to go away on holiday.

Recently, after the van had not been used for three weeks, the battery was dead. Obviously correcting the wiring of the radio had stopped the heavy drain on the battery. But should a charged battery go flat after three weeks? Is it a characteristic of this particular vehicle, i.e. you have to charge the battery with a charger if the van has been standing for three weeks? I would be very grateful to hear from any Trident owner who can offer information and advice. In spite of the initial problems I have had with my van I find it an excellent vehicle both from a driver's and a camper's point of view. N.B. The leisure battery has always remained charged.

Richard Little

It is known that any motor vehicle battery will discharge if the vehicle is not run for some time. I wonder if the problem relates to any form of security apparatus which may be draining the battery. Over to the experts!

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From the Factory

12th November 1999. The NCC have just signed off the Sherbourne as complying with the Habitation Code. There is still further testing to do on this vehicle, both in the Carver Cold Chamber and Payee Testing at the demanding Chobham test track (you will read a little more about how we test new vehicles in the Year 2000 Company Magazine). At Willersey, we are all very pleased with our latest creation. At the same time, we have spent the last few months looking at the re-organisation of the factory to ensure that the Sherbourne goes into production smoothly. As part of this re-organisation, the Design Department will move to a unit on the adjacent industrial estate; the Van Conversion Finishing Line will be housed in the former Design Department and the Styrofoam assembly line will be transferred to where the Finishing Line is presently located in the main factory. The expanded Press Shop remains in the Styrofoam factory to cater for increased production. It is our intention that the Sherbourne will be additional to those models that we currently produce. To this end

a number of projects have been set up to look at differing aspects of production, parts storage, and logistics. All this planning will come together once our factory is re-organised over the weekend of 18th/19th December. This will not result in any disruption to our monocoque manufacturing facilities and with only minimal disruption to our panel van production.

We will be taking on additional staff early next year and these will, for the first time, be given a comprehensive induction and training programme. The Sherbourne will be built on a new Styrofoam assembly line in the main factory and batch building will ensure your needs are met without delay.

In order to ensure the integrity of all our manufacturing processes, two weeks ago we ceased any design work, and most of our Design Team, our Quality Team, and other key individuals audited everyone carrying out 230 volt installation, LPG installation, seat belt fixing, cab seat fitting and sealing the exterior components into the vehicle. The aim of this exercise was to ensure that the right people, correctly trained, carry out the task for which they are employed - furthermore that they are regularly audited for the quality of their work and indeed if they are absent from their station, a similar qualified and trained person will take their place. All this will lead to improved quality which will benefit us all in the long term. It has been a lengthy exercise but certainly most fruitful and already we are beginning to reap the benefits.

Charles Trevelyan

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Automatic Gearbox

My van is a VW Trophy 2.4D with automatic gearbox. This has a feature which I consider to be faulty. I have approached many people for an opinion, one being the VW specialist on the MMM technical staff. He agrees with me but VW agents do not accept that this feature is anything other than normal.

When descending a hill it is sometimes advisable to over-ride the automatic box and move the lever from 'D' to 'L' in one movement. To go into a lower gear it is only possible to do so by

pressing the button, i.e. from 2 to 1. When the road levels, in order to engage the drive again one movement of the lever should be enough - but this one movement goes into neutral and then it needs a second movement backwards to engage 'D' - only achieved by pressing the button. It should be possible to do these movements without taking one's eyes off the road. It is unsafe to look down to see if the movement from '2' to 'D' has actually been made.

I now need to speak to a fellow member who has this VW gearbox. Can anyone help?

Harry Kent

The telephone number for *Harry* is 018 8681 2712

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Unleaded Fuel

We have had our Bedford 2.3 litre CF250 cylinder head modified for unleaded petrol. The work was carried out by a firm in the West Midlands. Cleaning, fit four valve seats, recut inlet valve seats, refurbish exhaust valve guides, skimming and repainting - all for just under £180.00. Excellent service. They phoned to say they had received the head, we had a progress phone call and another when it was despatched. All in just over a week. If any members are interested, give us a ring on 015 0322 0542 and we will be pleased to give further information.

Noelle & Alan Johns

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Jammed Brakes

I own a 1996 Duetto on the 2.5 diesel Ford Transit chassis. I have twice experienced the jamming problem resulting in two journeys on or behind a recovery vehicle. The brakes started to bind and within ten second had jammed on solid. After several visits to my local Ford dealer following each incident they, in desperation, rang Ford's Technical Department in Dagenham. The suggested remedy was to replace the master cylinder. Since this has been done we have covered nearly 5,000 miles without a hint of further trouble. Evidently the seals occasionally flip over and thus do not allow pressure to release. As we had only done

17,000 miles, Ford agreed to meet half the cost of a new master cylinder which therefore cost me just over £90.00. I don't know if this is a common problem but I do know that I am not alone!

Cliff Warner

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Topaz water ingress

Last autumn I discovered that the nearside rear side panel covering the side window was loose on the leading edge. The screws were loose and could not be tightened and the panel could be lifted about two inches from the vehicle body. On lifting some sections of plywood laminations dropped out. I decided to remove the entire panel. Some complete sections of plywood were adhering to the panel, others to the window. On examination, it was apparent that water had got in under the leading, vertical edge and de-laminated the plywood. It appeared that this section had a minimum of "stand off" adhesive under it and therefore any water, instead of dropping from the adhesive, was soaked up by the plywood. No other sections showed any signs of dampness despite the fact that the small window aperture was not securely sealed to the body.

To rectify matters I placed a piece of plywood some 3mm thinner than the adjacent piece (so that I could place a thicker amount of adhesive under it) to match the gaps between the wood sections and the glass. I then replaced all the other pieces of plywood that had come loose. After these set I used an adhesive on the facing side of the plywood pieces and replaced the cover. I then fitted two extra vertical screws, with appropriate black covers, and another under the small window, matching the screw positions on the other side of the vehicle.

Gordon King

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VW PRESS RELEASE

VW has reduced the prices of the most commonly replaced parts on the current Transporter range by as much as 70%, although the average is 30%. A few examples. A rear coil spring was £131.69 and is now £45.00. A steering rack was £851.00 -

is £500.00. A front suspension damper was £95.00 - is £40.00. Prices do NOT include VAT. VW strongly suggest that non-genuine parts may affect the running, performance and life of the vehicle. All genuine parts have a 12 month warranty or 24 months in the case of exhaust components.

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Obituary

Joy Say wrote to our Membership Secretary when cancelling her membership of the Club to advise that her husband, *John*, had passed away a few months ago. She has sold their van but may well be seen in company with *Denise Stow* at a future event. Our condolences and sympathies are offered to *Joy* and the family.

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FOR SALE

Men's waterproof 'Hi Jack' jacket, navy blue, AutoSleeper embroidered logo. 33" back measurement, fits 40" chest plus. Draw string waist, hood in collar. Bought last year at C & C Rally, worn only once. £12.00. Also 'Ultimate' jacket, waxed, top quality, olive green, as new. Max protection from wet and cold. Dacron filling.

Measurements as above, £20.00. Phone Joy Say on 018 8432 782 or write to 51 Glover Drive Cullompton, Devon, EX15 1SR.

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Ford Duetto, 2.5 diesel, 1995 'M' reg. Superb example of this mark. One owner from new, regular service history, new Michelin's all round. Non-smokers, no pets. Alarm immobiliser, twin direction roof fan, Fiamma awning, Silver Screens. Fairly priced at £18,000.00. Please phone Terry Stoten on 015 8265 4299 or write to 3 Upton Close, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU2 7BH.

Thanks for the donation.

#####

Peugeot Executive, 2.5 turbo diesel + intercooler. 5,500 miles. 'R' reg, purchased new October 1997. Non-smokers, no pets. Fiamma awning, Silver Screen, door pocket, cushions, etc. Garaged during winter. Regrettably health decided sale. A joy to drive and live in! £26,950.00. Tel: Gervase King on 017 8048 1913 or write to Crown Lodge, Crown Street, Ryhall, Stamford, Lincs., PE9 4HQ.



Thanks for the donation.

#####

VW Trident 2.4 diesel, 1997. 20,000 miles only. Remote alarm, second battery with lux pack and rear ladder. Full VW service history. Just had full mechanical service by VW agent and motorhome inspection/service by A/S dealership. Immaculate condition. 11 months tax. Lady owner. Sale because of order for new Talisman due early next year. Quick sale required, hence £17,995.00. Telephone Pat or Ron Ely on 019 2449 4168 or 019 6131 9876 or write to 8 Ingham Garth, Blakehall, Mirfield, West Yorkshire, WF14 9NR.

Thanks for the donation.

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Trophy 2.4 diesel. 1994 'L' reg. 53,000 miles. Very reliable. All usual refinements, oven, toilet, shower etc. Extras include alarm, two-way extractor/intake fan, Status aerial, Fiamma awning, cycle rack. Full service history. Non-smokers, no pets. £16,500.00 ono. Wanted. Post 1994 Clubman. Phone John Johnson on 017 0422 8044 or write to 5 Fylde Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR9 9XH.

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

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