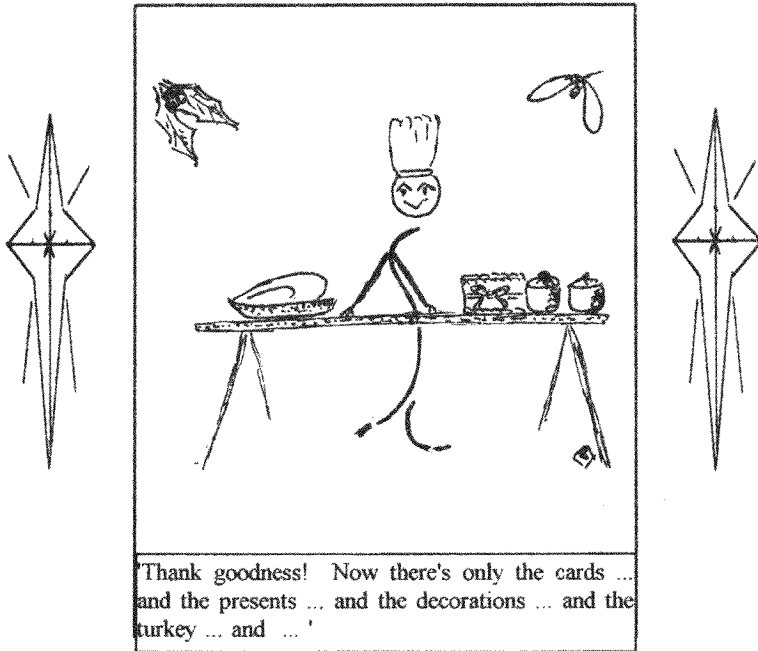




AUTO-SLEEPER  
OWNERS' CLUB

# Newsletter



**No. 159**

**December 2001**

## **If you have a problem**

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO if a problem develops with your van? From correspondence arriving on my desk there seems to be some doubt about how to go about getting things put right - indeed some members write to me to complain, apparently without having taken the basic steps. While I'm always pleased to hear your experiences of the various Auto-Sleeper models, no-one in his right mind would ask me for technical advice - my mechanical education began and ended when a farmer uncle told me that the best tool in any mechanic's toolbox was a four pound hammer, and that 'that would cure most things'.

If you buy your van from dealers, any defect should first be taken up with them. That applies whether the van is brand new or previously-owned and whether the trouble appears as you drive off the forecourt or later. They are responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is mechanically sound and fit for its purpose. If they have given a warranty with the sale, they will quickly tell you whether or not it applies. In addition, if there appears to be a defect in manufacture, it is *their* responsibility to contact Auto-Sleepers, not yours. If they are reluctant to do so, and you have been dealing with a salesman, ask to see someone in management and remind that person of the responsibility. That will usually get action.

If you have bought privately it may be difficult to pin the previous owner down, especially if the van is past the first flush of youth. An Auto-Sleeper dealership may be able to advise on availability of parts, etc.

Should the dealer not be helpful, then a letter or phone call to the factory will meet with a helpful response. It isn't sensible to turn up at Willersey without an appointment and expect to have immediate attention, even if the job appears to be a small one - work has to be planned ahead and parts etc. obtained.

If all else fails, a letter to *ASOC Newsletter* will be passed on and a reply sought where appropriate. We'll always be pleased to hear about the difficulty and its solution after everything is sorted out.

*Ian Day*

**A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS AND CONTRIBUTORS**



## **ACCEO AGM**

**DURING OCTOBER**, Barbara and I represented the Club at the Annual General Meeting of ACCEO - the Association of Camping and Caravanning Exempted Organisations.

ACCEO is an association of some 200 clubs which hold a DETR Certificate of Exemption giving them the right to hold a rally of up to 120 hours' duration on an unlicensed site without having to apply (or pay) for planning permission. ACCEO represents its member clubs in negotiations with Government departments, especially when alterations to legislation affecting camping and caravanning are planned.

Nothing controversial was put forward at this year's meeting. The constitution was amended to reflect the change of name of the Government department responsible for exemption certificates from DETR to DEFRA, although clubs were told that they must continue to refer to their 'DETR' certificate until it becomes due for renewal by DEFRA (or whatever the department is called by then).

I was able to chat with David Wood, motorhome representative on the ACCEO Executive Committee, who had become secretary of the Association, and with Jean Groves, who used to be the staff of ACCEO's head office before it was closed. Jean, a member of the Historic Caravan Club, was elected to the Committee, and those members who know her and appreciate her wide knowledge and willingness to give advice will wish her well in her new rôle. Jean represented ACCEO at our Club and Company rally two years ago.

On the morning of the AGM, Oakwood Village demonstrated the ACCEO web site ([www.oakwood-village.co.uk](http://www.oakwood-village.co.uk)) and offered to design and host a web site for individual clubs for a fee of £25 a month. ASOC already has its own web site at no cost to the Club - [www.asoc.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.asoc.fsnet.co.uk)

Barbara and I wish all members a very Happy Christmas.

**Ray Whiley**

## ***From the President***

### **Trident trials**

AS A RESULT of Keith Taylor's and Rita Jones' letter (October issue), drawing attention to the positioning of the fire extinguisher in the Trident, I have now arranged for it to be mounted in a different position.

In the case of the problem they have experienced with their base vehicle, I have (as always) passed their comments on to our technical interface with Volkswagen, the Motorhome Brand Manager, so that he is aware of it and can forward the information back to the factory in Germany.

***Charles Trevelyan***

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### **Successful Willersey week-end**

AUTO-SLEEPERS' first Open Week-end, held 13-14 October was a success. More than 1500 requests were received for the information pack, and it was evident both from the many people thronging the factory area and the numbers of vans staying on the campsite overnight or parked up for the day, that most of those asking for information had turned up - encouraged, no doubt, by the warm, fine weather.

Significantly, there was a considerable number of trailer caravan owners present, many of whom seemed to be genuinely interested in the possibility of changing up to motorhome ownership.

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### **Tour de France**

HAVING BEEN an avid follower of the Tour de France cycle race for a number of years through television, I would now like to see it 'live' in the French Alps. I'd be grateful for any help or guidance from members regarding sites and routes, together with any other relevant information.

***John Ward***

*Has anyone followed it themselves, or know when next year's route will be announced ( it's different every year)? - Ed.*

## Engine additives?

MOST OF US put our vans up for a few months over the winter. Jean and I have a 'K' registered Clubman on a VW base and give the engine a start every couple of weeks.

Can anyone give me advice on using an additive with the engine oil? I use Injector Redex with the petrol as an upper cylinder lubricant.

I'd be pleased to have any recommendations and can be phoned on 01234 403511.

*Peter Burraway*

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## Gunged-up waste taps

WHEN WINTERISING my Duetto, I found that if the water pump is switched on, water can be drained at a much speedier rate - but stand clear when releasing the water-heater drain plug.

Can anyone tell me why the plug on the grey water drain is invariably bunged up with gunge, making it necessary to dismantle the plug to clear the blockage, although I'm most careful nothing goes down the sink to get into the waste water tank?

I'm sure I can't be the only one to have this problem, and any suggestions as to a remedy would be welcome.

*Brian Green*

*You're certainly not the only one, Brian. Let's hear from those who've solved the problem - Ed.*

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## Talbot windscreen water

REGARDING MAURICE WRIGHT'S leaking Talbot windscreen in the November issue, I have a 1994 Talisman and experienced similar problems. In October 2000 I asked Auto-Sleepers if they had experience of this problem, and almost by return of post Charles Trevelyan replied:

'We have been aware in the past of corrosion becoming apparent in the lower radii of the window aperture on Talbot Express models. The probable cause is that the drain holes that are within this aperture - approx. 2 ins inboard from each lower radius - have become blocked, causing water to settle in the screen/bodywork section. Before doing anything, it would be sensible to have these drain holes unblocked - I believe small tubes run down within the bulkhead to drain this water.'

For repairs he recommended Batford Mill Coachcraft at Harpenden. I took the Talisman to them last November. They removed the wind-screen and repaired and resprayed the apertures at a cost of £352.50 for labour, materials and VAT. One year on and I am very satisfied with the service from both Auto-Sleepers and Batford.

Batford have moved and now trade as Motorhomes Coachcraft at Gibraltar Farm, Harpenden, Herts, which is about a mile from Junction 10 on the M1 on A1081, south towards Harpenden. Peter Ayles is Managing Director and can be contacted by phone at 01582 404880, fax at 01582 404490, or e-mail at [peterayles@aol.com](mailto:peterayles@aol.com)

*John Cullin*

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## Winter in Spain

I HOPE TO RETIRE at the end of this year with the intention of spending January to March 2002 in Spain. I'm collecting information from any and every source. Anything any member could tell me would be appreciated, including referrals to sources of information. I'd appreciate it if they could e-mail [Mike@PoundPiece.fnet.co.uk](mailto:Mike@PoundPiece.fnet.co.uk) or phone me at 01905 641371.

*Mike Smith*

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## Driving positions

FOLLOWING UP on John Johnson's item 'Cruise control? in November's *ASOC Newsletter*, I sympathise with him. I am 76 and my pain is in the left leg. I find an orthopaedic wedge-shaped cushion useful in our

car, a Rover Metro, though the seat in the A-S Harmony (pre-Boxer) is excellent - firm, flat and the right height from the floor. A cushion would be a cheaper option than a new seat or van.

**David Matthews**



MY WIFE, CAROLINE, had problems with the right leg, too. We have a Harmony based on one of the last of the Talbot Expresses. The problem seemed to be that there was no floor on which to rest the heel and the weight of the leg was therefore wholly on the underside of the thigh.

On the Talbot, the floor beneath the accelerator pedal slopes down from the front, giving nowhere to rest the heel of the right foot. I bridged from the seat box to the floor under the accelerator with a horizontal piece of wood, wide enough for the right foot - a very simple construction and totally removable.

**Michael Fradin**

*Two helpful suggestions, but care must be taken that anything placed on the floor cannot slip to impede operation of the pedals - Ed.*

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## **At home at Lytham**

AS FIRST-TIME RALLIERS we were made so welcome at the Lytham St. Annes Rally. Everyone was so friendly and immediately made us feel at home.

We enjoyed the hospitality at Todds Motor Caravans in Preston and if ever we change our van, we'd certainly visit them to see what they could offer us. The Fish and Chip Supper was excellent, the quizzes entertaining, the Poetry very amusing, and the drawing of the raffle hilarious. Other ralliers solved the drainage problem we had from the shower basin - 'Decomposed soap!'

It was one long laugh and packed with fun from the moment we arrived until we left. We'd like to thank Marshals, Kath and Norman Benyon, Barbara and Vic Kaye for a wonderful first rally, and are looking forward to our next.

**Gill and Ron Lawton**

## Where the waste goes

TO ANSWER DEREK AND MAY ARMITAGE'S QUESTION about waste disposal while wild camping abroad:

Obviously different countries pose different problems. France still has many old-style public 'French toilets' which nobody seems to want to use, but they're perfect for cassette toilet emptying - and I always leave them cleaner than when I went in. Sometimes I have to pay ten francs to use the automated sea-front type public toilets.

Italy has numerous free dump points for motorhomes where both toilet and grey water waste can be disposed of. They are also excellent places to get a tankful of fresh water. Similarly, in other European countries I use public toilet facilities. I also carry an old Army trenching tool which I've had to use only twice in the past six years. With it you can go into a wood or the countryside, dig a deep hole and empty the cassette. After I've filled the hole in, nobody can tell we have even been there.

Grey waste is no problem. We have a large fold-up plastic container. When it's full, it's poured into public toilets or, in hot weather, over any grassed waste land where it's usually soaked away in minutes and leaves no trace. I usually try to do that discreetly as non-motorhome people could take offence if they thought it was toilet waste I was getting rid of.

As far as tipping toilet waste into the sea is concerned, I've never seen that done, nor met anyone who has, but - somehow - people assume 'that's what wild campers do'. All I can say on the subject is: 'Don't we all like swimming in the sea?'

*Tom Claxton*

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## Handy Hint

**Fuel cap lubricant:** Ford dealers sell a PTFE spray lubricant which is very good for locks. I had to replace the diesel fuel cap on my Duetto because of corrosion. The new one gets lubricated regularly.

*John Parker*

## Boxer battery access

REGARDING THE ITEM on access to batteries fitted under seats in Boxer vehicles (November issue), my Executive suffered the same problem, so I decided to have a go at the modification.

The seat works fine after the mod. but in the article there was no mention of the five ball bearings that fell out and the four bits of white plastic rod. I presume there would be one ball bearing in each of the bottom guides, but where was the fifth from? And the white plastic rods - do they go in the ends of the slides? If so, top or bottom? Are they supposed to be a tight fit?

Some guidance would be appreciated.

*Roger Spensley*



*Following the same item we also received this e-mail from Bob Fryer:*

I WAS VERY INTERESTED in the article (November issue) and have suffered for six years with this problem. I've had to remove the driver's seat on at least four occasions to get access to the battery. It is not an easy task.

I've now removed the seat again to carry out the modification suggested by Charles Trevelyan. Before taking a grinder to the runners, I placed the seat as far forward on the seat box as possible to make contact with the front fascia, and found that it would require at least a further inch plus to be able to take the battery out. I'm afraid, therefore, that this is a non-starter for an Executive Boxer.

*Two days later, another e-mail came from Bob:*

Further to my previous e-mail, I had another thought that if I pushed the seat forward really hard against the fascia I could gain some more space which would facilitate removal of the battery.

It is with much regret that I took the grinder to the seat runners. I can move the seat, but can Charles Trevelyan or the Tiggers tell me how

to retain the front ball bearings in the slide because as far as I can see there is nothing now to stop them falling out. I look forward to any suggestions.

**Bob Fryer**

*We've sent copies of both Roger's and Bob's e-mails to Charles Trevelyan and to the TIG Chairman, Andrew Entwistle, in the hope that there might be easy answers, but repeat the advice we gave at the end of the original piece - don't tackle modifications unless you are confident of your skill - Ed.*

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### **Beware the green vanman**

AFTER YEARS OF CARAVANNING we've become owners of our first motorhome by buying a Topaz.

Because Alice didn't want to be known as a 'white vanman', we chose a lovely shade of green. We took possession in August and the same weekend attended a rally of 270 motorhomes Brownhills were holding.

Talking to numerous owners, we were told 'very friendly people who'll always acknowledge you when you meet them on the road'. But it doesn't appear to be true. Yes, they're friendly when they meet us at rallies or on sites, but after almost waving our arms off we've notched up only five responses to date.

Why? We think we've found the reason. In our area, Yorkshire Electricity use high top, long wheel based vans painted a shade of green similar to ours. Perhaps approaching drivers can't decide whether we're employees out to repair the national grid or just a couple of motorhomers having the time of their lives.

We'll continue to wave when we meet motorhomes, whether they're red, blue, white or - dare we say it - green. We enjoy meeting fellow owners and look forward to joining members on future rallies.

**Alice and Ray Dixon**

*It just goes to show how many of us expect motorhomes to be white or cream, doesn't it? Keep up the good work, Alice and Ray - Ed.*



# December 2001 Rally Supplement



*I would like to wish all members a Merry Christmas and a Very Prosperous New Year.*

If you are planning to run a rally in 2002 then please contact me as soon as possible

**\*\*\*\*\*HELP REQUIRED.** Marshals are required to run the following rallies in 2002:

1.Motorcaravan Jamboree, the Kent County Showground, Detling. 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>.May .

2.Warners' Midsummer Event, Lincoln Racecourse 19<sup>th</sup>.- 21<sup>st</sup>.July

3.The Shepton Mallet Show,12<sup>th</sup>.-15<sup>th</sup>.September .

I will need to know who is willing to marshal at these rallies by January 2002.                      No marshals - No rallies!

31<sup>st</sup>.December- 2<sup>nd</sup>.January New Year Rally. Hidden Valley,North Devon. If you are interested then please contact Sandra & Bernie Wisely at 2 Mount Pleasant,Bishops Itchington,Southam, Warwickshire.CV47 2QE.Tel.No. 01926 614 194.

**\*\*\*\*\*Proposed Rally in The Black Forest & Bavaria.A two Centre German Rally at Kirchzarten & Oberammergau.**

3<sup>rd</sup>.June - 16<sup>th</sup>. June 2002. Please note that only applications from those willing to commit themselves to attend **BOTH CENTRES** for the FULL period of the rally will be considered.

Those interested please contact Nora & Ven Venables, Tel.No 01902 332 105 as soon as possible.

**14<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> ( 3 nights).February 2002."Valentines Rally" Grouse & Claret, Rowsley,Nr. Matlock,Derbyshire.**

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

Rally Marshals: Jan & Vic Hicklin & Evelyn & Ben Mansfield.

Site Fee:£ 7.00 per night. Electricity included.( incl. VAT).

Rally Fee:£1.75 plus 50p per person.(incl.VAT).

Booking slips to: Mrs.J.Hicklin ,381 Manor Road, Brimington,Chesterfield, Derbyshire.S43 1PP. Tel.No. 01246 236 157

Cheques payable to Mrs.J. Hicklin.

**Attractions:** Use of clubroom,meals in Grouse & Claret,Campers breakfast £1.99 including a cuppa in restaurant.Retail shopping outlet next door to site.Chatsworth Park & Garden Centre,Farm shop,Mill & craft centre.Bus stop outside site for buses to Matlock & Bakewell.The area is a walkers paradise.Extra nights can be arranged with the landlord.

**Directions:** On A6 between Matlock & Bakewell.

**LIMITED To 29 VANS.**

*We depend on volunteers within the Club to act as rally marshals.If you know of a suitable site why not think about running a rally.It is not difficult and help is available.*

*It is important that all potential rally dates and venues are checked with me first as,unless they are approved by the Club,there will be no Public Liability Insurance and no rally can be held.*

*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 at least 3 months before the actual rally.*

*Neil C. Rogers,  
3 Appleby Close,  
Aldbrough St. John,  
Richmond,  
North Yorks,  
DL11 7TT.*

*Tel./Fax. No. 01325 374 540 E-Mail. ncr@nasuwt.net*

*Local assistant: Jerry Haxton (01483 223 476) Woking,Surrey.*

**E & O E**

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!**

.....

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

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

.....

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

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

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

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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!**

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  Evening meal: 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 14 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:  
Electricity: Yes  No  Evening meal: Yes  No   
Have you any special needs? Yes  No  If Yes please specify:-

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Names of Adults.....

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

Extras: Please indicate which you would like, if available  
Electricity: Yes  No  Evening meal if arranged: 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 14 DAYS BEFORE EVENT,IF POSSIBLE PLEASE!**

## **Mind your step**

DURING THE ASOC RALLY IN FRANCE, I realised that when stepping in and out of the rear door of my Talisman, the metal step felt 'spongy' on the right-hand side when stepping out. I put it down to the pressure when I used my left foot going in and my right one going out. It could also be that I'd put a little weight on due to consumption of French red wine, ample portions of cheese and sticks of baguettes and butter. As nobody else commented on the 'spongy' step, I put the matter out of my mind and got on with enjoying the rest of the holiday.

After we got home, however, and were making countless trips in and out of the motorhome to remove everything that wasn't fixed, I became aware that the step had become more flexible and needed attention. When I checked it, I found that the safety nut on the left-hand holding bolt was missing and that the bolt was only supported by the very last thread. Not only could that bolt have been lost at any time, but the right-hand side nut was just loose and could have gone as well.

I've replaced both bolt and nuts with a longer bolt and two nuts, drilled a hole in the bolt and secured a split pin behind the two nuts. Because there is no way the nuts can get past the split pin if they come loose, and be lost, the step is now safe.

I reported this serious matter to Charles Trevelyan at Auto-Sleepers. He was most concerned and plans to take it up with the manufacturers and suppliers.

It seemed prudent to check all screws and fixing devices in the van and I found a couple of missing screws as well as several loose ones. The table was a major hazard.

Fortunately I found the problem when I did, avoiding a possibly serious accident if the step had collapsed. It would pay everyone to spend some time checking vehicle screws and nuts to secure their safety and future.

**Ray Pope**

*Good advice, Ray. Quite a few people must have screws loose - Ed.*

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Christmas comes, but once a year is enough - Anon.

## Radio rescue

EARLY THIS YEAR a request was made in *ASOC Newsletter* by a member who was having a problem with radio reception in his Duetto. A few months after reading about this I was on holiday at the Pear Tree Touring Park, near Poole, where site owners Alan and Margaret Broome told me they'd just bought a Duetto and how pleased they were with it. The only problem they had was that the radio reception was very poor.

I showed them the Newsletter and suggested that perhaps we could test the aerial wiring with a meter for continuity. The result was that while the outer of the co-axial cable plug at the radio end to the roof aerial was all right, the inner was disconnected. After removing the panelling to get to the back of the aerial, I found the cable at that point was not the same as the cable at the radio and could only assume that the cable was too short to reach the radio, so an extension lead had been fitted. That was the case, with the extension lead coiled up and fastened with cable ties under the dashboard. That lead was where the problem was. A new lead was fitted and the problem solved.

After reading that Newsletter and other copies I had with me, Alan and Margaret became members of the Club.

*David Lowe*

*A satisfactory outcome all round. Welcome, Ian and Margaret - Ed.*

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## Carver clear-up

WHEN HOWARD MARSHALL wrote about the 'Best of both worlds' published in *ASOC Newsletter's* October issue, we said that he had also sent details of problems he had been experiencing with the Carver heater in his Trooper.

The P4 unit was found to be faulty when checked before the four-months old vehicle was handed over in February, was repaired after a three-week wait, failed after 30 minutes use a month or so later, was again repaired but failed after an hour's use at the beginning of a fortnight's holiday in June. In July the heater was removed and sent for 'soak' checks, to be refitted three weeks later.

We referred Howard's letter to Charles Trevelyan at Auto-Sleepers who involved Carver's new owners, Truma, and expressed surprise that neither he nor his dealers contacted A-S or Truma to have the matter resolved. At the end of October it was good to get the note printed below - Ed.

AS SOME PEOPLE POINT OUT the Newsletter can sometimes contain more negatives than positives. It is nice, therefore, to forward a positive - a pat on the back, indeed.

Since my mail re P4 heater problems I have been on my travels again. On my return, a telephone message from Truma awaited. Nathan [at Truma] was extremely helpful and had prepared an exchange unit for my use. I am pleased to say the original unit has performed OK since its last (third) repair, so the offer was not necessary.

May I thank Auto-Sleepers, Truma and *ASOC Newsletter* for assisting my cause. I am crossing my fingers for trouble-free heating and am now incorporating monthly testing as a matter of course.

*Howard Marshall*

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## **Fire!**

ON LEAVING our last week-end rally near Fordingbridge, we were ten minutes into our journey when we saw smoke coming from the dash air vent on the driver's side. Before we could find a safe place to stop and investigate the cause, we saw flames inside the vent - which meant coming to a full stop to sort it.

Following a successful attack with the fire extinguisher, we still couldn't locate the cause of the fire, but, making sure the vehicle was safe, we continued home. What made matters worse was the fact that we were due to part-exchange the van for a new Pollensa two days later.

Once home, I made a more thorough investigation and found that the dimmer switch for the panel lighting had somehow shorted out, melted and caught fire. I got a new switch and fitted it after contacting my dealers to let them know of the problem and explaining that the extinguisher had made a rather sorry mess of the cab area. I shudder to think what state the van would have been in had I not been able to quell the fire.

This may be an isolated incident, but I think it is something of which everyone, especially those with a T4, should be aware.

*John Ward*

*Good to know things were no worse, John, and that your new Pollensa is now residing where the Clubman used to be - Ed.*

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## **Excelsior matters**

I WAS INTERESTED in Bryan Orchard's solution to the heat problem ('Hotting up' in the November issue) as we also have an Excelsior and found the toilet compartment was getting more than its fair share of the heat.

The Fanmaster has an adjusting control behind the fan unit that diverts more flow into one of the outlets. This may help, but my experience is that not enough diversion is possible. I've fitted an outlet into the cab area by tee-ing off behind the existing lounge outlet and running a new length of pipe along the top of the forward seat compartment, behind the drop-down flap, to an outlet behind the driver's seat. The internal 'box' around the water heater and pump had to be reduced in size, which also gives me more storage in that compartment. Distribution is better if the driver's seat is moved forward. I've also removed the butterfly from this outlet because Carver recommend that one outlet is permanently open.

I also managed to fit an open-topped storage compartment above the pipe run behind the off-side bed box drawer, which just allows out-of-the-way storage for my utility tent poles.

I guess the optimum solution would be a combination of Bryan's and my schemes, where his pipe run from the toilet compartment supply was taken all the way to the cab by separate pipe. I've a sketch of the arrangement and photographs, if anyone is interested.

Now a caution: When washing monocoque vans, be on the lookout for fibreglass gel coat chips. If you can see the fibreglass matting and it's a dirty colour, it can mean a leak. I recently noticed that the carpet lining my Luton was wet and on investigation found a leak in the roof at the front end of the main fore-and-aft gutter, which is also a seam. Although it was repaired by Cheltenham Fibreglass without charge, it involved a

long round trip. Had the leak been in a panelled area, it would have been hidden.

**John Read**

*Why not send a copy of your sketch and photos for TIG's files, John? - Ed.*

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## **Sites seen**

**Ashfordby Road Sports Ground CL, Melton Mowbray.** Doreen and I are new members and very new to auto-sleeping, having bought our Trophy last February. We've just completed our first three-week holiday in the van, travelling to Norfolk, the Cotswolds and Somerset from our home in the Wirral. We've learned a lot and are now much wiser than when we started out, having gone out initially without a long enough mains hook-up lead, no fresh water hose and no chocks for levelling up. However, we enjoyed it immensely and were particularly impressed with the standard of amenities provided at the sites. There was one in particular on which we stayed on the way to Norfolk.

The Ashfordby Road Sports Ground at Melton Mowbray is owned and run by the Town Council, and comprises an eighteen-hole golf course and sports field. The area set aside for caravans lies off to one side, is all grass and mostly level. From it you have a wonderful view of the golf course stretching off into the distance, and of the football fields where an occasional schools match takes place in the afternoon. The facilities provided consist of a small, but adequate, shower and toilet block which is kept very clean. There is a small kiosk selling ice cream and sweets etc. and takes the money for the golf. This quiet and peaceful site, not far from the M1, is a most convenient half-way stop between the north and the south, and is open all year.

Details are available on page 369 of the Caravan Club Directory. Because it's a certified location, access is restricted to five vans [and Caravan Club members - Ed].

**Cedric Cawthorne**

*I wish we could print the photograph of this apparently lawn-like site Cedric sent - Ed.*

## Obituaries

**George (Brad) Bradshaw** We were sorry to learn of the death of George, known to members as Brad, who died on 27 September. Our condolences are extended to Diana. Following Brad's death, we regret that Diana will be leaving the Club.

**Phyllis McCallum** It is with regret that we record the death of Phyllis. She had been admitted to hospital for an operation on her knee, but later suffered a cardiac arrest and died on 18 October. We send our sympathy to her husband, Eoin, and others close to them.

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## Wanted

**CUPS, PLATES AND SAUCERS** matching those originally supplied with VW A-S models of late 1980s, stamped Bilton and Coloroll. Pattern thought to be 'Pink Snowdrop'. Anyone with items for sale or able to suggest possible sources should phone David Thornton 0114 2368770 (Sheffield).\*

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## For sale



**SILVER SCREENS.** Set of exterior Silver screens to fit cab of latest A-S VW conversion, never used: **£30** ono; set of interior Silver Screens to fit cab A-S Talbot Express conversion, hardly used: **£15** ono; set of VW front footwell mats to fit latest A-S

VW conversion, hardly used: **£25** ono. Phone Anita or William Venton 01242 678660 (Cheltenham) or mobile 07967 532069.\*

**AIRIDE, SILVER SCREEN.** Airide air suspension to fit front-wheel drive vehicles: **£170**; Silver Screen to fit Peugeot pre-Boxer: **£30**. Phone John Ward 01472 502715 (Lincs.).

**SILVER SCREEN, HEADLIGHT PROTECTORS.** Set of 4 internal Silver Screens for rear of VWT4 Trident: **£20**; Pair of plastic headlamp protectors for pre-1998 VW T4: **£10**. Phone Dave Titchener 01993 704416 (Oxfordshire).

**EXECUTIVE 2.5 DIESEL, 'N' reg.,** 16,500 miles. MoT Aug. 2002, taxed to Jan. 2002. Extra: swivel passenger seat. Non smoker, no children. Immaculate condition: **£22,000** ovno. Very reluctant sale. Hope to buy an elderly smaller van when right vehicle turns up. Phone Sarah Mylne 01289 386207 (N. Northumberland, Scots. Borders).

**HARRISON DE LUXE COACH BUILT FREE-STANDING AWNING.** Top of the range, never used. Bought as a gift by mistake. Cost £575. Will sell at **£450** ovno. Phone Chris and Ivan Simpson 01270 873191 after 7 pm (Staffs.).

**TOPAZ 2.4 TDI (112 bhp).** 'P' reg. 21,000 miles. VanBitz remote alarm with security loop, Hope Safe-T-Bar, back box, Silver Screen, Omnistor 5000 awning. Recent exhaust, Tax and MoT. Very reliable: **£21,500** ovno. Phone Tom McGuigan 01525 720869 (Beds).\*

**TOPAZ TDI (102 bhp).** 'W' reg., 17,500 miles. Omnistor awning, Fiamma bike rack, full VW tow kit, 3-speed extractor in place of roof vent. Superb to drive. Immaculate: **£25,500**. Phone John Riggs 01747 861933.\*

**BOX FOR BOXER EXECUTIVE OR TALISMAN; FOLDING BIKE.** Rear fibreglass box on strong quickly-detachable chassis-mounted frame. No drilling necessary: **£200**. Dahon Mariner folding bike, unused: **£125**. Phone Roger Green 01474 814496 (Kent).

**FIAMMA CYCLE RACK** suitable for VW T4, Trident or other tailgate van. As new: **£80** ono. Phone George Williams 01432 356700 (Hereford).\*

**LEGEND GL 2.5 DIESEL WITH PAS.** 1990, 44,500 miles. Taxed and MoT to May 2002. Deadlocks on all doors, immobiliser, Omnistor awning, 2 swivel cab seats incl. in sale, Status TV aerial and booster, Silver Screen. Full service history. Garaged, no smokers/pets. Immaculate condition: **£13,995** ono. Phone Bobbie and Beatrice Gordon 028 3833 5328 (N. Ireland).\*

**CUSHIONS** for dinette and bed for Amethyst (blue). Open to offers. Phone Norman Ailward 01494 713071 (Bucks.).

**HARMONY 1905cc TURBO DIESEL.** 1995, 'N' reg., 25,000 miles. All usual A-S fitting incl. hot water and heating, fridge, flush toilet and awning. No pets, non-smokers. Cruise control fitted, undersealed and winter stored. VGC: **£16,600**. Phone Harry Warren 019467 25306 (W. Cumbria).\*

**ROOF BOX, BACK BOX, BRAKE ATTACHMENT, WINDSCREEN COVER.** Omnistor 130 roof box, fits Clubman rack. Used only 1 season. Cost £259 new, will accept: **£200** ovno. Omnistor Carry-All back box, can be fitted to cycle rack or direct to rear van panel; complete with all fittings and mounting frame: **£200**. VW T4 brake lever attachment x2, makes operation of hand brake lever easier for those having difficulty or with weak grip. Cost £69 each; will accept **£55** incl. p & p. J & M Designs (silver screen) windscreen cover for VW T4. Good condition: **£50** incl. p & p. Phone John Ward 01494 639700 (Bucks).

**VT20, 1984, WITH FREE-STANDING AWNING.** 71,000 miles (new engine 29,000), elevating roof, second battery, mains hook-up, tow bar.

Re-upholstered. MoT/tax June 2002. Excellent condition: **£4,250**. Phone Leslie Coombs 01323 890639 ( E. Sussex).\*

**EXECUTIVE, PETROL, 4-BERTH.** 'W' reg., 2000, 10,000 miles. Awning, bike rack, overcab bed, Status aerial. Non-smokers, no pets. Ill health reason for sale. **£26,000** ono. Phone Mike or Jan Senior 01287 623034 (N. Yorkshire).

**AMETHYST 2.5 TURBO DIESEL, 4-BERTH,** May 1999, 'T' reg., 24,000 miles, full service history, taxed April 2002. Secondary carpets, full-length lined curtains between cab and living area, 2 cycle rack, external TV socket. Usual A-S quality: **£27,950** ono. Phone Richard Salter 01395 267849 or 07880 907298 (E. Devon).\*

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*Note: Advertisements followed by a \* mean that the advertiser has made a donation to Club funds. To each we say 'Thanks for the donation' - Ed.*

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### *Sitting on the step*



### **Christmas cheer**

ZEKIEL were in a right old wax when he met us at site outside Folkestone where we were spending the night. Mind you, he couldn't say he weren't warned. He'd filled his van so full of beer and wine and such at Calais, it could barely waddle to ship, and he went over ramps so gingery-like the ship's crew were calling him all sorts to get a move on. And he staggered up to Customs at Dover just the same way. It were no surprise when they waved him into their shed at Dover to have a good look at him.

Trust my Martha to stir things. 'What happened to all the boxes you had on roof rack,' she asked after Zekiel pulled on to pitch. He gave her a look that'd have stripped armour plate off a battleship and stumped off to toilet block.

'Customs took them,' Hepsibah, his missus said. 'Serves him right. I told him we had too much. But he tried to play clever dick, didn't he when they asked what he had on roof and he told them "Only a couple of immigrants". Well, I ask you! Anyone could see there weren't hardy room for us with all the boxes and bottles, let alone stowaways. Any road they went through van with as tooth-comb. Had all the boxes and bottles out, then emptied the lockers. I were that ashamed - they even

tipped all dirty laundry out. And Zekiel kept going on at them about Englishman's rights and how he'd write a letter to our MP - him as 'as trouble marking a lottery ticket! Well, they put up with his carryings-on for a while, then, 'I think, sir,' one said, ever so polite, 'it might be an idea if we left my colleagues here to finish off and go into office so what you're saying can be written down.' That shut him up. You know what he's like - all mouth, and gormless with it.

'Nay, lad - Officer,' he said when we were all sat down. 'I didn't mean owt. I'm just upset, that's all. It took me a fair long time to get all that stuff packed right and it'll take till Michaelmas to put it back in again. 'Customs man said, 'That won't be a problem, sir. I've decided all that stuff isn't for your personal use, so I'm impounding it.'

Well, I were fair flummoxed and Zekiel looked as if he'd been hit over head with a bottle. 'You can't,' he said. 'Yes, I can, sir,' and Customs man pulled out a big book and showed him something in it. 'It's there in black and white.' Well, we went back to van in a daze, like, and stuffed everything else back just anyhow. We were driving off when a police sergeant waved us down.

'Would you mind pulling on to weight-bridge, sir?' he asked.

'We're late now, thanks to yon chaps,' Zekiel said. 'Do we have to?' We did. And to crown all, sergeant said after we'd been weighed. 'I'm sorry, sir, I can't allow you to proceed unless you get rid of surplus weight.' We weren't more than a stone or two over and upshot was we'd to leave the utility tent behind and arrange for it to be sent on by carrier. It's all Zekiel's doing - I'm sure they'd not have been so rough if he'd not carried on like he did.

'Sorry to hear about trouble,' I said, expecting fireworks, when he came back from toilets, but he were looking more cheerful - almost perky.

'Aye, it were a bit of a blow,' he said, 'But they were only doing job. All the same, they didn't get everything, tha knows,' he said, winking. 'Fancy a drop of ale?' He fetched a couple of glasses and bent under van to fresh water tap - and drew off some prime French lager.

Like Hepsibah said - no gumption.

***Enoch***

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