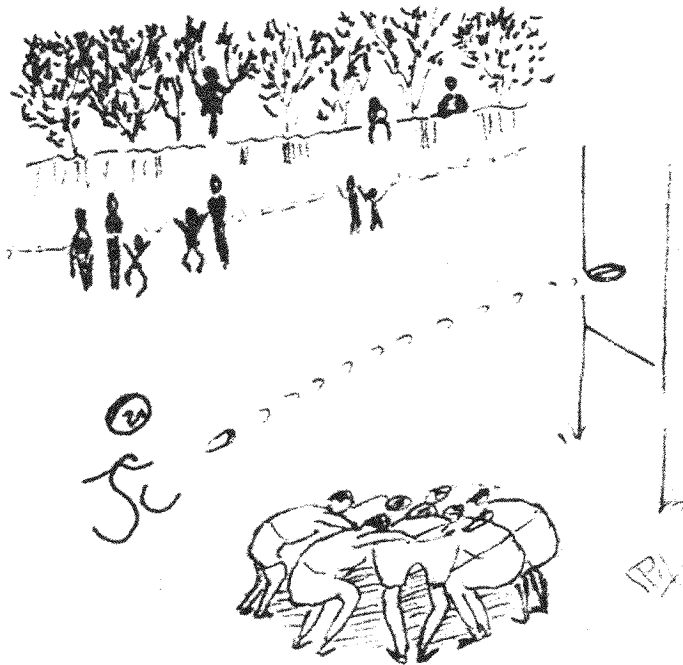




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AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB

A Company Limited by Guarantee.
Registered Office: Orchard Works, Willersey, Nr. Broadway,
Worcs., WR12 7QF. Registered No: 4616969



NEWSLETTER 188
MAY 2004

Hello.

There is still a steady, though small, stream of items arriving for YOUR Newsletter. Naturally, being greedy, I would always like to receive more and I hope that many of you will take the trouble to put fingers to keypads, pens to paper, crayon to cardboard or whatever to let me have some notes of your doings. The one thing that we have avoided over all the years of the Club is the sort of rally report which I have seen in some other publications - you know the sort - "We had a rally at Wherever-it-was and Mr and Mrs Wotsit, Mr and Mrs Thingummy, Mr and Mrs Themthere all turned up". This is followed by another report in the very same lines, giving many or most of the same names. Believe it or not, I saw one magazine a long time ago which contained about six so-called reports in this fashion.

But we have always managed to have much more interesting reports, not only of rallies but of other uses for your vans. One of which, the last of a trio, is included in this issue. So let me have your interesting items and, when space permits, I will certainly include them. I can't print photographs but if you can make a sketch I can include that.

-----oooOOOooo-----

Headlamp Guards

When visiting my local Peugeot Garage recently I purchased a pair of Headlamp Guards for my Nuevo ES, as I thought they would be cheaper to replace than a new headlamp, should one be damaged by flying stones etc.

I found them very well made and easy to fit. Included in the kit are Beam Deflectors for driving on the continent and there are small marks on the guards to position these correctly. The part number is VAL 249.

Rex Woodruffe.

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Club & Company Rally 2004

The application form and rally notes for the Club & Company Rally are enclosed with this Newsletter. This year's rally will once again be at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern from 9th to 11th July. As usual, members can stay on for Sunday night as well. The sub-committee is grafting away to try and make this year's event bigger and better than last year. Why don't you come along to see if they succeed!

Also enclosed is a volunteer form. Please consider giving an hour or two of your time to help make the weekend a success. Last year

we were pleasantly surprised by the way members responded to our plea for help and we hope you will all help again this year.

Andy Cavell

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And another cartoon from *Jill Pearce*



Don't forget that there are other stalls as well. The Cake Stall would very much appreciate contributions - large cakes or small - and there are the other stalls for brich-a-brac and books (but NOT magazines, please). All contributions will be gratefully received.

-----oooOOOooo-----

Gas Cylinders

I read, with interest, the comments regarding refillable gas cylinders in the Newsletter. When we researched the problem back in 2001 we contacted TB Turbo of Lancaster and asked their advice. This resulted in a two day visit to their works to have a gas tank fitted under the nearside bed locker of our Ford based Pollensa.

The tanks is out of the way, can be refilled at any Auto-Gas outlet in the UK and most petrol stations on the continent. The tank holds 48 litres of gas which, at UK prices, equates to £17.76 approx. (48 litres = 4 x 6kg bottles). Also the gas locker is now freed up for the storage of the odd bits and pieces which one always needs for camping. If anyone would like further information they can contact us on 014 9452 0734.

Tricia and John Ward

Thanks for that. The comments mentioned actually relate to the sort of replacement, non-fitted, bottles which apparently are now

obtainable, not to the fitted tanks which a number of people have been using for a long time now and have been the subject of earlier articles.

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Just a small note on my own personal experience. Living under the Malvern Hills our village doesn't have gas to the property. The village is 100% electric. (All them thar eggs in one basket; Yuk!) We have had, for the past 40 years, the big Calor bottles, six in a row. All linked together so that should the one in use run out, all we have to do is switch off the empty one and switch on the full one. Easy! But, should we forget to close the valve of the empty bottle, what happens is that the full bottle syphons gas back into the empty bottle. So both bottles are half full. And, of course, as the gauge is down stream on the pipe away from the bottles we always have a reading of the correct amount of gas flow to the appliances.

So to *Joyce and Michael Thomas* as the gas in the red bottle is the same as the gas at the garage pump which does not freeze, what naughty thoughts are passing through our brains? Do we need two refill cylinders? I am sure that our technical group will chastise us for forgetting to switch off the empty tank as we fill up at the garage pump. Of course, both the red cylinder and the garage have Propane gas. One must always, when filling up the empty refill cylinder at the pump, remember to close the vale of the non refillable Calor bottle to make sure that the refill gas is not seeping into the part full Calor bottle. Which, of course, using the contents/flow/capacity gauge tells you not to fill beyond 80%. I trust that our members will think twice before not switching off the empty bottle valve.

Geoff Williamson

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Insurance

A cautionary tale! We recently received a renewal notice for our Peugeot Harmony from the AA with whom we insure both our vehicles. Last year's premium was £311.00 but this year they were asking for £516.00 - a sum which we considered to be grossly inflated and unacceptably high.

I phoned Willersey and was advised to contact *Baz Wellard* for advice. This I did and he came up with the name of his own insurers who specialize in motorcaravans offering cover specific to our vehicles. I was able to purchase the insurance over the phone from a very pleasant and helpful person who was horrified to hear how much the AA had tried to extract from us. The cost? An amazing £173.00! I asked her if they

had many claims to which the reply was very few, which is why they are able to keep premiums at this level.

If anyone would like more details, please e-mail me at jill@harrison480.freeseve.co.uk and I will be happy to help.

Jill Harrison

This goes back first to the principle of "Caveat Emptor" (Let the buyer beware) and the suggestions that it always pays to shop around. The figure quoted of £516.00 seems to me to be based on the cubic capacity of the engine rather than the type of vehicle. I fell into that trap many years ago when I had a 3.5litre engine in a Ford based van. My then insurers seemed to think that it was more of a racing car!

-----oooOOOooo-----

Air Ride Suspension

I had Air Ride suspension fitted to my Symphony at last year's Club & Company rally and I am more than satisfied with the outcome. A word of warning, however. You must inform your insurance company of the change otherwise you may find that your insurance becomes invalid.

Ron Pollard

A comment from our technical group says "It is recommended that members always check their insurance documentation before any change is made to ensure that insurance cover is not invalidated. If in doubt, a letter (or a phone call) to your insurance company or broker - recording what was stated, by whom and when - should give you the information required."

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From the Factory

In talking to our dealers, they appear to be busier than ever, reporting a marked increase in interest in sales of both new and pre-owned motorhomes. This is reflected here in the Service Centre where we are more than well occupied. We now have four conversion technicians, Paul, Darren, Mark and Tim - and Terry our automotive guru! Interestingly, we received 98 incoming telephone calls one day recently! Remember that these are largely questions or enquiries which themselves need a detailed response as well as, of course, many bookings.

The type of work we do is enormously varied, ranging from fitting a replacement side panel to an Autocruise, to fitting a forward

facing seat and lap and diagonal seatbelt assembly to a Peugeot Symphony. Indeed, each day is refreshingly different!

Next door, production is now in the ever-capable hands of Alan Williams. Already significant improvements have taken place ranging from quality - good news - to factory cleanliness and organisation. His skills and expertise are of enormous value to us; from our point of view in the Service Centre, we find him and his team extraordinarily helpful. It is almost "Yes is the answer, now what is the question?" Alan will, of course, be at the Club and Company Rally in July so you will all have the opportunity of meeting him then.

As you know, Pam Hadley, our main factory receptionist, left us after 21 years loyal service. She will always be remembered as the smiling face of Auto-Sleepers and as one who always looked after our customers with such care and kindness. Her popularity and respect is borne out by the fact that so many customers to the Service Centre went to see Pam simply to keep in touch. I know I speak on behalf of us all in stating that she will be sadly missed and we all wish her, and Bill in six month's time, a most happy retirement. Pam and Bill have promised to come to the Club and Company Rally, not least to meet and keep up with their many friends of old.

As you will have noted, this article is written by me as I had to do in days of old! I shall alternate with Carole Domenech of the Byron Group (our PR agency) so you will benefit from a greater insight of life at Willersey (me) as well as from an informative overview of Auto-Sleepers and the market in general (Carole).

With all good wishes to you all for a most happy Easter.

Charles Trevelyan

-----oooOOOooo-----

Little Budworth Rally

Ralliers were guided to their somewhat muddy pitches by well waterproofed *Bryn Morgan*, *Ven Venables* and *Roger Soensley* - well done lads! Anyway, we all survived the showers and eventually there were 32 vans on site.

We gathered for coffee in the Noggins Barn and caught up with news from folk we hadn't seen since last year. *Liz (Morgan)* ran through the extensive programme she had arranged for us and it appeared that this was going to be a grand weekend for walkers, art lovers and technocrats. And so it proved.

The walkers set off on Friday morning to explore the surrounding countryside, whilst some of those less athletic or adventurous souls caught the bus into Chester to explore the city.

In the evening we were treated to a very interesting slide show about the Anderton Boat Lift which was built in 1875 to join the River Weaver with the Trent and Mersey Canal. This ran past the river but was unfortunately 50' 4" higher. The lift had fallen into disrepair, was deemed to be unsafe and closed. Our speaker, Christine Thompson, together with her husband Ted and their M.P., Neil Hamilton, had been instrumental in raising funds for virtual rebuilding.

Saturday saw us boarding a coach for a visit to Port Sunlight. I thought we were going to a soap factory! But not a bit of it. The village was the brainchild of Lord Lever to house his workforce. After viewing the interesting artefacts in the Visitor Centre we had a tour of the village with all explained by a knowledgeable guide. The Lady Lever Art Gallery houses a magnificent collection of paintings, porcelain, silver etc.

In theory the rally closed on Sunday morning but many chose to visit the Boat Lift which we had heard so much about. We took a trip in a boat from the canal down to the river - not very far, but very interesting.

All in all a super rally. All thanks to *Liz, Bryn, Nora, Ven* and all their helpers.

Brian Smith

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Hidden Valley Rally

The New Year rally at Hidden Valley has been and gone but what a great time we had. Good food and music, good weather, lots and lots of belly laughs, tremendous company and with several members being on top form to help lead the fun. Our thanks go, especially, to *Angie and Andy Cavell* for their raffle organisation, *Maureen and Harry Emblem* for the quiz and to all who joined in to help.

The coming year end, for family reasons, *Mo and I* will not be able to attend. Therefore I and the Club need a volunteer to take over and organise this coming year end. I have started to make the arrangements and will keep it rolling until I can hand over. It sounds like a lot of hard work, not tremendous, but the rewards are wonderful. Details need to be pulled together by certain dates and these are laid down in a schedule, passed on to me. You just follow suit across the months and everything comes together. You do NOT have to be computer literate but it does help. However there are plenty of people willing to help out on such occasions.

Hopefully someone will fancy taking the reins. So please give me a call (evenings) on 012 9248 2818 or e-mail mike@aswfabrications.co.uk and let us talk about it.

Happy Rallying.

Mo & Mike Valentine

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Burton - Marston Brewery Rally

It is now a week since we returned from Burton - our first Club Rally! The first ten minutes dispelled any doubts we might have had about going on a rally. We were initially greeted in a very friendly manner by *Jan*, and then by almost everyone on the rally, (probably aided by the "First Rally" notice in the window). We found (as has been said before), that nothing was too much trouble. The tour of the brewery, the tasting, and the food were all superb. As was the bus trip around Burton.

Well *Trish* (dare I say *Tireless Trish?*), *Ted*, *Jan*, and *Vic* - you did it all again, and so successfully! Even the weather was good! So thank you for a really splendid weekend and also a thank you to all the other ralliers for making us so welcome.

Maureen and Alan Blackburn

-----oooOOOooo-----

Western Isles

Having had several wonderful holidays in our camper on the Western Isles, I hope the following thoughts may be of use to those members thinking of visiting them in the future.

Firstly, don't be too worried about finding 'camp sites'. On the Islands they are very few and far between and wild camping is virtually anywhere, keeping common courtesy and consideration in mind. Car parks, small piers (don't block access), or by the many spectacular beaches all provide excellent overnight stops.

Don't be worried about safety; crime rates are very low, virtually non-existent. We have always found the local people to be very helpful and friendly and never once have we felt insecure. Electric hook-ups are not necessary. Use your gas to cook, refills are readily available. You will not drain your leisure batteries using lighting; in summer in the Western Isles (May/June) it doesn't get dark until midnight and sometimes hardly at all. Late May and June are the best months to visit for weather. These are the sunniest months and July and August are a little

wetter. The Midge, notorious in quiet Scottish glens, do not prove to be much of a problem on the Islands. Even a slight sea breeze keeps them grounded, so camp by the shore and you will be very unlucky if you get bother.

We use public toilets to empty our toilet and fill our water; some even have showers (Lochboisdale) and we have never had any problems. Just think ahead and use the facilities when you are near them. Another option for showering, not using the camper, is to take a trip to the local swimming pool, e.g. The one next to the Community School on Benbecula. Not only can you have a shower but you can also have a swim. There is also a camp site at this complex. Unless you are very hardy I wouldn't advocate swimming in the sea, even with the Gulf Stream running by. I know! I tried it once!!

Don't expect Sainsburys and the like. Use local shops which boosts the local economy and you will find most things that you need. Again, plan a couple of days ahead as not all villages have a shop. Co-incidentally, the MMM magazine for April 2004 has two good articles about the Islands and the ferry services that serve them. It is worth getting hold of a copy as it provides web sites and addresses, tourist information etc. Also where to buy maps. Get a good map or you may miss a lot.

There is a caravan site in Stornaway but it is a town site and could be anywhere. The site on Benbecula is surrounding by buildings. We rough camped about a mile up the road behind the sand dunes. One site I can recommend is perhaps not a true site as such. It is a very long way away behind a wonderful beach at the road end just through the village of Valtos. There are toilets and water and other caravans which seem to live there, but no warden. Just marvellous vies across Loch Road, peace to watch birds, find wild orchids, go shell hunting on white sand beaches and, if you stay quiet, you twitchers may hear Corn Crakes. I haven't seen one yet.

It isn't all perfect; you can get wet days; you do get windy days. But the good days you will remember all your days. Sea so clear you can see the sand ripples 20 feet down. Sunsets of such indescribable beauty. Don't think any longer, just go! With any luck we'll see you there!

Sylvia and Robert Millar

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We went to the Western Isles in 2002, this year hopefully we'll go to Orkney and Shetland. If anyone would be interested, please telephone on 016 8456 8207 (There's an answering machine on!)

Ann & Ricky Smith

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In 2002 we island hopped from Ullapool to Lewis to Barra/Oban for the whole month of June. Caledonian MacBrayne run the ferries for most of the Scottish Islands – they will have a website. We bought a "Hopscotch" ticket which is valid for one month. You pay for length up to 5 metres and then 5-8 metres. If you are just over 5 metres and try to cheat they measure your van (we didn't because we already knew!)

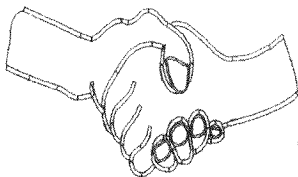
The length of time required on each island!!!? How long is a piece of string? It depends on the weather – we had glorious sunshine, some heavy rain and a howling gale – and your interests. We like walking and fishing and the month could have been extended but our ticket couldn't! If you have bad weather and are not energetic you will want to leave quickly – but if it is windy and you are not a good sailor, wait for it to calm down. In May you almost certainly will not have to book far ahead for your crossings.

Campsites – we did not stay on a campsite after leaving Ullapool. Campsites on the isles are few except for Skye and we met others who had stayed on a couple and were not impressed. The site at Ullapool is beautifully situated and in easy walking distance (along the shore footpath) to the harbour and centre and well placed for an early sailing and the CalMac offices.

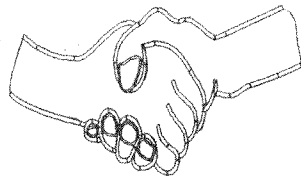
There is a campsite in Stornoway. We wild camped at the end of B.895 north of Stornoway, an excellent spot at the start of a footpath (boggy) to Port Nis. Shortly before it there is a short tarmac road to the right to toilets where you might also be able to stop? On the west coast along the B.8011 we found several places to camp and fish (most of the loch fishing is free and we caught lots of trout). There is also a campsite off this road between Cnip and Riof which looked well located. On Harris (north) there are lovely sands at the end of the B.887 but no camping. We found a place just beyond Miabhaig to overnight.

On Scalpay there is now a causeway. We found one small place to camp near the road end (our van is small). There is an excellent toilet and shower block at the old jetty and possible to overnight there as well.

On south of Tarbert on the minor road to Losgainir (beyond which at the end is a good beach) you can pay £1.50 to camp on the machair payable to a local crofter, but better still if you continue on the A.859 before Sellebost there is wonderful parking with sea views to Taransay (sometimes boat trips to the island from the beach) with public toilets and everyone camps here free. The minor road up the east of Harris is VERY narrow. We camped in a small picnic area on the RHS beyond Roghal.



MAY 2004
Rally Supplement



Applications for all rallies, unless otherwise stated in this supplement, are to be made using a rally slip by post.

If you intend to take a car/trailer or tent to a rally inform the marshal.

30th.Dec. -2nd.Jan. Hidden Valley, New Year Rally. MARSHALS REQUIRED
If we do not find a volunteer marshal for this rally it will not take place.

6th. (Sunday) – 13th. (Sunday) June 2004. Delfse Hout Caravan Site, Delft, Holland.
Rally starts at 12 noon Sunday June 6th. & closes Sunday June 13th. 12 noon.
Rally marshals: Tricia & Ted Pratt & Jan & Vic Hicklin.
THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL.

17th. June – 1st. July (14 nights) Le Bohat, Sarzeau, South Brittany, France.

Rally Marshals: Dorothy & Baz Wellard, Jill & James Bertlin & Brian Thomas.

Site fees (based on 2 people) 15.20 euros, Electricity 2.80 euros (approx. £11 + £2 standard rate per night respectively, subject to exchange rate) payable direct to site management. Bookings only accepted for the **full 14 nights.**

Rally Fee: £15 non-refundable unless unsuccessful. Please do NOT arrange to arrive before 10.00 on the 17th, to give us, and site management, time to prepare. If you wish to stay on after the rally please advise us.

Camping Le Bohat is a 3 star site where a rally was successfully held for 33 units in 2003 (details available on Club website). It has full facilities plus a swimming pool and is only 1.5 miles from Sarzeau village and 14 miles from Vannes.

The journey distances are 225 miles from Cherbourg, 400 miles from Calais & 120 miles from St. Malo.

If this is your first drive on the Continent and you require advice please let us know. Fuller details to those applying in due course.

Application on rally slip only – NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE - with a SAE & a cheque for £15 payable to :- Mrs.D.Wellard, 18 Greenwood Close, Fareham, Hants. PO16 7UF

LIMIT 33 VANS.

30th.April – 3rd.May. A.G.M., Newark Showground, Notts.

The application forms for this rally were with the February Newsletter. Please note that the closing date was 27th. March.

3rd - 7th May (4 nights) Walk the Wolds, Well Alford, Lincs.

Emergency Tel.No. 07768164522. Marshal's mobile.

Rally Marshals: Janet Sutterby & Eileen Kellard.

THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL.

6th - 10th May (4 nights) Little Cotton Farm, Dartmouth, Devon.

Emergency Tel.No. 01803 833675. Site owner's no. also to ring to arrange extra nights. Paul & Dot White.

Rally Marshals: Pam & Terry Holtom assisted by Jenny & Geoff Raistrick.

THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL.

*******NB. This rally is now starting on Thursday 6th May.**

6th - 9th May (3 nights) Burn Gliding Club, Nr. Selby, North Yorks.

Club Tel.No.01757 270 296 (Emergencies only).

Rally Marshal: Alan Guest.

Site Fee: £4.70 per night. (incl. VAT) **No Electricity.** Rally Fee: £2.35 (incl. VAT).

Booking slips to Alan Guest, 27 Chiltern Drive, Ackworth, Pontefract, West Yorks.

WF7 7DW. Tel.No. 01977 612 773. (after 6.30pm.) Cheques payable to A.Guest.

Attractions: Gliding trial flights/ lessons over weekend (subject to weather).

Directions: From M62 junct.34 take A19 towards Selby, Gliding Club signposted in Burn Village.

*******NEW**

13th - 16th May Southern Motorcaravan Show, Newbury Showground, Berkshire.

Emergency Tel.No.07743 307533. Marshal's mobile.

Rally Marshals: Daphne & John Hallett.

Special Club prices. Arrive Thursday £26, arrive Friday £24 & arrive Saturday £20.

Rally Fee: £1.75 Couples, £1.20 singles. (Both include VAT).

Send rally fees with rally slip & SAE for a Show application form by 16th April to:-

Mr. & Mrs. J.Hallett, 13 Linden Crescent, Grove Wantage, Oxfordshire. OX12 7NB

Tel.No. 01235 764 550. Rally fee cheques payable to C.J.Hallett.

Return application forms to the organisers, Warners, by the closing date 23rd April.

The rally ends Sunday 12 noon but you may remain on site until noon Monday.

20th - 25th May (5 nights) Ambleside Rugby Club, Ambleside, Cumbria.

Emergency Tel.No. 0775 3609463 (Marshal's mobile).

Rally Marshals: Sue & Peter Coward, Silvergarth, Low Riddings, Grasmere. LA22 9QY Tel.No. 015394 35828. & Pam & Bill Todd.

Site Fee: £5.25 per night. **NO Electricity.** Rally Fee: £4.00 Couples, £2.25 singles (includes VAT).

GREENFIELD SITE with fresh water point & elsan emptying point.

Dogs welcome but please keep on leads at all times and exercise off site.

We will have exclusive use of the club's facilities – toilets during the day & also the clubhouse when required in the evening. Possible rally supper one night (approx. £4.00 each, pay at rally). Indicate on rally slip if interested. **A BRING YOUR OWN meal on Monday evening.**

*****Rally slips & cheques payable to W.H. Todd, 1 Milcote Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands. B73 6QJ. Tel. 0121 354 9407.** Enclose a SAE for confirmation & directions.

Attractions: Ideal base for exploring Lakeland at a beautiful time of the year or merely relaxing in pleasant surroundings. Numerous walks & places of interest within easy reach. Opportunity of guided fell walk. Ambleside centre 5mins walk. Steamer pier. Lake Windermere 10 mins.

RALLY STARTS 12 NOON (Thursday) LIMIT 30 Vans.

THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL.

26th – 31st. May (5 nights) Strathallen Games Park, Bridge of Allen, Nr. Stirling, Scotland.

Emergency Tel. No. 07760103335

Rally Marshals: Joy & Donald Stott.

Site Fees: £2.50 per night. NO Electricity. Rally Fee: £2.35. (incl. VAT).

A flat field with water & elsan disposal.

It is a pleasant walk, 20 mins., into village centre. Bus service to Stirling & Edinburgh near to site. This is a central location for touring this part of Scotland.

Booking slips & cheques payable to: Mr. Donald Stott, 159 Middleton St., Alexandria, Dumbartonshire G83 0DH. Tel. No. 01389 757358.

Directions: From M9, North until end of motorway Junction 11, at roundabout take 4th. exit sp. Bridge of Allen, continue through village until you reach small park/gardens on the right. Turn **right** immediately after the park then first **left**. The rally field gates are directly in front of you.

From A9, South to roundabout at beginning of M9 (**DO NOT go on motorway**). Take the 2nd. Exit sp. Bridge of Allen then as above.

From Fife, Old A9 until 30mph restriction as you enter Bridge of Allen, turn **left** approx 100 yds then **left** again and as above gates are ahead of you.

28th. May – 1st. June. (4 nights); Stokes Bay, Gosport, Hants.

Emergency Tel. No. 07879 473434. Marshal's mobile.

Rally Marshals: Dorothy & Baz Wellard assisted by Eirwen & Ben Cox.

Site Fee: £5.80 per night. NO Electricity. Rally Fee: £2.50 (includes VAT).

Booking slips to: Mr. & Mrs. B. Wellard, 18 Greenwood Close, Fareham, Hants. PO16 7UF.

Tel. No. 01329 231259. Cheques payable to: Mrs. D. Wellard.

Attractions: Gosport seaside common (green field site) with views across the Solent to the Isle of Wight. A do-as-you-wish rally, local to Naval ships, submarines, sail boats, nature reserve, shopping outlet, sea fishing and walks along the sea front (bistro & café).

The village of Alverstoke is 500 yds. away with small shops &

2 taverns. Only 2 miles away is Gosport, easily reached by bike, bus or van, no height barriers but Saturday's street market may make car parks busy. City of Portsmouth, HMS Victory, Mary

Rose, steam/sail ship HMS Warrior, Naval museum complex, and the modern shopping outlet are easily accessed by regular ferry from Gosport.
Possibility of fish & chip supper on Saturday.

Directions: Leave M27 at junction 11 SP. Fareham Central A27 & Gosport A32. Follow signs towards Gosport A32: then follow signs to Lee-on-Solent sea front. Go left (East) along sea front for 1.5 miles, turning **right** directly after army camp on RHS, into Browndown Road. At next roundabout take **2nd**. exit and continue along coast road. At next roundabout take **3rd**. exit. Site gate on **right** in 20yds.

4th - 6th June (2 nights) Blue Lias, Nr. Coventry, Warks.

Emergency Tel.No. 07799660641. Marshals' mobile.

Rally Marshals: Sandra & Bernie Wisely.

Site Fees: £5.00 per night (Incl. VAT).. NO ELECTRICITY. Rally Fee: £2.35 (Incl VAT)
GREENFIELD SITE. Pub toilets during opening hours.

Cheques & rally slips to Sandra Wisely, 2 Mount Pleasant, Bishops Itchington, Southam, Warwickshire. CV47 2QE. Tel.No. 01926 614 194

Fishing available on site - a permit can be purchased on site @£5.00 per person. Canal walks from Blue Lias.

Meal available on Saturday night £5.95 per head, sweets extra, payable to site.

Choose from: Steak & Ale Pie, Plaice or Vegetable Lasagne. Choice of boiled/ chipped potatoes & peas - please state your meal preference on rally slip.

Directions: From the Southam By-pass take the A426 signed Rugby. In just over 1 mile at the first cross road turn left (un-classified road 17tgw) Blue Lias is on the **left** in about ½ mile. From Rugby take the A426, go through Dunchurch towards Southam. After approx. 4 ½ miles pass the Boat Inn Public House on the right. At just under 1 mile at the next crossroads turn **right** (un-classified road 17 tgw). Blue Lias is on the **left** in about ½ mile.

Maximum of 20 vans.

17th - 21st June (4 nights) Springbok Estate, Alfold, Surrey.

Site Tel.No. 01403 752 555 (Emergencies only).

Rally Marshals: Sylvia & Norman Brice.

Site Fee: £ 4.50 per night. NO Electricity. Rally Fee: £2.50 (couples), £1.75 (singles) .Incl. VAT.
GREENFIELD SITE . Toilet emptying & water points. Toilets.

Rally slips & cheques payable to Mrs. S. Brice, 35 Halfpenny Close, Chilworth, Guildford, Surrey. GU4 8NH . Tel.No. 01483 562 986.

Attractions: Large country house (home to merchant seamen) with social club. Close to Alfold village, 20 mins. walk for papers, bread etc. Lots of gentle walks around in the grounds of Springbok. Fishing lake, bring your licence. Within easy reach of Cranleigh, Guildford, Godalming, Horsham & South Coast.

Skittles & buffet evening to be arranged. Please indicate on rally slip if interested.

Dogs welcome on leads at all times.

Directions: Take A281 Guildford to Horsham road, at Alfold crossways turn off s.p. Alfold. Immediately turn **right** (caravan sign) s.p. Dunsfold. Site approx. 1 ½ miles.

2nd - 6th July (4 nights). Stanford Caravan Park, Nr. Lutterworth, Leicestershire.

Emergency Tel.No. 017888 60250.

Rally Marshals: Nora & Ven Venables, 15 Langley Gardens, Merry Hill, Wolverhampton. WV3 7JN. Tel.No. 01902 332 105, Mobile 07703639109 & Elizabeth & Bryn Morgan.

Site Fee: £6.50 per night incl electricity. Rally Fee: £2.00 per person.

This is a GREENFIELD site, own toilet essential. There is a dog walk on the Estate but dogs must be kept on a lead on site.

*****Rally slips & cheques (with SAE for directions) payable to Mrs. E. Morgan, 44 Mersey Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport. SK4 3DJ. Tel.No. 0161432 4869.**

Attractions: Stanford Hall & grounds, motorcycle museum, tea rooms are approx. ½ mile from site. Velocette Owners' Club rally in grounds. Free fishing in the River Avon.

A coach trip, approx. £7, may be arranged. Also a light meal, £4.50, on Saturday evening in the upstairs tea room. Please state if interested on rally slip

DO NOT SEND MONEY for meals/coach trip.

2nd - 5th July (3 nights) Prestwood Steam Fair, Great Missenden, Bucks.

Rally Marshals: Ann & Norman Ailward & Margaret & Bob Cleaver.

Fee for the weekend £15.00 plus Rally Fee of £1.20 per unit (incl. VAT).

Fee includes unlimited entrance to the Steam Rally. This is a GREEN FIELD site and own toilets are essential.

Rally slips & cheques to Mrs. C.A. Ailward, 77b Park View, Moulton, Northampton. NN3 7UZ. Tel.No. 01604 790 095

Directions: From A413 Great Missenden take A4128 to Prestwood and follow Steam Rally signs. *No arrivals before 1.00p.m. Friday.*

9th - 11th July (2 nights) Club & Company, Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcs.

The application forms are enclosed with this Newsletter.

Please note the closing date.

15th - 18th July (3 nights). Abbeygate College, Saighton, Nr. Chester.

Emergency Tel.No. 01244 332 077.

Rally Marshals: Duncan & Jean Ellis.

Site Fees: £6.00 per night. NO electricity. Rally Fee: £3.00 couples/singles £1.50 (incl VAT). Booking slips & cheques to: Mr. & Mrs. D. Ellis, 6 Tudor Close, Shotton, Deeside, Flint. CH15 1NY. Tel.No. 01244 812 761. Cheques payable to D. Ellis.

Saturday evening buffet & dessert £6.00 per person. **Pay caterers on night.**

Directions: From North M6, M56, M53 take A41 s.p. Whitchurch. In approx 2 ½ miles after entering Waverton **turn right** for Saighton. Beware humpback bridge, carry on through village, then left hand bends, down hill - college gates on **left**. From South.

A41 Whitchurch to Chester. After entering Waverton **turn left** at Black Dog.

At T junction **left** over bridge then as above. **LIMIT OF 35 Vans.**

16th - 18th July Midsummer Music & Leisure Show, Lincoln.

NO MARSHAL so the Club will not rally at the Show.

22nd - 25th July (3 nights). Beacon Park, Lichfield, Staffs

Emergency Tel.No. 07713186508 Marshals' mobile

Rally Marshals: Tricia & Ted Pratt & Jan & Vic Hicklin.

Site Fee:£4.50 per night. NO ELECTRICITY. Rally Fee:£2.35 (Both include VAT).

Booking slips & cheques payable to P.M.Pratt,3 Grafton Road, Stapenhill,Burton on Trent,Staffs.DE15 9DN.Tel.No. 01283 538 818.

You may arrive on Thursday p.m. This is virtually a green field site although toilets & disabled toilets are available in Beacon Park.

Saturday Evening Get - Together includes Jacket Potato,Dessert & Drink. -£4.5 0 per head

pay with booking slip.

Attractions: Park is adjacent to Lichfield City Centre & Cathedral.

Small golf course,pitch & putt,tennis & bowls.

Directions: Beacon Park is situated in Lichfield just off the A51 Tamworth to Rugeley Road.,Go round the island with the Bowling Green Pub in the middle,take the A51 Rugeley/Stafford Road,turn immediately **right** down Walsall Road,then **left** into Lower Sandford Street.Follow signs for Car Park Beacon Park,through the car park keeping to the **right**.

*If you wish to run a rally in 2004 please contact me to check dates **before** booking with a site.A "Guide to New/Possible Marshals" is available. If you would like one please contact me,details below.*

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 & 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.***

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 & OE

Ferry Leverburgh to North Uist, then on new causeway to Berneray (of Prince Charles fame) where we turned left at Borgh to parking area on machair. Coastal walks here. In the village down (right) to the old ferry terminal there are excellent toilets and showers. Carry on north to the end of the road and camp amongst the dunes – obviously choose hard sand!

Back to North Uist, there is a Co-op at Solas!!! We turned right at Griminis and camped LHS beside loch. At the RSPB place before Baile Raghnaill you will probably hear the corncrake. South of Clachan na Luib we turned west through Samhla continued seawards and camped on a long spit of land. Then on to the Standing Stones at Callanish (a must see) to Benbecula. At Lionacleit there is a large school/community centre with indoor pool!!! There is a campsite next to this. We spent the day parked to the lee of the community building as the van was rocking and dustbins took to the air in a gale. We used the library and the pool and when we left we camped in the lee of a rock – cannot remember where!

On to South Uist and once over the causeway we turned west on minor road where camping possible at the end with good views and an ancient burial ground. Continuing south A.865 it is possible to camp beside Loch Bi or turn on to B.890 and camp at the end of the road. The next minor road west beyond Tobha Mhor, through Sniseabhal we camped near the sea – this road continues and rejoins the main road. At the A.865/B.888 junction there is a shop. Continue to the end of the B.888 and then east to Ludag you can overnight at the jetty beside toilets. There is now a causeway to Eriskay and it is possible to camp outside Am Baile – on my map there is a golf course? We took the CalMac ferry Lochboisdale to Castlebay but there is now a cheaper(?) ferry going to the north of Barra to Ludag or Port a Charra. Not sure which.

Barra – excellent camping near the airport where it is entertaining watching the planes, but we preferred to go further north and camped at the old jetty in Eolaigearraidh. There are toilets here. We thought the only other suitable camping was in the south on Vatersay – there is parking at the dunes. We spent the last night parked outside (north) of Castlebay in suitable parking looking down towards the town. *[MACHAIR* = coastal land made up of many crushed seashells and sand/soil grazed and worked by crofters, short grass and tiny flowers.]

Jean & Ken Fowler

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The Coxes

I was sorry to read that *Barbara & John Cox* (Members No. 1) are not very mobile at present and may miss the A.G.M. I don't think they have missed one since the Club started all those years ago. *John*, it will be remembered, started the ball rolling to set up the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club and *Barbara* was a very active partner. The only reason that her name is not included as one of the original founder members is that she was working at the time when it was starting and couldn't accompany *John* on the many trips to Willersey and the many discussions which took place there to get this lot going.

I do hope that they manage to get to Newark. Things would not be the same without them. And I am sure that everyone will join me in wishing them well.

Rita Daley

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Technical Group

In 'Chairman's Chat' last month *Harry* mentioned that *Neil Rogers* (our Rally co-ordinator) had prepared a guide for prospective 'new marshals'. *Neil* has kindly now made this guide readily available on the Club's website - www.asoc.fsnet.co.uk "new ralliers" page. If you don't have access to a computer then you can go to your local library. Why not give marshalling a try? It is enjoyable, interesting and rewarding.

One further 'Ideas Sheet' is now available: - No.72 - Extra Security for Sliding Windows.

*Baz Wellard**

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More Electrics

Looking back through the Newsletters over several years, there appears in them a lot of sound advice from members regarding electrical safety on site and at home. What is not usually mentioned are the exceptions to the general rule which can catch anyone out, so based on personal experience watch out for the following pitfalls.

1. Depending on the tyres fitted on your van, the "rubber" they are made of contains carbon which is a conductor of electricity. This information is from *John Scott* in September 1998. Because the tyres now make an alternative path to earth, the usual neon tester will show "Earth OK" when it isn't. The answer here is to make a short test lead using a blue male plug as used to connect to the site supply linked to a UK 13

amp socket . The plug goes into your hook-up lead and the neon tester fits the 13 amp socket. For more information see *John Parker's* letter of November 1998.

2. UK electrical appliances often have a single pole on/off switch. (For the record, so do electrical appliances in France, Germany, Holland.....) By making sure, (which you should do) that the brown coloured wire connects to the live pole the switch will disconnect most of the appliance from the mains. Well not necessarily! For quite some time now some electronic equipment (such as VCR's, satellite receivers, mains/battery radios, cassette recorders) is supplied with a detachable mains lead with a small figure-of-eight connector which plugs into the back of the equipment. This connector is not marked to distinguish between live and neutral and it is reversible, so there is no certainty which pole is disconnected if a single pole switch is fitted. Also members should be aware that in some cases, the on/off switch is not fitted in EITHER mains connector, so that the equipment is "live" all the time it is plugged into the mains and incidentally will be consuming a small amount of current! These "unusual" configurations will not, in themselves, prevent such equipment obtaining a safety certificate from the British Electrical Approvals Board (BEAB) or the European equivalent, whose tests are very comprehensive. Remember to regard the on/off switch for what it is, a convenience not a safety device and don't delve inside any electrical gear unless it is unplugged. And in the case of a TV set not even then!

Albert Brown.

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Tour de France

And so to France for the greatest free annual sporting event in the world - the Tour de France. The arrival of the Tour at the top of Le Alpe D'Huez, its spiritual home in the alps, had determined the timing of the two previous trips leaving only a couple of weeks 'recovery' time in between. I couldn't leave work before the end of March as this is the critical preparation time in the retail trade for Christmas! It also meant that I'd return to work with the seasonal range on the shelf in store - done and dusted.

Fresh from our success in driving on the 'wrong' side of the roads of Norway we headed off across the channel, albeit a little more apprehensive having heard much about the standards of driving 'over there'. We cheated by using the autoroutes, continuing to avoid major towns and cities, getting lost in Auckland was still a raw memory, as

there were many miles to cover to the French Alps. This was the first week of July and by the time we reached Macon the south of France was already in the grip of a heatwave. The Noisekiller engine blanket became redundant in an effort to keep the engine temperature down. Later we drove with the bonnet on half latch because of the extreme heat.

Our camp site was at the base of Le Alpe D'Huez, just outside Bourg D'Osains and the temperature hit the high 90's. It has always been our wish to avoid excessively hot locations but the lure of the Tour in its 100th year meant some bullet biting. We arrived on the Thursday with the Tour's arrival due on the Sunday and it was apparent that things were getting very busy already. Our original plan was to drive up Le Alpe on Saturday lunchtime with the intention of getting a roadside viewing point. After fuelling up on food and water we headed out on a recce on Friday midday to find absolutely no space at the roadside and only a few spaces in the summit town where motorhomes were parked on every single flat spot. We were baulked on the ascent and the temperature gauge shot up, requiring a pause and the heating on full blast. Scary moment number 3. The engine had gone from stone cold to red hot in five miles!!

On the way up there were vans parked where you would think it was impossible. The apex of hairpin bends was a popular choice and they had been there for some time. A mountain goat would have turned up its nose at some of the unbelievably precarious parking, with a 6,000 foot drop into the bargain. Needless to say we slotted into a space in a car park there and then and sat tight. I estimate that there were 3,000 - 4,000 vans in an area the size of Bracknell town centre!

Despite the heat the views of the surrounding mountains were 'magnifique'. The final official figures for spectators was 600,000 on a mountain with one approach road 10 miles long encompassing 22 hairpin bends. One bend is traditionally manned by Italians, another by the Dutch in their bright orange garb. The whole atmosphere was extremely good natured and we made friends with a French couple next to us even though they spoke no English and we very little French. The night before the Tour arrived was one very loud party as more campers (in tents) arrived to take up station on the grass verges and the roundabouts themselves.

I'd waited for 40 years to see the Tour on French soil and to be on Alpe D'Huez itself is a dream realised, but it could only comfortably be achieved with a motorhome. The best bit about this location is the fact that the climb is so steep that it takes some 40-50 minutes for the first and last rides to pass, whereas on a flat road it is all over in 30

seconds although there is a huge publicity caravan preceding the event which can take over an hour to pass. Having survived the excitement it was time to try and get back to base camp. The ability to empty waste and toilet tanks was very limited so the descent that night was essential.

The Gendarmerie had other ideas, saying that we could not go down until 10.00 pm as they had to get the 4,000 Tour support vehicles down first. But we were eventually released at about 8.30 pm. We arrived back at base camp at half past midnight, something of a record for a 10 mile descent! One road up means one road down; 600,000 spectators; you get the picture, I'm sure. The smell of burning brakes will endure; not ours this time as we had learnt the lesson in Norway.

We headed home out through Italy, up through Switzerland, into Luxembourg and eventually back to the ferry. I'd like to wax lyrical about the places we drove through but the heat was completely unbearable and the memory overshadowed by the need to survive. We recorded 38 degrees in the back of the van on an Italian motorway with the cab windows down, 60 mph and the fans on full blast. A most unpleasant experience. We could only view the Gran Paradiso national park from an air conditioned hotel room in Aosta - it was that bad. We've made a note of a couple of camp sites where you are not packed in like sardines and hope to re-visit another day.

There was one final scary moment when cruising up through France on our way to the ferry when two men tried to flag us down, supposedly broken down at the side of the road. They might have been genuine but having seen another car stop and then drive away sharpish we decided that a clean pair of heels was the safest bet.

The Tour is due to visit Le Alpe D'Huez in 2004 and this time it will be an individual time trial stage which will take several hours for all the riders to reach the top. They will leave the base of the mountain singly at one minute intervals. It will be the best opportunity to see the riders at close quarters and it will probably be the race's defining day, but the area will be chaotic for around a week either side of the July 22nd stage date. Anyone thinking about going will need to be in camp by the previous Sunday and not even try to leave until Saturday 24th. If attempting to view the race from the summit, be prepared to park up from Monday/Tuesday onwards. Cycling Weekly gives full details of the race route and dates and, nearer the time, will also give timing schedules. There is also a web site for the Tour de France.

We used the Caravan Club for this particular trip and the cost was just under £500.00 for 3 weeks including the ferry and site fees.

The hotel in Aosta added a bit more as did fuel and toll roads. So good value for the money.

In summing up our three trips, they have been a fantastic experience, not likely to be repeated all in one year and they have given us the basis for ideas in the future. South Island in New Zealand and Norway would definitely be on a return trip list as would northern Europe. No place to place touring but settling in one area for at least a week to explore more fully. No more than 100 miles in a day as that is too much. As for visiting the Tour in France - been there; done that; will look forward to its possible arrival in London in 2007.

Patricia and Terry Hammond

This is the last part of what has been a most interesting trilogy of adventures with a motorhome. Sorry that it has taken this long to get this episode in place.

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CUSHION SETS

Below is a list of cushion sets that are surplus to production requirements. They are available at a significantly reduced cost, on a first come first served basis, and may be attractive to Club members who might wish to have their interior cushions refurnished or replaced.

Please be aware that cab seats are NOT included - these are not available. Furthermore, if members wish to change their upholstery to a different type, they should be aware that a significant amount of work is required with regards to re-trimming of pelmets, end panels and numerous other small but significant items.

<u>Model</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Available</u>
Executive	Caracus	1 set
	Fresea	4 sets
	Opus Gold	1 set
	Rainbow	1 set
Talisman	Fresea	1 set
	Nimea	1 set
	Opus Gold	1 set
Topaz	Fresea	2 sets
	Milano Gold	1 set
	Sandria	3½ sets
Gatcombe/Clubman Anniversary	Murray Red	4 sets
	Rainbow	1 set
	Surat	1 set

Duetto	Artimas	2 sets
Symbol	Renaulds	1 set
	Aura Blue	2 sets
	Fellini Grey	1 set
	Fresea	2 sets
Ravenna	Milano Gold	1 set
	Opus Gold	2 sets
	Vanity	1 set
Palermo	Amanda	1 set
	Milano Gold	1 set
Pollensa	Sandria	1 set
	Artimas	1 set
Amethyst	Nimea	1 set
Amethyst DL	Aura Blue	2 sets
Rienza	Fresea	1 set
	Sandria	1 set
Nuevo ES	Nimea	1 set

Do ring us at the Service Centre, 013 8685 3511, if you have any queries. We are anxious not to split the sets; those unsold will be offered to our dealers.

Charles Trevelyan

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Chairman's Chat



This will be the last Chat before the AGM. I shall look forward to seeing many of you at Newark again this year. This is normally a very pleasant weekend, subject to weather conditions of course although they don't usually have very much effect upon members.

Please remember that if you want to park close to your friends you should arrange to arrive at the show ground together. Places must not be reserved beside you for later arrivals. Obviously, some places will be restricted, especially for committee members and those who have often been referred to as "Privileged Parkers" - meaning that they may not be quite so able bodied as the rest of us.

It is a strict rule of the show ground that all dogs must be kept on a lead at all times. I know that last year there was some sort of a dog show further over in the field where some were not being properly

controlled, but let us make sure that our Club keeps to the rules of the show ground as well as our own. Also please ensure that the water points are only used for drawing fresh water - not for rinsing out loos etc. There will be proper waste water and toilet points available.

Now I suppose that I shall have to start writing my speech - "Unaccustomed as I am etc. etc ..." You know the jargon! But please rest assured that I shall keep it as short as I possibly can. Meanwhile, please read the Committee Reports which will tell you what has been happening for the past year. See you at Newark!

Harry Henthorne

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For Sale

Thompson portable colour TV, 12v/240v. In as new condition complete with padded carrier bag. Cost £240.00 new, £115.00 ono. Also Fiamma F45 awning, 2.4m (8') long suitable to fit most small motor homes like Trident or Duetto etc. £120.00 ono. Phone Philip Gledhill on 014 8465 4780 or 07 831 456 689 (Huddersfield, West Yorkshire).

Thanks for the donation.



#####

Solar screen for Ford (Smiley). Immaculate condition. £25.00. A-S Ford cab carpet. £5.00. Tel: Ivor Barnet on 015 8489 0428 (Ludlow, Shropshire).

#####

Trooper, 'Y' reg, November 2002. 18 months old. 8,800 miles, excellent condition. Eberspacher heating system, cycle rack, cables, gas bottles etc. Sale due to bereavement. Cost £27,600.00 new, accept £19,000.00 ono. Phone Bill Stead on 019 0462 2480 or 07 742 091 684 (York).

Thanks for the donation.

#####

A-S Symbol, 2+2, petrol. January 2002. 14,000 miles. All the usual A-S refinements plus Van Bitz alarm, isolator and Battery Master. Fiamma wind out awning. Solar panel. Carefully used and maintained. Non-smokers, no pets. £22,500.00. Tel: Peter Durrant on 015 0853 6889 (Long Stratton, Norfolk).

Thanks for the donation.

#####



Symbol. 1,9 turbo-diesel, 2001. 18,000 miles. Full A-S spec + Van Bitz alarm, Battery Master, Heiki roof light and safe. Green herringbone upholstery. One owner, non smokers, no pets. Full service history. 12 month's MOT, A-S habitation service February 2004. Immaculate condition. £21,995.00. Tel Maggie & Malcolm Imhoff on 0121 382 4806, mobile 07 833 644 543 or e-mail malcolm@emandem.co.uk (West Midlands)

#####

Peugeot Ravenna 1.9TD (1999/T); 11,000 miles. MOT & SMMT to June 2004. 1 owner, non smokers, no pets or children. Near mint condition. Fully equipped ready for immediate use with many extra fittings including cruise control, Fanmaster, 3.5m awning, Status aerial, exterior access locker, twin gas with Gaslo easy switch-over and Spareline for easy check on spare tyre. Cost new over £33,500.00. Equipped ready for immediate use with pots, pans, cutlery, original china and glassware etc. Bargain at £21,500.00 (negotiable). Also new 3.5m safari room with Softex groundsheet, Silver Screen, collapsible tripod bases and shorter posts for freestanding use of both tables, Fiamma blocks etc. Cost new over £800.00. Will sell individual items or accept £300.00 for the lot. Or take everything for £21,600.00 (negotiable). Packing it in due to age and disability. Contact Ken Milward at f.milward@which.net or telephone 013 0578 2082 (Weymouth).

Thanks for the donation.

#####

Peugeot Talbot Harmony, 1991, 2 litre petrol, 4 berths. 51,000 miles. Taxed and MOT to February 2005. One owner. Complete with all equipment plus Harrison awning. Phone Dot & Bryce Hamilton on 016 2178 5266 (Maldon, Essex).

Thanks for the donation.

#####

Executive 2.5TD 'X' reg, 2001. 27,500 miles. Usual facilities plus awning, cycle rack, extractor fan. £23,900.00 ono. Contact Roy Arnold at roy.arnold@nitworld.com or telephone 014 7231 3645 (Grimsby).

#####

Ventura Freestander (high) drive away awning suitable for coachbuilt motorhome. As new condition. Contact Steve Earnshaw on 07 971 171 970 (South Yorkshire).

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