

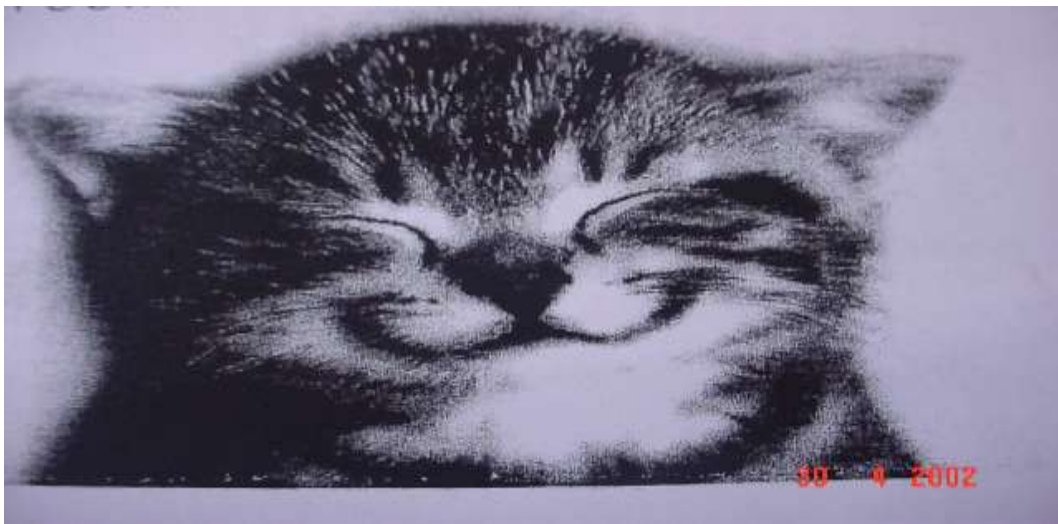


The Autocruisers

Newsletter No.21
July 2002

SMILING is infectious; You catch it like the flu
When someone SMILED at me today, I started SMILING too
I passed around the corner and someone saw my grin
When he SMILED, I realised I'd passed it on to him.
I thought about that smile, then realised its worth
A single SMILE just like mine could travel 'round the earth.
So if you feel a SMILE begin, don't leave it undetected

LET'S START AN EPIDEMIC QUICK AND GET THE WORLD INFECTED



The Rules of the House

If you sleep on it make it up
If you wear it hang it up
If you drop it pick it up
If you eat out of it wash it
If you open it close it
If you turn it on turn it off
If you empty it fill it up
If it howls feed it
If it cries love it!

Rally News

Would all members please note that we do not require a deposit to be sent with the booking form. All site fees are payable in cash to the rally host unless otherwise notified.

*Billing Aquadrome
1-4 August*

For all attending this rally. Please show your membership card at the entrance. Do not pay any money at this time. Your site fees are payable to Tom & Margaret Smallwood, the rally hosts, as soon as possible after your arrival. Registration Number H338 CRY. Will you please bring something to put on the communal barbecue to be held on Saturday night as well as something for the Faith Supper and Punch Bowl on Friday night.

*Basingstoke Canal Centre
4-7 July*

There will be a meal served on Saturday night. This meal will be a curry. If anyone attending the rally does not eat curry please contact Sheila Lennie and alternatives will be arranged.

*5th Annual General Meeting
The Haven Arms, Hedon
12-15 September*

At the end of the newsletter you will find a membership renewal form. Please send this to Sheila Lennie with your cheque for renewal for £10 dated 1st September 2002 made payable to The Autocruisers.

We shall have a barbecue on Friday night with our punch bowl. For those of you that did not attend this rally last year I can tell you that we had never seen a barbecue like it. In fact we had to tell them to stop cooking, as we couldn't eat another thing.

I am happy to announce that after the meal on Saturday night Stephanie Lawrence has agreed to come and entertain us again this year.

*The Old Brick Kilns, Fakenham
10-13 October*

Please send your booking forms to Bernie King for this rally. We have a room booked for Friday night punch bowl and we will be having a meal on Saturday night.

Rally News

Newton Mill, Bath

7-10 November

Please send your booking form for this rally to Peter Lockwood. We have a room booked for Thursday and Friday evenings and will be having a meal on Saturday night.



Bainland Caravan Park

Woodhall Spa

November 28th - December 1st



I would like to thank all of you that have sent in your booking forms for this rally. I have printed below all the confirmed bookings. If your name does not appear and you want to attend our Christmas rally please contact Sheila Lennie. Closing date for booking is 10 October 2002.

Peter & Janet Lockwood
Lance & Sheila Lennie
David & Rita Martin
Peter & Gayna Hughes
Tom & Barbara Robinson
Reg & Pat White
Ron & Joyce Bull
Steve & Caroline Joyce
Derek & Dot Ludlum
John & Carol Jenkinson
Bill & Vera Blundell
John & Anne Purser
Alec & Sylvia Blackburn
Len & Joyce Foster

Tom & Margaret Smallwood
Geoff Lawrence & Pat Small
Bernie King
Ken & Audrey Stokes
Colin & Sue Granville
John & Sheila Affleck
Sue and Donald Roe
Alan & Christine Horton
Jim & Rosie Keen
John & June Boulby
Brian & Grace Hall
John & Jenny Furlong
Michael & Linda Bennett

Slap 'Ed Nomination

We went to Bishopthorpe near York and stayed at the Riverside site. By the way, you have guessed the river. On the first evening we went for a walk around, on the way back to the site we came to a Spar shop that was still open. I said that we needed some more eggs, went in and bought some and then went back to the site. Next day, after a cooked breakfast, we needed some more bacon. I said "Let's go back to the Spar shop and although I thought it looked different; I stood looking around as one often does when the man behind the counter asked if he could help me. I asked him where I would find the bacon. His reply was '**Madam this is a Newsagents.**' The shop you need is further up the road so I left 2 inches tall and somewhat flushed.

Don't Mess With Them!



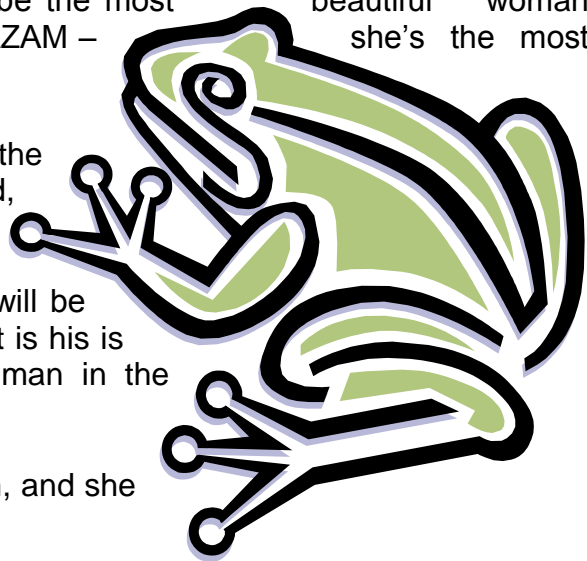
A woman was out golfing one day when she hit her ball into the woods. She went into the woods to look for it and found a frog in a trap. The frog said to her, 'If you release me from this trap, I will grant you three wishes.'

The woman freed the frog and the frog said, 'Thank you, but I failed to mention that there was a condition to your wishes – that whatever you wish for, your husband will get 10 times more or better!' The woman said, 'That would be okay,' and for her first wish, she wanted to be the most beautiful woman in the world.

The frog warned her, 'You do realise that this wish will also make your husband the most handsome man in the world, an Adonis, that women will flock to.' The woman replied, 'That will be okay because I will be the most beautiful woman and he will only have eyes for me.' So, KAZAM – she's the most beautiful woman in the world!

For her second wish, she wanted to be the richest woman in the world. The frog said, 'That will make your husband the richest man in the world and he will be ten times richer than you!' The woman said, 'That will be okay because what is mine is his and what is his is mine.' So KAZAM she's the richest woman in the world!

The frog then enquired about her third wish, and she answered, 'I'd like a mild heart attack.....'



Moral of the story: Women are clever bitches. Don't mess with them!

Do they think we're stupid? – Part Two

On Tesco's Tiramisu dessert

Do not turn upside down.

On Marks & Spencer Bread Pudding

Product will be hot after heating.

On package for a Rowenta Iron

Do not iron clothes on body.

On Boot's Children's Cough Medicine

Do not drive or operate machinery.

On a string of Chinese-made Christmas lights

For indoor or outdoor use only.

On a Japanese food processor

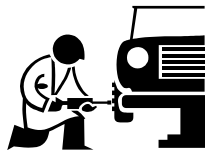
Not to be used for the other use.

On an American Airlines packet of nuts

Instructions: Open packet, eat nuts.

On a Swedish chainsaw

Do not attempt to stop chain with your hands.



Problems with Peugeot dealers?

I had a letter from Don Roberts thanking the membership for the birthday card for his 81st birthday on 8th February. He also wrote about problems with his Peugeot dealer.

'Have you had problems with Peugeot dealers refusing to service your motorhome? It's too big or too heavy!

I have, so this year I asked them to contact their UK Headquarters to find out where it could be serviced. Surprise, surprise, the following afternoon the Sheffield dealer phoned to say they would be pleased to service my motorhome and when would I like it done.

So if you have a similar problem don't be put off. Insist, after all we in the UK pay a high price for our motor vehicles and one of the excuses is we get good service from our dealers.



Some more Actual Epitaphs

Grave of Ellen Shannon

Who was fatally burned
March 21, 1870
By the explosion of a lamp
Filled with "R.E. Danforth's
Non-Explosive Burning Fluid"

Thurmont, Maryland

Here lies an Atheist
All dressed up
And no place to go.

In a Leeds graveyard (1861)

Here lies my wife
Here lies she;
Hallelujah!
Hallelujee!

Memory of an accident

Here lies the body
of Jonathan Blake
Stepped on the gas
Instead of the brake.

Someone determined to be anonymous

I was somebody
Who, is no business
Of yours.

On Margaret Daniels grave

She always said her feet
were killing here but nobody
believed her.

Anna Hopewell's grave, Vermont

Here lies the body of our Anna
Done to death by a banana
It wasn't the fruit that laid her low
But the skin of the thing that made her go

John Penny's epitaph

Reader if cash thou art
In want of any
Dig 4 feet deep
And thou wilt find a Penny.

Someone in Winslow, Maine didn't like Mr Wood

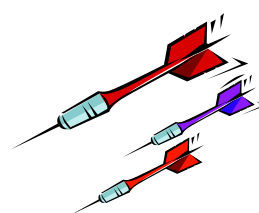
In memory of Beza Wood
Departed this life

Nov. 2, 1837
Aged 45 years
Here lies one Wood, Enclosed in wood
One Wood within another
The outer wood is very good
We cannot praise the other.

Haven Arms Hedon

Rally Report by

Sheila Lennie



11 vans arrived for this rally. Peter Hughes shouldn't have been there really as he spent a lot of his time working on his computer. Lorraine very kindly gave him a hook up to enable him to use said computer.

Don and Monica Roberts were with us for the weekend and we were all very happy to see them. They have been unable to rally due to ill health.

Thursday night saw Sue arrive with Anita (one of the co-owners of our French Club House). They had come armed with a birthday present for Lorraine. They presented her with two records that they had framed and she was delighted with them.

Sue showed us a load of photos of the club house and explained where we would be camping. Carol Jenkinson advised her that she would need some goats to trim the grass on a very steep slope. Sue was quite happy about this (not sure about Colin though), then Carol, who had kept goats in the past, explained that Sue would then need some ducks to trim it even further and lastly a pony to complete the job. Sue then decided that she wanted a dog as well by this time Colin was turning a funny colour!

Friday dawned, nice and sunny, and the majority of us went for a walk into Hedon. Carol had been the previous day and come back with some bargains and that was enough for us! Lance and I walked in and met Gayna, Audrey and Ken who told us that the tea shop behind them was very good and that they had been in there for over an hour! Needless to say Lance and I tried it and it was indeed very good. The punch bowl was postponed until Saturday night as Colin was not going to be very early arriving.

On Friday evening we all went into the pub where a buffet was being served and we held a Darts Competition. A lot of merriment followed. Darts were going everywhere! After a number of practise sessions Tim, Lorraine's son, drew up a list and off we went. We were playing doubles at 301. There was some funny subtractions calculated at times but in the end we had a final. Janet and Sue against Tim and Lance. It was a hard fought final and eventually Tim and Lance won the day.

Saturday dawned nice and sunny and Colin offered to take us into Hull. Lance and Sue sat right at the back of this seven seater and Ken, Gayna and I shared the back seat and Audrey was in the front. Off we went into Hedon because we had all sponsored Tim the night before for a tractor pull. Unfortunately it started raining whilst we parked up waiting for them to pass. After about ten minutes it was decided that we were in the wrong place and so we set off for Hull. As luck would have it we passed the crazy devils pulling this tractor and with much shouting, jeering and waving we passed them. We spent the day in Hull having lunch in the Art Gallery. Lance and Ken had gone walkabout and couldn't find us after that. They looked in all the cafés and restaurants but didn't know there was one in the Art Gallery (that's what happens when you go out with a local). After a very healthy lunch we then managed to do some shopping. Arriving back at 4pm Sue hurriedly set about concocting a punch bowl. Everyone greeted this with much ado. Then it was time to get ready for the carvery and cabaret. The meal was superb but that can't be said of the cabaret. The young man had stepped in at the last minute and it turned out he was trained as an opera singer. He had a fantastic voice and didn't need to use a microphone but I unfortunately insisted on it. He was not a pub singer but we still enjoyed his performance, probably because of the comments passed back and forth between the tables.

Sunday saw us at the coffee morning and the raffle. The very last thing on the table was an envelope which was won by John & June Boulby. On opening it they found a note instructing them to go to Peter & Gayna's van for their prize. They had won one of those lovely tigers that was on offer at Christmas in the alternative rally. June was absolutely

delighted. Goodbyes were said for those who had to leave early but for the rest of us we sat down to Sunday lunch in the pub. Colin and Sue's son and daughter-in-law joined us with granddaughter Megan.

All too soon it was time to leave and say our goodbyes to one and all. Another fantastic rally. Roll on the next one!

Grand Christmas Raffle

We have a good response from everyone for this raffle but I know that Peter Lockwood will still not be happy and will try and persuade you to part with your money at every rally. We have also had a number of cheques through the post from members who have not attended a rally this year.

PRIZES

1st prize - £200 in vouchers of your choice

The following is a selection from the other prizes on offer

A hand made waxed jacket

A low wattage kettle

2 Directors chairs

An Autocruisers fleece jacket

An Autocruisers sweat shirt

An Autocruisers polo shirt

An electric hand mixer

More prizes will be announced in the next newsletter

So keep buying those tickets!

Two Ethical Questions

1. If you knew a woman who was pregnant, who had eight kids already, three who were deaf, two who were blind, one mentally retarded, and she had syphilis; would you recommend that she have an abortion?

2. It is time to elect the world leader, and your vote counts. Here are the facts about the three leading candidates.
 - Candidate A – Associates with crooked politicians, and consults astrologists. He's had two mistresses. He also chain smokes and drinks 8 to 10 martinis a day.
 - Candidate B – He was kicked out of office twice, sleeps until noon, used opium in college and drinks a quart of whisky every evening.
 - Candidate C – He is a decorated war hero. He's a vegetarian, doesn't smoke, drinks an occasional beer and hasn't had any extramarital affairs.

Which of these candidates would be your choice? Answer over the page.

Geordie's Golf Stocking

When Geordie Broon was working in the forst shift doon the pit
His marra sed what's up wi thoo, thoo luks put oot a bit'
'Why' Geordie sed, 'wor Martha winnet darn me stockings noo
She says she wants some money for ti buy is some that's new'

'She wasn't oot of bed this morning when aa came away
So aa pulled me golfing stockings on when aa came oot the day'
His marra sed 'what, thoo plays golf, aa didn't knaa thoo could'

'No' Geordie sed 'aa divvent play, aa wadent be nee good'

His marra sed ' why Goerdie if ye divvent play golf yit
Hoo dis it come ye hev stockings and wear them for the pit'
'Owts good eneuf for pit' sed Geordie, 'when aa'm only filling coals
Aa caal them me golfing socks cos aa counted eighteen holes'

Quasimodo

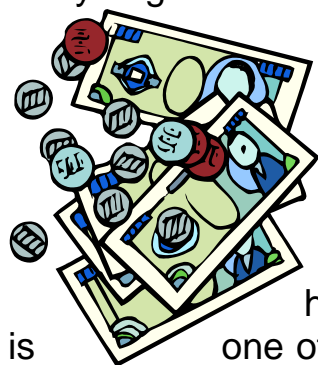
After Quasimodo's death, the bishop of the cathedral of Notre Dame sent word through the streets of Paris that a new bell ringer was needed. The bishop decided that he would conduct the interviews personally and went up into the belfry to begin the screening process. After observing several applicants demonstrate their skills, he decided to call it a day when a lone, armless man approached him and announced that he was there to apply for the bell ringer's job. The bishop was incredulous/ "You have no arms!" "No matter," said the man, "observe!" He then began striking the bells with his face, producing a beautiful melody on the carillon. The bishop listened in astonishment, convinced that he had finally found a suitable replaced for Quasimodo. Suddenly, rushing forward to strike the bell, the armless man tripped, and plunged headlong out of the belfry window to his death in the street below. The stunned bishop rushed to his side. When they reached the street, a crowd had gathered around the fallen figure, drawn by the beautiful music they had heard only moments before. As they silent parted to let the bishop through, one of them asked, "Bishop, who was this man?" "I don't know his name," the bishop sadly replied, "but his face rings a bell."

The following day, despite the sadness that weighed heavily on his heart due to the unfortunate death of the armless campanologist, the bishop continued his interviews for the bell ringer of Notre Dame. The first man to approach him said, "Your Excellency, I am the brother of the poor, armless wretch that fell to his death fro this very belfry yesterday. I pray that you honour his life by allowing me to replace him in this duty." The bishop agreed to give the man an audition, and as the armless man's brother stooped to pick up the mallet to strike the first bell, he groaned, clutched at his chest and died on the spot. Two monks, hearing the bishop's cries of grief at this second tragedy, rushed up the stairs to his side. "What has happened?" the first breathlessly asked, "Who is this man?" "I don't know his name," sighed the distraught bishop, "but he's a dead ringer for his brother."

Answers

1. Beethoven's mother
2. Candidate A – Roosevelt
Candidate B – Churchill
Candidate C – Hitler

Did you guess correctly?



*Keep your money safe
Put it under your bed!*

Two months ago my son received a letter to inform him that our bank (who shall remain nameless – but it is one of the big ones!), had transferred funds into his current account from a savings account. Great you would think, what a thoughtful bank, ensuring that he did not incur charges for going overdrawn. Well yes it would have been except it was taken from **my** account. Well husband's name is on it as well. Although both son and husband have the same name you would have thought that someone would have realised that they actually have different birthdays – or at least I hope they do!

I consulted with two members of the club for advice and one gave me the name of someone to write to at their Head Office. It always better to go to the top straight away. I received a letter by return apologising for this erroneous transfer and was told it would be looked into and I would be informed as to what had happened. I received a further letter informing me that the money had been returned to my savings account and an extra deposit of £100 had been made as a gesture of goodwill. I was assured that this would not happen again.

Well, I can hear you say, what on earth is she complaining about. It was sorted and I ended up £100 richer. Very true but imagine my surprise when two months later on checking my savings account I find another amount has been transferred to said delinquent, (sorry son's account). I immediately telephoned Head Office and the poor chap at the other end couldn't apologise enough. He assured me that it would be resolved the next morning. Sure enough just before noon he telephoned and said the money had been put back into the savings account. He felt that another £100 should be forthcoming. Very nice I can hear you say. Now what is she complaining about. Shut up and I will tell you.

Later that day I discovered that they had indeed returned the money to our savings account – but I bet you will never guess from where they got the money to replace the erroneous transfer.

Our current account!

So keep your money safe – put it under your bed.

Peterborough Show

Ollie and I arrived at about 9.15 am and it took at least 30 minutes to the The Autocruisers.

Just after midday the first van arrived, closely followed by three more. There were twelve vans due to arrive for the weekend, which would include some first timers to look forward to meeting.

The weather was great on Thursday but early Friday morning the pitter patter started and remained on and off through the day together with a strong gusting wind. (*Well it was at Peterborough Joe. Remember the first one folks when we had to be pulled **on and off?***)

Late Friday evening Any & Margaret McKay arrived in their Pioneer III together with our youngest rallier, their daughter Verity aged 6 months.

It was noticed over the weekend that or two little parcels were being smuggled into vans.

Each of us who had rallied found difficulty in finding our 'plot' and none of the marshals seemed to be aware of its SECRET location!

We met Tom & Margaret Smallwood having a sneaky look at vans – Is there a change in the air?

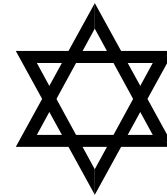
Eleven vans duly arrived, perhaps the other one could not find us.

Best wishes

Joe



Vatican City



About a century or two ago, the Pope decided that all Jews had to leave the Vatican. Naturally there was a big uproar from the Jewish community.

So the Pope made a deal. He would have a religious debate with a member of the Jewish community. If the Jew won, the Jews could stay. If the Pope won, the Jews would leave.

The Jews realized that they had no choice. So they picked middle-aged man named Moishe to represent them. Moishe asked for one addition to the debate. To make it more interesting, neither side would be allowed to take. The Pope agreed.

The day of the great debate came. Moishe and the Pope sat opposite each other for a full minute before the Pope raised his hand and showed three fingers. Moishe looked back at him and raised one finger. The Pope waved his fingers in a circle around his head. Moishe pointed to the ground where he sat. The Pope pulled out a wafer and a glass of wine. Moishe pulled out an apple. The Pope stood up and said, *"I give up. This man is too good. The Jews can stay."*

An hour later, the cardinals were all around the Pope asking him what happened. The Pope said, *"First I held up three fingers to represent the Trinity. He responded by holding up one finger to remind me that there was still one God common to both our religions. Then I waved my finger around to show him that God was all around us. He responded by pointing to the ground and showing me that God was also right here with us. I pulled out the wine and wafer to show that God absolves us from our sins. He pulled out an apple to remind me of original sin. He had an answer for everything. What could I do?"*

Meanwhile, the Jewish community had crowded around Moishe.

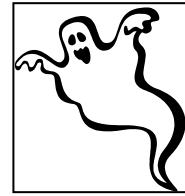
"What happened?" they asked.

"Well," said Moishe, *"First he said to me that the Jews had three days to get out of here. I told him that not one of us was leaving. Then he told me that this whole city would be cleared of Jews. I let him know that we were staying right here."*

"And then?" asked a woman. *"I don't know,"* said Moishe. *"He took out his lunch and I took out mine."*



*Strange but True
Articles supplied
by
Peter Lockwood*



The Mystery of the MARY CELESTE



One day in 1872, workers in the New York docks paused to look for a moment. Sailing slowly towards the harbour entrance was the brigantine, which had been loading alcohol at pier 44. She'd had a bit of an accident there, so they had heard. A sling had slipped, and one of the two lifeboats had been crushed. But she was a good little ship.

"Where's she going?" one asked. "Genoa", another answered. "Wish I were going to Genoa", said the first man. But he would not have said that if he had known that the crew of this ship, the *Mary Celeste*, would never be seen again.

Towards the end of that same year, the brig *Dei Gratia* was forcing her bows through the Atlantic rollers west of Spain. Captain Morehouse was fixing the ship's position on the chart. "600 miles north-west of Spain" he murmured. There was a clatter outside, and a seaman came into the chartroom. "Mate asks if you could come on deck, sir. There's a ship out there that don't seem to have anyone on board!"

On deck, Deveau, the first mate, was studying the strange ship through a telescope. "Well, Mr Deveau?" said Captain Morehouse.

"Don't like it, sir, and that's a fact. Rigging awry, sails everywhere but where they should be, an' there ain't even a man at the wheel. In fact, blessed if I can see a soul aboard her!"

"Sail closer, Mr Deveau," ordered the Captain. As they moved closer, he could make out more details of the drifting ship. "By George!" he exclaimed suddenly, "It's the old *Mary Celeste*! Look at her! Riggings adrift, main stay sail's been let down in a hurry and not stowed, the fore topsail seems to have been carried away. Make her a signal, Mr Deveau!" No answer was received from the *Mary Celeste*, so a second signal was made, but there was still no answer.

"Ahoy there, the *Mary Celeste*!" The shout echoed across the water, and was not answered. All that could be heard was the creaking of the ship's timbers and the flapping of the sails. "Send off a boarding party Mr Deveau" ordered the Captain. The first and second mates, with one of the crew, rowed over to the *Mary Celeste*, and hauled themselves on deck.

"Anyone aboard?" Silence. Two of the men walked along the deck, not knowing that they were starting the investigation of one of the greatest shipping mysteries of all

time. What caused the abandonment? Did the crew think that the ship was sinking? They would only do that if there were water in the hold.

"There's a sounding rod here" said the second mate. "They must have checked the water level themselves." The depth of water in the hold proved to be just over a yard.

To the mate the amount of water in the hold did not seem to indicate that the ship was on the point of sinking. In the captain's cabin, several things caught Mr Deveau's eye. The contents of the cabin were untouched – clothes, charts, books were all in their proper places. Even more curious, the money and the jewellery in the cabin had not been removed. But what had disappeared, and were nowhere to be found, were the captain's navigation instruments. In the galley were the remains of an unfinished meal, and cups of coffee were still on the table. One thing was for certain – the ship had not been caught in any violent storm, or the coffee would have been spilt!

Back on the *Dei Gratia*, the captain waited impatiently for his men to report back. They told him what they had seen. "There's no damage to the hull, sir. There's food on the table, food in the pantry a-plenty. There's money and jewellery untouched". The second mate added, "One thing strikes as curious, begging your leave, sir, an' that's that all's in its appointed place, if you follow my meaning. But one of the hatch covers is off. All we did find was this here sword – an it looks like blood on the blade".

The *Dei Gratia* made for Gibraltar, arriving on the 12th December, and the *Mary Celeste* followed her into port the next morning, sailed by the men who had salvaged her. The news broke on the world with an entry in Lloyd's list: 'Gibraltar, 13th December 1872, 1.45 p.m. *Mary Celeste* from New York to Genoa, with alcohol has been derelict at sea and brought here by three men of the *Dei Gratia* (British Brigantine)'.

The Queen's Advocate at Gibraltar formed the theory that the crew had got at the cargo of alcohol and, crazy with drink, killed the officers and made off in the small boat. But there was no sign of violence throughout the ship, the cargo of alcohol was not tampered with and the stains on the sword were not blood as originally thought.

Theories about the fate of the *Mary Celeste* were numerous. It was said that the crew mutinied and disposed of the officers before making off in the small boat. But there was no record of trouble on the ship, no signs of violence and the men had no record of previous violence. It was also suggested that a sea monster had appeared and eaten the crew one by one as they came up on deck! It was the opinion of Mr Deveau, however, that water was discovered in the hold and the captain, thinking of his wife and child who were aboard, ordered that the ship should be abandoned in case it sank. There would certainly have been time to pack money and jewellery – and finish a cup of coffee.

The mystery of the *Mary Celeste* remains to this day. What caused the crew to abandon ship in mid-ocean? Why should they leave, when there were no signs of violence, plenty of food, and the weather fine? We shall probably never know.

It was in Haiti, in the West Indies, that the *Mary Celeste* ended her strange life. In January 1885, with all canvas set and a fair wind, she struck a reef and became a total loss.



This poem is called 'The Old Woman' but applies equally to men sent in by Peter Lockwood.

There's nothing the matter with me!

I am as healthy as can be.
I may have arthritis in both my knees

And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.

My pulse is weak and my blood is thin

-But I'm awfully well- for the shape I'm in!

Arch supports I must have for my feet

Or I wouldn't be able to go out on the street.

Sleep is denied me night after night,

But every morning I find I'm still alright.

My memory's failing, my heads in a spin

-But I'm awfully well- for the shape I'm in!

The moral comes clear as the tale unfolds

But for you and me who are growing old.

It's better to say, 'I'm fine' with a grin

Than to let people know of the shape I'm in.

My 'get up and go' has long 'got up and gone'

But I don't really mind as I think with a grin

Of all the grand places my 'get up' has been!

'Old age is golden' I've heard it said

But sometimes I wonder, as I as I get into bed

With my ears in a drawer and my teeth in a cup

And my eyes on a table till I wake up.

E'er sleep overtakes me, I say to myself

Is there anything else I should put on the shelf?

When I was young, my slippers were red

I could kick my heels right over my head.

When I was older my slippers were blue

But still I could dance the whole night through.

Now that I'm old, my slippers are black

I walk to the store - and puff my way back.

I get up each morning and shake up my wits,

Pick up the paper and read the 'Obits'

If my name isn't there, I know I'm not dead

So I have a good breakfast and go back to bed!

Chairman's Rantings!

It's that time again when I've been called up to say a few words. We have just hosted the rally at Merley Court, Wimborne Minster which was most enjoyable. Merley Court is a site that we will definitely visit again as there is so much to see in the area and the campsite itself is excellent with a garden to walk around and sit in. There are also plenty of things to entertain the children (small as well as big children), such as swings, crazy golf, swimming pool (when the weather is warmer), climbing frames, short tennis and a hand ball court but to mention a few.

It is nice to see that more of our members are now attending the rallies as the hosts put a lot of work and enthusiasm into running the rallies. If anyone would like to run a rally, please let one of the committee members know, and you will get plenty of help.

The Worksop rally has had a limit placed on it and is now over subscribed, so if you are still thinking of coming to the Christmas rally at Woodhall Spa, book now so that you won't be disappointed.

Did you hear about the man who walks into a bar with a roll of tarmac under his arm and says: "Pint, please and one for the road"

Peter

TOP TEN REASONS FOR BEING AMERICAN:

1. You can have a woman president without electing her.
2. You can spell colour wrong and get away with it.
3. You can call Budweiser beer.
4. You can be a crook/adulterer and still be president.
5. If you've got enough money you can get elected to do anything.
6. If you can breathe you can get a gun.
7. You can invent a new public holiday every year.
8. You can play golf in the most hideous clothes ever made and nobody seems to care.
9. You get to call everyone you've never met "*buddy*".
10. You can think you're the greatest nation on earth when you're not at all.

Merley Court rally report by Joyce Bull


The rally took place at Wimborne Minster. Here's just a snippet about the small market town, it gets its name from the river Wim but has since changed the Wim to the Allen. The church or minster may stand on the site of a nunnery, built around 700 B.C. built in the Norman to late Gothic style with twin towers. A special feature is the clock, the jack-o-clock or quarter jack. A figure of a grenadier strikes on the west tower clock with a hammer each quarter, but enough about that.

Finding Merley Court proved to be a bit of a mystery tour. Every van had to do several U-turns and much asking for the park as the map provided was totally wrong. (*Sorry about that hee hee! Ed.*) But we got there to be greeted by our hosts Peter & Janet who promptly invited us into the awning, introduced us to new members and gave us a glass of wine or two. How nice it was to see Bernie in the corner.



Friday – a brisk 1¼-mile hike to a market, a three in one, an ordinary market, a farmers market and a sort of boot sale. The walk back to Merley and got drenched!

The usual faith supper and punch bowl on Friday night. Lots of good food and everybody a glow with red or white potent punch.

A  visit to Poole on the Saturday with Eric and Vera, nice place, very windy and another drenching getting back to the parked van. (*Guess who needs to win an umbrella! Ed.*)

Saturday night we met up for a lovely meal in the restaurant, the bonus ball number came through by phone to be won by Eric. (*Eric I will collect my share later – well it was my phone call. Ed*). Eric kindly treated us all to a game of skittles, we had a good laugh at that and the ladies team beat the gents



Sunday morning poor Bernie had a bad cough and had taken a turn for the worse, either John Jenkinson or Peter phoned for a doctor but an ambulance arrived and took Bernie to Poole hospital accompanied by Carol. I'm told he is on the mend.

Running late the coffee morning took place with the raffle, some very good prizes and the answers to Peter and Janet's quiz. Top prize went to Sylvia and Alec, a nice basket of plants, the booby to John & June Boulby (*what's new?*) a set of four tines of baked beans. Peter badgered me into giving a definition of beans but that's another story!!!!

That's all folks see you at Worksop in your red, white and blue!

Best wishes

Joyce

Bernie!

We would just like to say a special and sincere Thank You to our Autocruiser friends Carol and John Jenkinson, for the invaluable help and support they gave when Bernie King was taken ill at Merley Court, Wimborne Minster rally.

Janet & Peter Lockwood

A woman meets a gorgeous man in a bar. They talk, they connect, and they end up leaving together. They get back to his place, and as he shows her around his apartment, she notices that his bedroom is completely packed with sweet cuddly Teddy Bears. Hundreds of the cute small bears on a shelf all the way along the floor, cuddly medium-sized ones on a shelf a little higher, and huge enormous bears on the top shelf along the wall.

The woman is kind of surprised that this guy would have a collection of teddy bears, especially one that's so extensive, but she decides not to mention this to him, and is quite impressed by his sensitive side. She turns to him...they kiss...and they rip each other's clothes off and make hot steamy love.

After an intense night of passion with this sensitive guy, they are lying there together in the afterglow; the woman rolls over and asks, smiling, "Well, how was it?"

And the man says, "You can pick any prize from the bottom shelf!"

Thanks to John Jenkinson for the above.

A few sentences that may help you when pulled over by a policeman.

- My apologies officer! I thought you wanted to race me again.
- Sorry I was going so fast but Happy Hour finishes in twenty minutes.
- Officer, that's terrific. The last policeman only gave me a warning too!
- I'm glad you stopped me; I was wondering what the speed limit was.
- I'm glad you stopped me I was thinking about asking how to join the force.
- Do you know why you pulled me over? Okay, just so one of us does.
- I was trying to keep up with the traffic. Yes, I know there are no other cars around, that's how far ahead of me they are.
- No, offi, offi, Lucifer I'm not as think you are drunk I am. I swear to dog.

Soccer Sayings



Trevor Brooking:

Merseyside derbies usually last 90 minutes and I'm sure today's won't be any different.

Peter Jones:

And Arsenal now have plenty of time to dictate the last few seconds.

Brian Moore:

Newcastle, of course, unbeaten in their last five wins.

Gerry Francis:

What I said to them at half time would be unprintable on the radio.

Derek Johnstone, BBC TV Scotland, 1994

He's one of those footballers whose brains are in his head.

Dave Bassett:

And I honestly believe we can go all the way to Wembley unless somebody knocks us out.

Tom Ferrie:

Dumbarton player Steve McCahill has limped off with a badly cut forehead.

Richard Keys:

Well Roy, do you think that you'll have to finish above Manchester United to win the league?

Roy Evans:

You have to finish above everyone to win the league, Richard.

Radio 5 Live:

It's now 1-1, an exact reversal of the score on Saturday.

Blondes

A blonde goes for a walk. She comes to a river and sees another blonde on the opposite bank. 'Yoo-hoo' she shouts, 'how can I get to the other side?'

The second blonde looks up and shouts back, 'You ARE on the other side.'

Two blondes were walking through the woods and came across a set of tracks. One blonde said that they were deer tracks. The other blonde said that they were moose tracks. They were still arguing when the train hit them.

A blonde with two red ears went to the doctors. He asked her what had happened to them. 'I was ironing a shirt and the phone rang – but instead of picking up the phone I picked up the iron and stuck it to my ear.' 'Oh dear' said the doctor, 'what happened to the other one?' 'The idiot rang me back!'



The Parrot

There was this quiet, conservative man who happened to own a parrot. Unfortunately for the man, this parrot swore like a sailor. He would swear for five minutes straight without repeating himself. This bird's foul mouth was driving the man crazy. One day, it just got to be too much.

The guy grabbed the bird by the neck, shook him really hard, and yelled, "**QUIT IT!**" But this just made the bird mad and he would start swearing even more.

The guy finally got fed up and said, "*OK for you*" and locked the bird in a kitchen cabinet. This only aggravated the parrot who continued to claw and scratch the cabinet while he cursed even louder than before with a stream of swearing that would make a sailor blush.

At this point the guy became so mad that he threw the parrot into the freezer! For the first few seconds the bird started swearing words at the top of his lungs. He kicked and clawed and thrashed about all over the place. Then it suddenly became **VERY** quiet.

At first the guy just waited, but then he started to think that the bird might be hurt. After a couple of minutes of silence, he became so worried that he opened the freezer door. The bird calmly climbed onto the man's outstretched hand and said, "*Awfully sorry about all the trouble I gave you. I'll do my best to improve my vocabulary from now on.*" The man was astounded. He couldn't understand the transformation that had come over the parrot.



Then the parrot said, "*By the way, what did the chicken do?*"

TOP TEN REASONS FOR BEING ENGLISH:

1. Two World Wars and one World Cup doo-dah doo-dah.
2. Warm beer.
3. You get to confuse everyone with the rules of cricket.
4. You get to accept defeat graciously in major sporting events
5. Union Jack underpants.
6. Water shortages guaranteed every single summer.
7. You can live in the past and imagine you are still a world power.
8. Bathing once a week whether you need to or not.
9. Ditto changing underwear.
10. Beats being Welsh.

GERMAN:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
10. In built sense of pacifism.

WELSH:

1. You've got to be joking haven't you?!?!?!?

INDIAN:

1. Chicken Madras
2. Lamb Passandra
3. Onion Bhaji
4. Bombay Potato
5. Chicken Tikka Masala
6. Rogan Josh

7. Popadoms
8. Chicken Dopiaza
9. Meat Bhuna
10. Kingfisher lager

IRISH:

1. Guinness
2. 18 children because you can't use contraceptives.
3. You can get into a fight just be marching down someone's road.
4. Pubs never close.
5. Can use Papal edicts on contraception passed in the second Vatican Council of 1968 to persuade your girlfriend that you can't have sex with a condom on.
6. No one ever remembers the night before.
7. Kill people you don't agree with.
8. Stew.
9. More Guinness.
10. Eating stew and drinking Guinness in an Irish pub at 3 in the morning after a bout of violence.

CANADIAN:

1. It beats being American.
2. Only country to successfully invade the US and burn its capital to the ground..
3. You can play hockey 12 months of the year, outdoors.
4. See No.2
5. Where else can you travel 1000 miles over freshwater in a canoe?
6. A political leader can admit to smoking pot and his/her popularity ratings will rise.
7. See 2.
8. Kill Grizzly bears with huge shotguns and cover your house in their skins.
9. Own an Eskimo scheme.
10. See No.2.

Handy Hints from Barrie Stockton



As diesel is not volatile like petrol, there is very little gas above the fuel tank. Consequently, condensation occurs which may cause problems with injectors and rusting tanks. Therefore keep the tank topped up if leaving a vehicle standing for a few days.

Troubled by limited visibility in rain? Seat too high for wipers because of swivels? Try 24 inch wiper blades, the extra length even stops the passenger having to look out through one eye only.



Can't use the sun visor for the same reason? Try a green plastic clip-on type, clipped to the hinge side of the existing visor. When lowered this will reduce glare whilst maintaining the good view ahead.

Actual GCSE questions and answers collected from last year's GCSE exams.

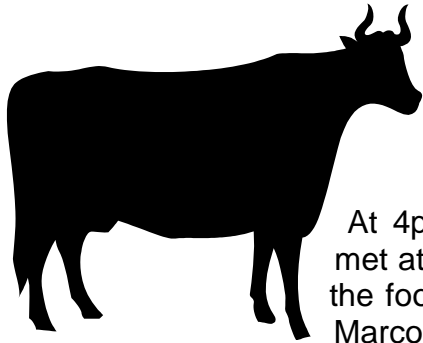
Geography

- Q. Name the four seasons?
A. Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar.
- Q. Explain one of the processes by which water can be made safe to drink?
A. Filtration makes water safe to drink because it removes large pollutant like grit, sand, dead sheep and canoeists.
- Q. How is dew formed?
A. The sun shines down on the leaves and makes them perspire.
- Q. What is a planet?
A. A body of earth surrounded by sky.
- Q. What causes the tides in the oceans?
A. The tides are a fight between the Earth and The Moon. All water tends to flow towards the moon, because there is no water on the moon, and nature abhors a vacuum. I forget where the sun joins in this fight.

Sociology

- Q. In a democratic society, how important are elections?
A. Very important. Sex can only happen when a male gets an election.
- Q. What are steroids?
A. Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs.
- Q. What guarantees may a mortgage company insist on?
A. If you are buying a house, they will insist on you being well endowed.

Next edition we will have Biology and English Q & A's.



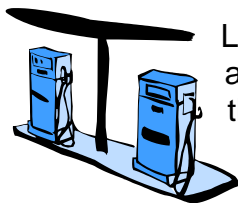
The Autocruisers Expedition 2002

At 4pm on 20 February 2002 eleven intrepid Autocruisers met at a service station on the M3. Their mission to follow in the footsteps of Vasca de Gama, Christopher Columbus and Marco Polo, following in the tradition of these great discoverers they left the shores of Old Blighty to discover Portugal and Spain.

Arriving at the ferry terminal at Portsmouth in good time we all partook of coffee in the terminal building. At last it was time to start this great adventure. We all returned to our vehicles ready to board the ferry. But not quite yet – no we sat in them for over an hour waiting to board. A phone call was received from Audrey, “Where are you Sheila?” she said. “Ken has searched all over the ship and can’t find any of you!” “We are still sitting on the jetty waiting to board” was the reply. Eventually we were allowed to board and we all met up in the dining area and sat down for some welcome refreshment. Having finished our meals a trip to the bar was decided upon. Whereupon a number of alcoholic beverages were consumed before certain members of the expedition started to feel slightly queasy. (Not from the alcohol I might add). The expedition party retired to their cabins for the night.



The tannoy system informing us that it was time to leave our cabins woke Lance and Sheila whilst everyone else was up and dressed and feeling slightly tired as a good night had not been had by one and all. Sleep had been hard to come by for the majority of the expedition owing to the rolling of the ferry!



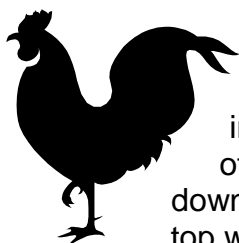
Leaving the ferry the first port of call was the petrol station where we all filled up with cheap European diesel. Then we off on our way on this great adventure. The expedition party consisted of Peter & Janet Lockwood, leaders, Jim & Rosie Keen celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary, (well actually it isn't until later this year but they thought they would go to Spain and Portugal as a present to themselves, or to get two lots of presents perhaps!), we also had Ken & Audrey Stokes, Ron & Joyce Bull and Joyce's daughter Sue Roe and Lance & Sheila Lennie.

It was decided very early on that Lance and Sheila would lead the expedition because of Betty Boop, (their satellite navigation system), and Peter and Janet would be tail end Charlie. Walkie-talkies were used between leader and tail end Charlie but most of the conversation cannot be printed here!

The first night's halt was all arranged and we all thanked our lucky stars that Betty Boop had come with us. She took us, in the dark, straight to the campsite. We would have still been driving round without her! As everyone was tired from the lack of sleep the night before, (except Sheila and Lance), a hurried meal was prepared, consumed and then it was time for bed! The next morning refreshed and ready to

roll we left the campsite at 9am and set our course steadily southward. Now we entered Spain, this is what we had come for.

A further campsite had been booked but unfortunately we didn't make it that far. A night's halt in a service area had to suffice! Again a meal was prepared and then drinks were dispensed in Janet & Peter's van, well it was Friday night! The following morning saw us up and ready to roll at 8am again heading south. We managed to make up the lost miles from the day before and after a bit of a search found the third campsite booked for that night's halt. Imagine our surprise when we realised it wasn't **open**! Actually it looked as though it had been closed for some time. With Ken marshalling we managed to all park in front of the gates in some sort of orderly fashion. A shower was not on the cards as none of us had any water on board and by this time we were beginning to smell. Ken went on a reconnaissance of the area and returned to find us all sitting on our chairs in the sunshine drinking beer. A restaurant had been found! So with much ado, no wash, no change of clothing we all descended on the restaurant except for Ron, Joyce and Sue as Joyce had started cooking almost before Ron had taken the key out of the ignition. A few drinks were consumed before we all sat down to a very welcome hot meal. After the meal Ron & Joyce joined us and a few more bebies were consumed before we all returned to our vans.



The next morning, up and ready to go with larks, we set off to enter Portugal. A message came through on the Walkie-talkie, "Did you see the stork?" Following that messages were going back and forth informing one or the other of storks to be seen. At lunchtime we pulled off the road and settled ourselves into a large car park where we all sat down to a lovely lunch alfresco. In front of us was a large building and on top was a stork. Binoculars were the order of the day and everyone was astounded at how this big bird managed to stay on top of the chimney without falling off.

It was here that a presentation was made to Jim and Rosie. They were presented with an unlimited crossing ticket across the Humber Bridge; unfortunately it was only valid for the time they were going to be away. After much amusement and an unhurried meal we set off at a fast pace with Peter leading (as he knew the way to the campsite at Alberfuria). We were all getting quite excited at the thought of a shower!

At long last an excited voice on the Walkie-talkie announced that we were about five minutes away. Having found our pitches there was a mass evacuation to the showers. You could smell us a mile away! After a very welcome shower it was time to greet Dot & Derek Ludlum who had ventured into Portugal alone! Brave explorers!

A mass exodus occurred the next day when in true pioneer style the town was thoroughly mapped out. Coffee shops frequented and sangria tasted. A restaurant had been found by our intrepid leader and tables booked for a meal.

Another day saw a mass exodus as the group walked down to the Fisherman's beach, where colourful fishing boats are to be seen, and paid a visit to JoJo's bar which had been recommended, where we all had fish, chips and Sangria (we being Autocruisers felt we had to keep up with the drinking traditions of the club). After



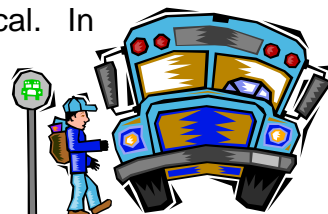
lunch we all staggered off to one of the local supermarkets, Modelo, to purchase items to restock our very depleted stocks (ie booze) and then a quick visit to a Patisserie where cakes and a Galoa (a large milky coffee) were ordered. Jim bill stated '2 x kiss' and Peter wanting to know what a kiss was asked the waitress who after much laughter gave him a kiss on the cheek! He didn't wash for a week! (A kiss is a small Portuguese cake).

Janet & Peter knew of a good restaurant down near the 'Strip', so we all got ready and met up at the campsite reception. Once everyone was there Janet & Sheila went in and ordered some taxis. About 20 minutes later they went back in to find out where the taxis were and were told 'You only asked how many taxis you would need for 13 people you didn't tell me to order them!' They came 5 minutes later.



A certain member of our party did some washing, went away with five pairs of knickers and came back with six! Did she find a pair someone had left? No, she decided not to waste the water and took off the ones she was wearing. No names but I leave you to guess who.

A coach trip was the order of the day on Thursday and we were taken to the most beautiful places in the Algarve. Our tour guide was very vocal. In fact after about 2 hours we wished someone would shoot him. He informed us that the orange trees that we could see only provided oranges once a year. If he told us that once he told us 100 times! His only adjectives were beautiful and famous. Everything was the most beautiful or most famous. We visited Silves, the top of mount Monchique (where we all 'suffered' wine tasting, some of three or four times), Cape Vincente and Sagres. Whilst in Silves we visited a café where all the car stools were motorcycle seats on posts, (take note Sylvia, leader of the Alford chapter of Hells Angels, and Alex).



Earlier in the day Janet had texted C&M (Chris and Mike Bedwell), who were in Spain, and were going to meet up with us at Granada. Later that evening Sheila was sitting in Janet & Peter's van when Peter received a text message 'Who are you?' We thought the drink had got to Chris again, as one does, and the message was ignored. Still later the phone rang and after a few minutes of conversation laughter rang out because C&M (in this case Carol & Marion) were in the Granada Bingo Hall in Manchester when they received a strange message from J&P!!



As Jim and Rosie were celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary (albeit a little early), it was decided to hold a barbecue on Friday

and we would present them with their gift after eating. Peter did the honours and presented them with a decanter and glasses.

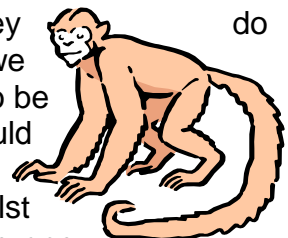
Another meal was partaken on Friday night at a local restaurant. This had been booked after a visit from Rosie, Jim, Derek, Dot, Janet, Peter and Ken who had gone to check it out. They decided to compare their Sangria with others that had been tasted. Sitting by the pool in temperatures of 70°F they did their best. Two hours later they staggered back to the vans for a 'Power Sleep' before getting ready for the evening meal. The meal was booked to celebrate Audrey's birthday who had received a set of coffee cups earlier that day from the expeditionary forces.

On Sunday we left Alberfuria to head for Spain, but before we left the campsite we all tramped into reception to pay our dues to Daniel, the receptionist. Sheila asked him if she could give him her body to pay for her fees. She then offered Peter's and then Joyce's. By now he was hysterical but politely refused our bodies. The river Guadiana is the border between Portugal and Spain. The river is very wide and we drove onto the bridge over the very wide river, at 10.45am, and drove off at 11.46am. This must be the longest bridge in the world!

We stopped at Camping Paloma on the outskirts of Tarifa about 25Km outside of Gibraltar. There is a lot to see on Gibraltar. St Michael's caves (to see the stalagmites and stalactites and the theatre that has been set up in one of the caverns, the Siege Tunnels, which were dug out by hand and are 35 miles long.



The following morning Ron and Jim took the whole company (except for Lance and Sheila who wanted to use their bikes) into Gibraltar. It was here that an International Incident was narrowly avoided. On passing through the customs on the Spanish side our intrepid Autocruisers found a car park that was completely empty! Hardly believing their luck they were about to park when they decided that maybe they should go a little further to be nearer the shops. A very kindly taxi driver showed them the way to Safeway's car park and then they went on a tour of the rock. It wasn't until they got up to the top of the rock that they noticed the car park. Still empty! No wonder, it was the airport runway! After the trip round with the friendly taxi driver who took them back to Safeway's car park where someone stopped Audrey to ask about the trip as they thought Peter was a Thompson rep as he had a red coat on! Gibraltar is a wonderful place. All the road signs were in English although they do drive on the wrong side of the road! Everywhere we looked we could see Union flags hanging from windows. They do not want to be Spanish. Passing Secretary's Lane and King's Bastion we could well understand. In fact there was a notice in the Post Office that said 'We do not accept euros!' Good for the Gibraltarians! Whilst visiting the Siege Tunnels we were informed that the runway (the one Ron and Jim wanted to park on), had been constructed during the second world war with rubble dug out of the Siege Tunnels. We were also informed that they never find dead apes. Nobody knows where they came from or where they go to die but it is thought that they use the Siege Tunnels to leave the rock via underground tunnels that are thought to exist but have never been found.



Just to give you an idea of prices on the Rock, the meals in Safeway were two for the price of one and one meal cost £2.99. A litre bottle of Grouse whisky was £5.75 a bottle. 200 Superking cigarettes were £6.90 and diesel on Gibraltar is only 95p a gallon! If we go again we are going to make sure all our water tanks are empty and fill up!

Jim had been experiencing overheating problems on his van so on the way back he called into a Peugeot dealer for them to have a look. Rosie and Janet went over to an hotel to wait whilst the van was attended to. It took two hours and the problem turned out to be a faulty fan connection, and the cost, nil. Peter & Jim joined the ladies in the hotel to find them in the lap of luxury drinking coffee.



As Lance and Sheila hadn't managed to get in on their bikes (I think the rain had something to do with it), they decided to stay an extra night at Tarifa and they would join our party in Granada. Sheila didn't want to go on to the next port of call, Ronda, because it involved a drive around a mountainside and she is none too happy with heights. So the evening ended with all the party enjoying a few beers in the campsite bar.

Tuesday morning saw some of us up bright and early and it was noticed that someone had removed the doors from the shower/toilet block, but her of knicker fame didn't let that stop her from going to the toilet. Sheila nearly had a fit when she poked what she thought was a blob in sink and it moved! There were dozens of large (about 2 inches long) beetles in all of the sinks. Washing was abandoned for the day.



Whilst Lance and Sheila drove off along the coast the rest of the expedition went to Ronda. After a drive along the coast to San Pedro, then a turn inland to start the climb to the campsite at Ronda. (2,788ft above sea level). It's 24 miles from the coast to Ronda and takes one hour due the twisting nature of the road. After a number of stops to take pictures and admire the scenery the party arrived at the campsite. Pitches were allocated – Jim's had a caravan on, Peter's had a tree in the middle of it! Sites were eventually found for one and all. A communal barbecue followed and then as evening set in everyone gathered in Jim & Rosie's van. An all time record was set as there were 8 people all sitting down in a Valentine. Has anyone done better?



Old Ronda is very impressive, being perched on the top of a cliff face, being about a thousand feet above the valley. There is a lot to see in the way of historic buildings and of course the views! The group on walking around the town found a shoe shop holding a sale. It appeared to be very small until you walked to the back of the shop and turned left! It must have been at least 100 feet (excuse the pun) long and stocked to the ceiling with shoes. Audrey became a self-appointed sales assistant advising everyone in the group on shoes. Needless to say nearly everyone came out with new shoes, especially as the price ranged from £12 to about £40.

Rosie, Jim, Peter & Janet visited the site restaurant in the evening where they had an excellent three-course meal and the compulsory jug of Sangria. One of Jim's passions is Banana splits but they weren't on the menu. Having spied some bananas Jim then proceeded to instruct the waiter on how to make a banana split and before long two very large



ones were delivered to the table.

The next day we headed to Granada through the mountains. On getting to Granada the instructions indicated that we had to turn off at Junction 126. There was no junction 126 so we turned off at 125, our first mistake! Whilst travelling up what one could only describe as the 'high street' Jim using his best Spanish (waving arms and making gestures) conversed with a bus driver and found the right turning for the campsite and drove there. Meanwhile the rest of us, three vans, continued along the high street intending to do a U-turn, but due to an accident the police were diverting all traffic. We turned left (second mistake) and ended up driving along a narrow cobble street. Did you know that you can get an Impala through a gap 1.9mtrs wide. We did! About an hour later and a few more adventures we all managed to find the campsite.

Lance and Sheila joined us again in Granada after their little dalliance in two seaside towns and they also had trouble finding the campsite. They arrived at the correct road junction and turned right instead of left where they would have found the campsite about 200 yards on the right. They, like the rest of us, explored the high street.

We visited the Alhambra Palace on Friday, a must if you visit Granada. Pre-booked tickets are advisable as you can 'jump' the queue at the palace. It is a Moorish palace and all the walls are covered with mosaics and carvings. There is also an abundance of water within the palace in the form of fountains.

It was at Granada that we saw a thong hanging on a washing line. This had been presented to the lady with the knickers the night before when we took over a Tapis Bar. We noticed that two of customers were slightly infirmed, one had a broken leg and the other a broken arm, this made us wonder what sort of neighbourhood we were in, but we needn't have worried as everyone joined in with our laughter. At one point a Spanish gentleman came over with a paper model of a dancing lady (made from a small paper serviette) which he put on the table and then put a drop of water on each of her 'arms' and she danced! A drink was purchased for the gentleman and his wife who then went into mass production of dancing ladies, so that each of the ladies in our group had one. Large pints of beer were produced. The glasses had been taken out of the freezer and were covered in frost. After that we all decided to drink Sangria, except for Lance who liked the cold beer. Every time we ordered more Sangria food would appear. If we had known this was going to happen we wouldn't have bothered to eat beforehand. The next morning it was time to say goodbye to Jim and Rosie as they had to make their way back to Old Blighty due to something called work.



It was decided that as there was so much to still discover that the party would split into two. Peter & Janet would lead one party and Lance & Sheila the other. Lance & Sheila accompanied by Ken & Audrey made their way to Madrid. Spending three nights there in total they managed to take a tour of Madrid and take in all the sights. On passing the bullring they were informed that the bull-fighting season had started on the previous Sunday and fights would take place all over Spain on Sunday nights for quite a few months.. They also checked out the Real Madrid football stadium.



On leaving Madrid they made their way to Lourdes. Again if you haven't been it is well worth a visit. It is the only religious building that didn't have a collecting box as far as we know but if you know better let us know. After purchasing bottles in the souvenir shops outside they filled their bottles with water and then visited the shrine. After purchasing candles, at a very reduced cost, they went to the designated area and lit them. The only items on sale were souvenir medallions with the money going to the restoration fund. The church is not very old but unfortunately the damp is badly damaging the walls and the murals.

The next day we are reliably informed was spent visiting supermarkets and purchasing all the bottles of JP Chenet Cabernet Syrah wine that could be found, (about 17 cases in all!) A leisurely pace brought them to St. Malo to await the rest of the expedition. They camped on top of a hill, which had been a German fortress during the war. The gun emplacements were still to be seen. There is a 1939-1945 museum within the fortress but unfortunately it was not due to open until the following Saturday. The next day whilst awaiting the rest of the expedition was spent walking around St. Malo.



In the meantime the other party drove out of Granada without any problems along the A92 Autovia (motorway to us) passing the Sierra Nevada mountains. At the town of Guadix they saw Troglodyte dwellings, most of which are still inhabited. It seemed strange to see chimneys posing out of the rocks and front doors on rock faces. The beauty of these dwelling is that if you need an extra room you just burrow deeper

Arriving at La Manga mid-afternoon they met up again with Derek and Dot who were already on site and they moved to join them in Section K of this large campsite with 1500 pitches. The temperature was in the high 70's with a welcome cool breeze.

On deciding to go exploring Ron took his van. Luckily for Peter his hair is already white because on leaving the campsite ... no I won't embarrass Ron by telling what happened, let's just say he drives very well in the U.K. The Spanish will remember when the Autocruisers hit town.



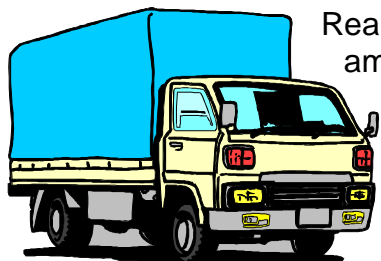
A trip to Los Belones to visit a 'Bodega' (a Spanish wine cellar) took place the next day. It was here that Joyce appeared from one and informed everyone that they were selling litres of gin for £2 a bottle! In true Autocruisers style they sauntered in (well ran actually), and purchased the entire stock of 8 bottles. Oh yes, they bought a few provisions as well.

Thursday was spent visiting markets. The first was at Los Urratais but as there were only two vans selling anything they drove to San Javier where they found a very large street market. It was here that Peter tried his hand at bartering. Peter offered 15 euros after the stallholder had requested 18. It then went to 20 and then 24. Peter realised at this time he was doing something wrong and gave the man the 18 euros he had asked for in the first place.

Derek celebrated his birthday and everyone went out for meal. It was here that they learned of a few Derbyshire sayings, (from guess who?) 'Blanket lifters' and 'A Thousand Farts on a Raft' (answers at the end of this report

Saying goodbye to La Manga on Saturday they started their journey back to St Malo where they hoped to meet up with Lance & Sheila and Ken & Audrey, assuming they hadn't been sold off as slaves somewhere.

The route back took them through some wonderful scenery. They saw rocks that had different colours in, like Alum bay on the Isle of Wight, and views across valleys as they climbed through the mountains.



being

lorry left at 04.33hrs!!

Reaching the French border on Sunday they noticed a large amount of lorries parked up. Apparently after a certain time on Sunday, lorries must park up until midnight, when they can resume their journeys, except for lorries carrying perishable goods. This left the roads clear from them. Just outside of L Rochelle they stopped overnight in a lorry park and by 20.00hrs it had filled up, there about 30 lorries. They had quite a night except that the first

Arriving in St Malo about mid afternoon on Tuesday they parked at the ferry port.. Lance had seen them arrive and Sheila had hot footed it back to the van for the mobile phone to contact them. Arriving back at the lookout spot, hot and bothered with St George's flag (to wave) and mobile in hand, Lance informed her that they had gone walkabout. They had decided to explore St. Malo. A little later Lance noticed that now the vans had gone! They had decided that they needed just a few more extra supplies (like more booze), and had gone to the local Carrefour. Sheila phoned them to ask where they were and asked if they could buy up the supermarkets supply of JP Chenet wine for Ken, as he felt thirsty!

Just as dusk was falling a flashing light could be seen from the ferry port coming from the hilltop nearby (hopefully the ships at sea didn't mistake this for the lighthouse at St. Malo). Could it be first contact Peter wondered? He climbed up on top of his can and flashed a light back. The light seemed to flash morse code (you know Ken, using your arms, for those not in the know, ask Ken). A phone call from Sheila was a let down as it was herself flashing (you can't be arrested for it). We understand the locals still talk about the night of the flashing lights in the sky to this day.



The next morning we all met up on the jetty and more bottles of Chenet were produced from Peter & Janet's van for Ken & Audrey. Ken was instructed at this time by a little Frenchman to go back to his van (which was at the end of the queue) and get ready to board. He came driving down at 100 miles an hour whilst Audrey was getting the case of wine from Janet. The little Frenchman hurried Ken onto the ferry. **Minus Audrey** who was left standing holding **his** case of wine! She quickly knocked on the door of Peter's van and jumped in.

With everyone safely aboard the ferry Ron was very quick to tuck into a full breakfast, whilst the rest of the company waited for lunch to be served. After lunch a quick trip around the duty free shop and a few purchases made and then it was time

for a carafe of wine. It was then we were informed that Peter & Janet were celebrating their wedding anniversary. Hurriedly more wine was procured and games were played. All too soon we docked and it was time to say goodbye to our brave fellow explorers. Would we do it again? You bet your little cotton socks – in a flash! We travelled 3,053 miles and it was fantastic! Let's try Italy next time?

A.G.M. Hedon 12-15 September 2002

I/We

Membership No.....

Will/will not be attending the above rally.

We do/do not wish to renew our membership.

Please send cheque for renewal for £10 payable to The Autocruisers dated 1st September 2001 to Hon. Sec Sheila Lennie 46 Brookside Dudley Cramlington Northumberland NE23 7DL

I would appreciate receipt of your reply as soon as possible after 1st August to enable completion of up to date membership lists.

In order to save costs would you please indicate whether or not you wish to receive an up to date membership list.

Membership List YES/NO