

Les Slimes

May 2021

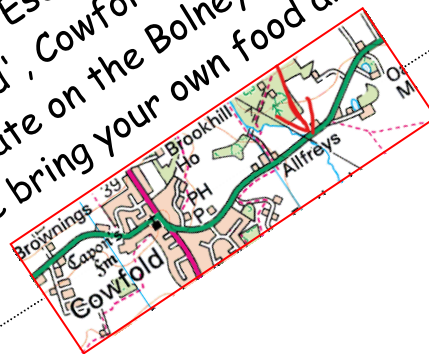


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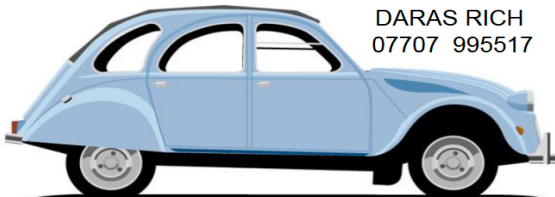
WE

20 May, we will be holding the May South Downs Escargots meeting at our Hat Camp venue, that is 'King Harry's Field', Cowfold, which is almost opposite the Oakendene Industrial Estate on the Bolney road. The meeting will run from 6pm onwards - please bring your own food and drink. Toilets should be available.



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World Meetings Smooth Driving all the Way (Almost)!

Part Four – Greek Odyssey

Most of our group planning for the 1999 trip to Greece involved booking our ferries and I say ferries because not only did we need a cross channel trip but also a crossing from Italy to Greece. I would add that the traditional planning meetings would be held at one of our houses, generally Kit and Hazel White's and involve food, often barbecued and a few drinks. Most of it would inevitably be just social but we did get on to the subject in hand occasionally. From memory planning for Greece consisted of book a ferry to Calais, drive to Lake Lucerne, go on to around Rimini, camp near Brindisi port and take the ferry to Greece. As I say not much was really detailed except the times of the ferries.

When the Greek Club won the right to stage the Meeting, back in Slovenia in 1995, they had a site in mind, on the coast opposite Corfu and near to the Albanian border. This was confirmed in 1997 in Holland when they gave a preview of a long thin coastal site not so very far from the ferry port of Igoumenitsa. However much closer to the date of the Meeting this was changed and quite dramatically.

The new site was on the opposite coast, under Mount Olympos, still by the coast but on the Aegean and not the Ionian Sea. They did however retain the original venue at Igoumenitsa as a first night holding camp for members arriving, as they would, later in the day at the nearby port. This was not a bad thing for it gave us a pre-arranged overnight stop and rest after a half day at sea, before the wonderful drive across the spine of Greece. Nor did it make any difference to our planning. It just gave us extra sights to see before the Meeting.

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Departure time came and we were on our way to France. There were four cars in our mini-convoy and we had one other member, John Shelley, travelling separately with Club Clouseau. Pierre was outnumbered on this trip as he left Calais in the company of three Dyanes, those of Kit White, John Blakeley and Daras Rich. All went well on our journey down to Switzerland and we found our camp-site by Lake Lucerne with ease. It was a scenic spot, the sun was shining and it was a relaxing evening. We needed an early night, with two full days to come, first through the St Gotthard tunnel into Italy and across the top of Italy and then all the way down to Brindisi, in the heel.

Our overnight stop between these lengthy days was in Rimini, where we man-



aged somehow to cram all our tents and cars plus 10 people into a plot probably meant for one large frame tent. We were pitched close to a railway line on an embankment. There were more people moving along this line than trains and we never did figure out whether they were gathering something or just following a short cut.

We had intended to find a camp-site close to Brindisi port but had been warned that the sites there would be crowded and that they suffered from a good deal of theft. Therefore as it was only about 120 kilometres from Brindisi and we would have ample time in the morning we camped overnight near Bari instead. It was a good choice. The site was pleasant and there were splendid take-away pizzas available.

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The departure from Brindisi on the "Ionian Bridge" was hilarious. It all seemed so easy and that should have been the warning, We found the ferry terminal , drove in through the gate and stopped in a line, near where the vessel was moored. Only through talking to other members did we suddenly realise that though we had our

tickets we did not have our boarding cards and these could only be obtained from the ferry company office in the town. We got directions and drove into town, eventually finding places to park. Needless to say the tiny office was crammed with people all clamouring to change their ticket to a boarding card with departure time starting to approach. Eventually we got our cards and rushed back to the port, though that was not entirely necessary as the departure time was I think at best meant to be an estimate!

More hilarity was to come. We boarded the ferry in good order but were put side by side in a long line on the main vehicle deck. We were then put, six cars at a time, on a big vehicle lift which took us down to the deck below. While all this was happening an articulated lorry was being painstakingly parked right into the very corner of the deck we were waiting on, so that he was almost touching the sides. We assumed this meant the deck was going to be filled with lorries but when we got off in Igoumenitsa it was still the only lorry on that deck!

Time was moving on and we were all getting a little peckish so we repaired to the restaurant/snack bar. It was as well we did. Later arrivals found it closed. It would seem that no matter what time the ship sailed the restaurant always closed at 1pm.! It was a very pleasant sail with much of it spent sitting on the sunny open deck.

Les Slimes



Leaving the ship brought back memories of the old days of crossing back from Cherbourg to Southampton/Portsmouth on the old Thoresen Ferries, which I did quite a lot from the late sixties onwards. The British Immigration authorities used to send a member of staff out on the morning boat from the UK so that he was able to check all passports on the return sailing in the afternoon. Once your passport was checked you were given a card which had to be handed in as you descended the ship gangway, negating queues at the arrival port. A good system, but it had one flaw, which we saw demonstrated.



The immigration officer had nothing to do on the long outward journey and on the occasion I mention had clearly spent rather too much of his idle time in the bar. Not too long after this a new system was brought in, with UK officers based at the French ports. This still continued until last year but who knows what is happening now under Brexit rules?

Departing the ferry at Igoumenitsa was not speedy as our cars had to come up on the lift, six by six, but leaving the port we played "follow my leader" for the short distance to the campsite. The cost of this was covered in your main booking fee, as was the ouzo drink presented to each person on arrival. I blame the latter on the way that I put our small tent up that night, fastened by only four tent pegs. You may ask why and the answer was that I hate to waste ouzo and virtually no-one else in our group would drink it!

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I don't remember a huge amount about the evening but we set off in the morning on our adventure across the spine of Greece. For that you will have to wait until next time!

Maurice



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Drive-it Day 2021

An excellent Drive-It Day outing was organised by Bob Brotherhood with members from three clubs, Clouseau, South Downs Escargots and Pompey Puddleducks taking part. In all there were 16 cars at the start point in Chichester and although Josh Draper left at the regrouping point late on there were 15 cars at the finish, the Spur pub at Slindon, where we also met up with Kit and Hazel White. We were blessed with sunny weather and although the east wind was brisk and cool we were able to enjoy an outdoor lunch at the pub on four separate tables around the garden. For most of us it was a long time since we had enjoyed food and drink at a pub. As always with Bob's runs we went down a lot of very minor roads and attracted lots of attention and waves from pedestrians, cyclists and other motorists. Thanks go to Bob for yet another excellent outing!



Maurice

Top :All Lines up at the regrouping point near finish

Bottom Gathering at the start at Tesco, Chichester



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TECHNICAL

We chatted over a fuel supply issue at our last meeting. Here is the update from Bijou John

I thought I would give an update on the progress investigating the "fuelling problem," on my Bijou, which was discussed at our meeting last week. (Ed: Engine running for a bit then stopping)

It was suggested that I investigate the pipework and sender unit.

The pipework was okay, so I removed the sender which was, as described by Daras, made up of brass washers. These washers were dirty and appeared to be stuck fast.

I cleaned the washers, on the outside and twisted those washers against one another, until the majority could move freely.

Having refitted the sender the fuel flows, at a trickle, when the engine is cranked on the starter motor, rather than the splutter, that I had before.

Please thank everyone for their help.