

IAH - Independent Association of Hobbyists

Hobby Motorhome Owners Club

The UK's only club for Hobby Motorhome Enthusiasts



NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2012

Hobby's 2013 Model Range by Technical Officer

The Hobby stand at Dusseldorf took us somewhat by surprise because if you are 700 series tag axle owners like ourselves there is nothing of this ilk in the 2013 range. Four wheelers only with a capacity of 3500Kg not the 4500Kg we are used too. Additionally there are no truly full size garages on any models. There are storerooms at the rear called garages but none are really capable of taking a full size bicycle for example without some dismantling. When I asked a sales Rep about this he said there are no garage models but they do supply a bike rack (chassis

mounted) and their own Hobby brand electric bicycles! External styling is very modern with lots of darkened glass, it was difficult to tell in the exhibition hall if this was detrimental to internal light levels. LEDs were in abundance internally

and on the rear external view and looked quite attractive. Based on the German literature the Hobby range now comprises: Premium Van (5 Models), Premium Drive (10 Models) and Siesta (2 Models). I must admit to not understanding the logic used to number the various models it being a number



Common Look To The Rear End
with LEDs Galore



Renault Based Premium Van

Contents:

Hobby's 2013 Models

Dusseldorf Show

Strumpshaw Rally

The Lawns Rally

Forthcoming Rallies

Forthcoming Shows

From the Committee

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Hobby's 2013 Model Range

followed two or three alpha characters. The alpha characters denote layout but the numbers appear unrelated - there must be a logic!

Premium Van Based on a Renault Master flat floor chassis with 3500Kg capacity and 2.3liter 125bhp engine as standard. They range between 6.27m and 7.12m long with ready to drive weights (include water, fuel etc and 75Kg driver) of 2903Kg to 3130Kg the latter leaving just 370Kg payload. They range through 2, 3 and 4 berth models with prices from €43,950 through €47950 from the factory including 19% German Tax. As usual the extras list could raise this price considerably!

Premium Drive Based on a Fiat Ducato chassis with 2.0liter 115bhp engine as standard. They range between 6.99m and 7.44m long with ready to drive weights of 2998kg to 3200kg on the 3500kg chassis. 3 and 4 berth only with rear beds transverse, corner, longitudinal singles or an island. An electric drop down bed over the lounge area provides the other 2 berths. Prices range through €49450 to €52980 ex factory including German Taxes.



Premium Drive

Siesta Based on a front wheel drive Ford Transit with 2.2liter 125bhp engine as standard. They are 7.0m long with ready to drive weights of 2953kg to 2968kg. 3 or 4 berth with either single or corner beds at rear. Priced at €43600 ex factory including German Taxes.

Hobby Pedelec A Hobby electric bicycle (produced by Wondervelo). A touring style bicycle with Aluminium frame and forks, with springing to front forks and seat post, 7 gears, 3 brakes (2 hand brakes, pedal backwards for 3rd). Total weight 25kg. Electric front wheel drive with up to 250 watts of power with a 36v 10ah battery with a charge time of 4 to 6 hours giving an approximate range of 90km. Yours for €1499.



Chassis Mounted Bike Rack



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DUSSELDORF CARAVAN SALON BY EDITOR

We had heard about and read about the Dusseldorf Show for many years but never journeyed to the event. But 2012 was to be different! We were going abroad, by car this time and decided to make a detour to Dusseldorf to see what was on offer. We were to travel via the tunnel, which was booked well in advance using Tesco Vouchers. Pre planning included what did we need to take or do to be legal besides the obvious like having a route and somewhere to stay. On the legal side Headlight Deflectors, Warning Triangle, Hi Viz Vests, Breathalysers, all essential spare bulbs, First Aid Kit and Fire Extinguisher recommended. Route was via Mr Garmin but checked out on a Map before leaving and the Hotel was found and booked via the Internet and was the Holiday Inn Express North Dusseldorf some 3.5 miles from the Exhibition Centre. On the day of travel we left from home (North Oxfordshire) setting off early to allow for the vagaries of the M25 only to arrive early having had a trouble free run, any other time you could guarantee the M25 to stop. Never mind we got on an earlier train and all was well. For anybody who has not used the Channel Tunnel it is smooth, quick (35 minutes traveling but must book in 30 minutes before departure) and hassle and virtually sensation free. According to the cars computer our total journey (excluding train element) was 412 miles at an average speed of 58 MPH (stayed within all speed limits) and 36 MPG which was not to bad for a well laden 3.2 litre gas guzzler. We had arrived and booked in at the hotel by late afternoon so set out for Dusseldorf Altstadt (Old Town) renown for its bars and restaurants etc (your typical tourist trap). There was a Tram some quarter of a mile from the hotel that would have taken us most of the way but having sat for several hours we decided to walk what was probably about 2 Miles. We meandered the Altstadt sites before having a meal in restaurant alongside the Rhine. 3 beers, 2 mid price main courses and 2 coffees were €40. We walked the long route back to the hotel following the Rhine north we passed through an Official Motorhome Aire that was virtually full (about 70 Units) but ideally situated for visiting the city and costing €12 per night. As we continued beside the Rhine we passed through a significant number probably approaching another 70 or more motorhomes all illegally parked! Appeared to be an unofficial Aire but signs did indicate no Motorhomes but as nearly all were German vehicles it must be alright! The next day we decided we would walk to the Exhibition Centre, the



Dusseldorf



Camping Aire - you need to be on good terms with your neighbours they are not far away.



Walkway beside the Rhine

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DUSSELDORF CARAVAN SALON BY EDITOR

long way via the river. On arrival we bought tickets for 2 day entry for 2 adults €30. Tickets were discounted €5 for having joined, free of charge, the Caravan Salon Club on the Internet some months before - not sure it is worth the hassle. The exhibition was housed in halls 9 through 17. Some halls had distinct themes eg:

One for the super rich with Motorhome prices of €200,000 plus and Fiat 500, Smartcar or Mini Convertible in the boot. A Frames and trailers just don't get a look in and I'm afraid in this company even the best of Hobby, Burstner and other mass producers look like poor mans toys by comparison. That said I am not sure I would buy one if I won the Lotto as most are absolutely huge making some American RVs look dinky. You certainly wouldn't want to tour Scotland or Cornwall in such a monster.

Another hall was predominantly awning and accessories.

Another appeared to be predominantly trade stands selling to the

Motorhome manufacturers. Everything from a rolling chassis to minor components.

Another hall was predominantly adventure motorhomes - 4 x 4 vehicles, motorhomes on Steroids. From Land Rovers with tents on the roof to HGV 4 x 6 based Motorhomes that could do the Paris/Dakar Rally and everything in between.

Hymer took up most of one hall with an extensive range.

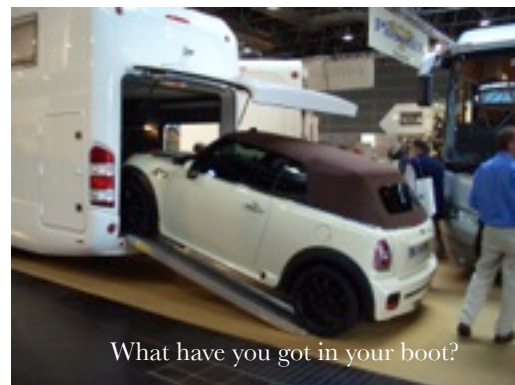
Some quirky things that took my eye:

A caravan pod affair - probably towable by a Smartcar!

A caravan with opening rear panel and retractable furniture to load your motorcycle.

An inflatable barge to take your caravan or motorhome on the canals and rivers of Europe.

We didn't manage the whole show in one day so returned the next morning to finish off the 3 halls we had not yet seen and revisit a couple of things that took our interest. The second day instead of walking the route we knew we thought we would put Mr Garmin in City Walking mode and try it out! Needless to say all did not go well as it took some strange detours for no apparent reason and was not very clear in its guidance with instructions at the top of the screen appearing to contradict the map on the lower screen. Perhaps it was just incompetent users all I say is if using it for something important practice with walking mode before hand. After the visit to the show we again took to the streets of the Altstadt. We were treated (I think it was meant to be a treat but female Opera singers can be a bit piercing!) to the rehearsals of open air Concert to be broadcast on live radio and TV the following night and also met up with several hundred roller bladers ready for an 8pm start to a mass skate through Dusseldorf. Many wore hi viz, others had lights attached to every where imaginable and there was of course a Polizei motorcycle escort. The most surprising thing was the age range of the participants with more in the upper



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DUSSELDORF CARAVAN SALON BY EDITOR

age bracket than the lower. On the previous running of the event they did 20km including going through Dusseldorf football stadium.

Was it worth the trip? The show was well laid out with plenty of space so that you did not feel crowded. There were vehicles on display that you do not see in the UK however there were no UK manufacturers present. Vehicle prices seemed cheaper but that is more gut reaction than scientific evaluation. Just like the NEC refreshments are a rip off - take your own. It was nice to see it once but I will not rush back to the show again. If visiting Dusseldorf by Motorhome if possible take a bicycle there are cycleways in abundance in much of the city.

STRUMPSHAW STEAM MUSEUM RALLY courtesy of Christine Lawson

The day before this rally was due to start, Dave and I met Ed and Vera in Lincoln at The Station, a pub we discovered last time we attended a function at Camper UK. Here we had our evening meal, and were allowed free overnight parking, a really good stopover spot to bear in mind, should you find you wish to break a journey in that area.

Next morning, the first day of the Strumpshaw rally, we continued down to Norfolk. The site was part of a large private estate with a very equestrian feel to it. We were welcomed by Gerry Bullock, the site manager, who told us how in earlier years, the owner Mr. Keys had been very involved with steam vehicles, but since his death, his wealth and property had been inherited by his son, who regretfully had been unable to carry on as his father had hence the equestrian eventing had ceased, but the livery stables are still very evident. The steam engine interest has been kept alive by a group of very enthusiastic volunteers including Gerry Bullock. His name might ring a bell with those of you who read MMM, as he writes site reviews for them.

During the next couple of days a grand total of 6 vans set up camp, including Jean and Mike from Derbyshire, this was their first rally but we felt they were a great addition to our club. Jean had some brilliant travelling ideas involving tights and tennis balls. The weather began showery but developed into a brighter sunnier week.



Steam Exhibition



The Chairman hard at it!

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STRUMPSHAW STEAM MUSEUM RALLY continued

We drove to Wroxham (aka Roystown) on the Broads on one showery day, but ended up getting a real soaking, so we cut short the visit but returned later in the week when the sun was really warm, and sat by the water watching both novice and expert in their crafts, surrounded by many kamikaze swans, who skilfully dodged every boat.

Potter Higham is a lovely village, again we sat and watched the boats after browsing around in Latham's warehouse, where almost everything you can think of is on sale. I bought some whole nutmegs and paper cake cases, Dave and Ed bought some "miracle" car polish.

Norwich is well worth a visit, we did in fact go twice. The Cathedral is very impressive as is a lot of the older architecture and the shopping centre has a good variety of retailers. The covered Victorian mall has beautiful coloured glasswork and tiled floor. Here we found the Colman's mustard shop, a lovely place to browse. We had coffee and panninis outdoors at a pavement cafe and sat awhile before calling at the outdoor market which is huge to buy fresh local veg, and especially Norfolk Taties for Dave, but they were actually from Suffolk, and very good too.

Back at Strumpshaw we were offered a free visit to the museum that Saturday, when it was closed to the public, we all gratefully accepted. The exhibits are impressive, ranging from pinball machines to steam combine harvesters and chain powered



Potter Higham



The Mustard Shop



The Motley Crew about to depart!

ploughing equipment, these huge things looked highly dangerous. The on site miniature railway was then pulled out and we all enjoyed a 15 minute ride around the estate aboard Jimmy, accompanied by Gerry's Jack Russell riding bravely on the footplate.

The end of the week brought us all together at The Huntsman a local pub to enjoy an evening meal, before the next day's departure to Lincolnshire.

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THE LAWNS LINCOLNSHIRE RALLY - courtesy of Christine Lawson

The journey took 1 hour 40 minutes and as we pulled onto the rally field we were struck by how lovely the site was. Thousands of newly planted trees and a fishing pond, the superb shower and loo facilities.

We were joined later by Tony and Pam who were on home ground for a short while before setting on another adventure to Morocco. The couple who they had met in Sicily and had persuaded them to become hobbyists, Gary and Donna, also joined us here and were soon part of the club.

Tracy and Nigel made us really at home, showed us around explaining that by next summer they will have hopefully complete phase 2 of the site, including another fishing pond and another facilities block. They did strike us as being hard working and dedicated to making their venture huge success.

As a thank you for holding our rally with them Tracy made a huge strawberry and cream gateaux, what a lovely gesture.

Another impressive idea was the outdoor sofa, which was soon occupied by Tony Charity and a good book

The weather was perfect, very hot and sunny but with a welcome breeze.

Tracy also holds Hog roasts if there is more than 20 willing guests, so as another caravan rally was onsite it was decided to have a "do" that Saturday night. Well it was delicious but not as good as the choice of puds she has made, Sherry trifle, Banoffee Pie, Lemon Meringue, Tiramisu and Gateau. The lass is amazing.

As we drove around various routes exploring the very flat countryside we found the villages much more enjoyable than the towns. Long Sutton was one such village where we found a butchers and bakers (no candlestick maker) a newsagent, 2 banks a coop with large car park DIY shop and a few pubs together with a village hall advertising a wide range of forthcoming events, a truly active community.



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THE LAWNS LINCOLNSHIRE RALLY - continued

Boston and Kings Lynn satisfied our retail therapy, and although we have been previously, we enjoyed them again in the lovely sunshine.

Ken, Lucy and Eric did a few outings on their bikes but poor Ken got puncture miles from anywhere, and had to call out International Rescue which was manned that day by Tony C. Eventually he got his bike back in working order, ready for the next ride out.

The local Chinese restaurant “Beijing Palace” had an eat as much as you want offer, well who can resist a challenge. A table for 12 was booked for our penultimate evening together.

In house entertainment was provided by “Bobby” our waiter, who, when asked by any diner for anything replied with a sharp “No-----Problem!” The food and service was first class, we all had a really lovely evening. Back to the lawns and as we had been offered the use of the barn for the evening chairs and tables were pulled into it and Ken brought a selection of beers he’d bought on their trip to Wells next the Sea, some with naughty names. The barn became a bit chilly as the night progressed but it was 3am before some of the hangers

on went to their beds.

No names shall be published! But at least a few of Ken’s special bottles were left untouched.



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Forthcoming Rallies (to keep abreast of events please check the Club Website):

Pre-Christmas Rally

Date: Monday 19 – 26 November

Venue: Roseberry Tourist Park, Earith Road, Willingham, Cambridge, CB24 5LT. Tel. 01954 260346.

Christine and Dave introduced us to this site about three years ago and we have been regular visitors ever since. We will be there during the above week in November and would like to invite you all to join us for a pre-Christmas get-together.

Their web site is www.roseberrytouristpark.co.uk which gives information and pictures. It is a lovely clean site with good facilities and very welcoming owners. We have been given a discounted rally price of £12.50 per night. The static caravan on site will also be available for us to use to get together (good for sing-alongs John!).

To book please call the site directly and say you are with the Hobby Group in order to get the discounted price and a pitch in the 'Hobby' area.

The park and ride busway about a mile or so away is now open to get into Cambridge in one direction and I believe out to Huntingdon in the other. There are interesting towns (and cities) to visit in the area: Cambridge, St Ives, St Neots, Ely, Huntingdon. Also of interest could be Grafham Water, Rutland Water and Oakham, the Imperial War Museum at RAF Duxford, The American War Cemetery at Madingly, to name just a few. We can also recommend some eateries!

It would be great if you could let us know on this forum or directly when you book. Do hope lots of you will be able to join us and we look forward to seeing you there

Jo and Cliff Antill

Forthcoming Shows (to keep abreast of events and ensure accuracy please check the Internet before travelling):

The Motorhome Show The Royal Bath & West Showground, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 6QN Jan 11 - 13.

Caravan and Motorhome Show Event City, Manchester, M17 8AS (postcode for car parking) Jan 17 - 20.

Caravan and Motorhome Show Cardiff Airport Jan 25 - 27.

The Spring Caravan & Camping Show NEC, Birmingham, B40 1NT Feb 19 - 24.

MESSAGE FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO

SEEING YOU AT NEXT YEARS RALLIES.