

## *Comfort in your Caravan*

I should invoke the wrath of thousands of you if I dare to say that trailer caravanning is the most comfortable form of camping. All right, all right, I have practised all sorts of camping from the smallest pedestrian tent (known as Lee's Coffin) through big tents, tent trailers to caravans and have been very comfortable in all of them. But it is possible to take advantage of the modern appliances invented to make life easier in a caravan, so we will look into some of these now.

A source of energy is required and more and more caravans are being fitted with their own battery. I carry a Lucas Pacemaker in a Desmo box firmly held as nearly over the wheel as possible. It is kept charged whilst on tow by means of a Lucas Split Charge Relay as described in "Camping & Caravanning" last July. But if you have had your 'van wired for mains electricity (a specialist's job) then this battery can be further cared for every time you plug in. Obtain a small charger such as the Tragonic. This is very safe as it is doubly insulated, the transformer is double wound and a fuse is incorporated. Wire up a little charging board as shown in my photo. You will see that I have included a Smiths Battery Condition Indicator and a Webb Battery Charge Control (see page 25 in the March number of the magazine). This charging board is permanently in circuit whenever you plug in, but the battery will never be overcharged. The supply from the car should be carried by heavy wire and I like this to have its own plug and socket. If you fit the special Hella 7 pin socket shown in the photo

you will see that this is catered for. But a warning. You have to break the accepted code that sockets and not plugs should be live. In this case the little plug on the caravan lead will be live from the caravan battery, so cap it when not connected and be careful not to produce a short when plugging in.

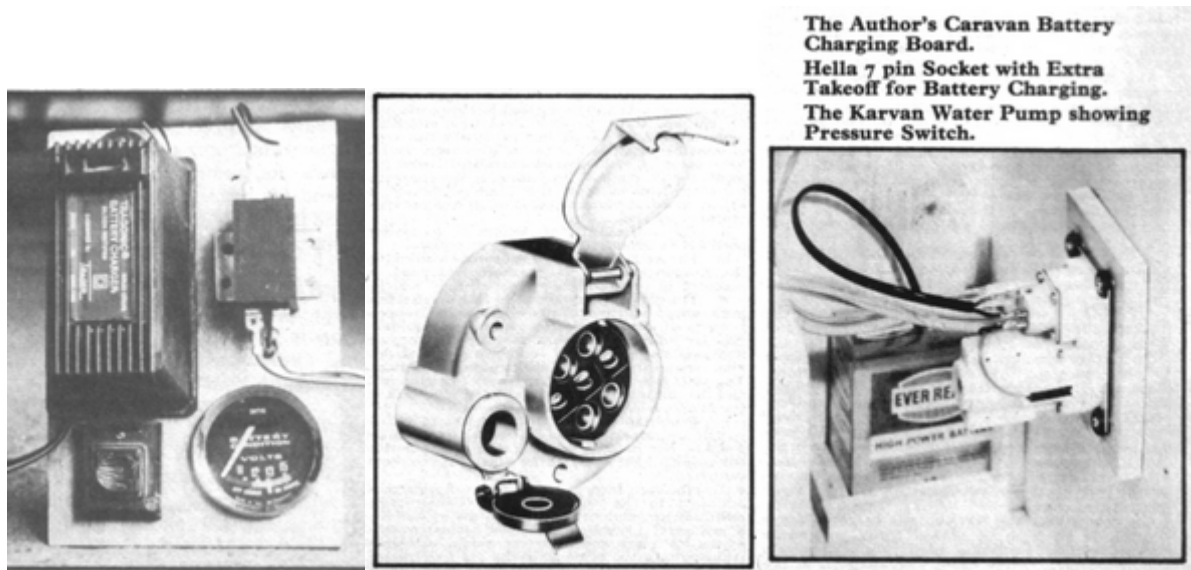
Now you have ample electricity for your comforts. You are probably using discharge tube lighting already, How about another in the toilet room? And• I have fixed a Transtrip 6 watt (yes, 6) right over the sink, a great help when washing up. But you will probably want to fit a water pump first of all. Many 'vans now have these as delivered. I have tested quite a few. The little Shurflow is self priming and very powerful. Unfortunately it is noisy even when rubber mounted. Aqua-Marine offer a beautifully made powerful job to be used in conjunction with their swinging tap which incorporated the on-off switch. Unfortunately this pump is not self priming. But if your water layout does not call for this, then I can recommend it. I have fitted the excellent little French pump called the Karvan marketed by Joy & King. It is small yet quite powerful enough. It is very quiet. No longer can my next door neighbour know at what late hour we make our first cup of tea.

This pump can be controlled by a switch and in this form it costs £7 plus VAT. But for 6Op more a pressure switch is incorporated. Now it is completely automatic and this is how it works. Your water outlets must have taps and the pump is permanently in circuit. It is self priming so it immediately tries to pump and thus builds up a slight pressure in the system. But this pressure operates the switch and cuts the supply. Open a tap, the pressure is relieved and away goes

the pump. You can have as many outlets as you like, but each must have a tap and all joints should be secured with clips. Joy & King offer a tap and faucet for deck mounting but if you prefer to fold away your faucet there is a folding one made by Munster Simms of Whale Pumps fame which has a tap built in at the sink mounting, or there is one as used in the current caravans manufactured by Cavalier. This has an on-off tap at the outlet of the folding faucet and we find it very convenient. In the toilet room washbasin I have an Aquaflo.

For my shower I do not use this system as I usually prefer warm water! So I have a separate drop-in pump which I immerse in a small polythene water carrier. There are some of these immersible pumps which are rather toylike but the Sodimer is quite satisfactory. As long as your water Container has an entry of just over 1~ ins, all you do is drop it in on the end of its wire and hose, switch on and it pumps.

My 12 volts does other jobs for me. It charges my cordless shaver through a suitable resistance. Also my tape recorder the correct dropping resistance to give 9 volts. But do not try this. on your Radio, unless you understand how to produce the correct voltage. But you could fit an Electrolux powered roof ventilation or an extractor for the "loo". For winter caravanning there is even a 12 volt electric blanket but this takes 7 amps so it must be used in moderation.



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