

Les Slimes

April 2021



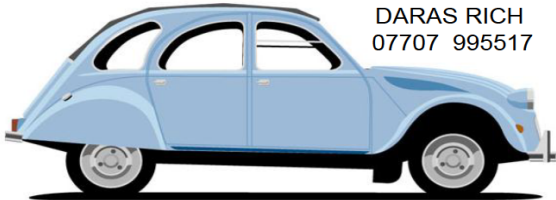
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World Meetings - Smooth Driving all the Way (ALMOST!)

Part Three - Dutch Courage

A travel story featuring Sue, Maurice and of course
Pierre



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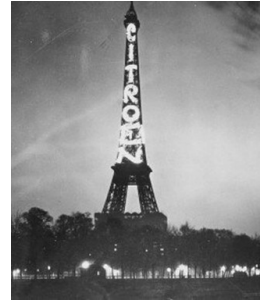
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A Lockdown Project from Bijou John

John writes :

"I have wanted to make a weather vane, for quite a while and decided that now, what with the lockdown, was the time.

When I designed it, I drew silhouettes of a number of objects, including the Bijou and my other cars, but I was disappointed by the outcome, nothing impressed me. Then, in conversation, with a friend, I mentioned the weather vane. She said that the, iconic, Marilyn Monroe pose, where the breeze is blowing through her dress, might make an interesting vane.

So, there you have it, my interpretation, of that pose. I deliberately left it so that it is representational of Marilyn, somewhat in the style of Rene Magritte"



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World Meetings Smooth Driving all the Way (Almost)!

Part Three - Dutch Courage

The World Meeting excitement was in the air again for it was late July 1997 and time to get ready for the trip to the Netherlands. This time there were two cars to pack for Pierre was to be joined



by his 425cc, AZ friend Françoise. It was the ideal trip for her first overseas excursion in my care, being a relatively short one and without any mountains to worry her smaller engine! Our Escargots contingent was much larger

this time, numbering over twenty, including a couple of "Club Clouseau" members. We had produced a special tee shirt (orange coloured naturally) for the trip to "Eendendam" to record the journey.

Leaving a few days before the start of the meeting, the plan was to stop overnight in Northern France and then make a two night stop on a large campsite near Amsterdam, to enable a full day to be spent in the city. From there it would then be only a short trip to the Meeting site on the following day to give ample time for checking-in, pitching camp and starting to relax.

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This all went pretty smoothly. No site had been found or booked in France but after a little initial difficulty we found a site large enough for our overnight stop and on the following day found our way to the recommended Dutch campground.

The day trip to Amsterdam was very enjoyable. We had time to take in all the sights, take a boat trip or just stroll alongside the canals and visit a bar or two. Care was needed though when walking to avoid the ubiquitous bicycles. Many of us wandered along to Oude Kerke to see the red-light district. Dam Square is always worth a visit but the one thing that sticks in my mind is looking in estate agency windows and indeed on a lot of vans and lorries and seeing only English. It takes a moment for the penny to drop and for you to realise you are reading it easily as little is in Dutch!

Off to the meeting and the queues to get in were short and good humoured. We were soon registered and directed to one of the fields to set up our tents. We were all sent to one of the "A" series fields as the organisers were keeping "H" vans and non-"A" series vehicles separate where possible. However, as the vehicles brought by Tim Evans and his work colleagues were in our group, we were all allowed to camp together. .

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Tim had his CX Safari camper-van conversion, called "Shuttleworth" and his crew had also brought a home-made Bedouin-like creation, nick-named "Postman Pat".

The attendance at the meeting was huge and far higher than any previous World Meeting. As a the organisers had to negotiate with local farmers to take additional fields! I seem to remember the number of vehicles attending was around the



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mark. We had ample space though and were handily placed close to the lake where Charlotte and Ben Rich and little Daniel Day enjoyed splashing around.

I find I have lots of pictures of the Meeting and our presence there but not one clear picture of Françoise. As each vehicle entered the site the Meeting sticker was affixed to its windscreen

and after all Françoise still has tached to the ner of the ture was taken Oakhanger on a



these years Fran-
hers proudly at-
top left hand cor-
screen. The pic-
fairly recently at
"Drive-It" Day.

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This meeting had a very large trade area and huge flea-market area by the lake. I suspect there was not much you would have been unable to buy there. We had taken, as at the last meeting, unsold South Downs Escargots/London to Brighton Run merchandise to sell. As ever the stickers were very popular. The entertainment was excellent, the weather good and the beer good. What was there not to enjoy?

French 2CVers have a habit of exhibiting all their regional food and drinks at their national meetings and this became international in 1997. One thing 2CVGB was still keen to do was to attract the 2CV world to Britain and at this meeting we put on a "Taste of Britain" stand along with all the other countries. What was provided has gone from my memory after all these years but I don't believe anything being left at the end. I know in more recent years we have offered marmite which always initially provokes dislike, but when tried is sometimes popular. They say you either love or hate it. Personally I hate it!



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As the Dutch are so incredibly fond of "H" vans and the attendance here was so large it was no surprise to find such a huge number of "Type "H" vans in attendance. There were certainly more than I had ever seen in one place before by a long, long way. It was a very effective, even overwhelming sight, especially as they were mainly in their designated field.

Departure time came all too soon and as usual we made our customary dash straight back to the port, Calais in this case. I left early in Francoise, with the speedy Pierre and Sue following some way behind. I arrived in good time, boarded the ferry early and found a position on deck where I could watch the cars as they came across the dock and up the ramp. Time marched on and there was no sign of a red special. The cars stopped coming ; it looked as though they were about to lift the ramp ; I began to wonder what had happened. Suddenly to my relief Pierre appeared , dashing across towards the ship and I watched him safely climb the ramp. The ramp was closed and we were casting off. That was cutting it fine!

It had been a wonderful trip and there had been such a wide variety of different vehicles to see. One we didn't see at Eendendam was the AK250 of Daras Rich. Daras reckoned it would be ready in time for this trip but, perfectionist as he is, he was still working on it and in fact would be for quite a while. It finally made a World Meeting journey eight years later, to Kelso, but more of that much later!

For now there was 1999 to think about and a far longer trip to Greece. Never mind, it would come soon enough.....

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Dutch
Pics !**



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