

GILDING THE LILY

by John Coleman

Improving (slightly) an Auto-Sleeper VHT

Having owned various VW motorcaravans over a period of twenty-five years we were delighted to be able to buy a low mileage Auto-Sleeper VHT. Though more than pleased with it we inevitably found a few 'wants'. Our solutions to these personal requirements may interest fellow VHT owners and MMM readers.

Our first concern was through ventilation (while static) on wet days. Having praised the upper sliding windows on hot days, whether driving or static, we soon found that they were not so practical to use on rainy ones. The solution was to design a 'see through' hood, giving maximum light while excluding rain water.

The hoods are supported on a 21in length of awning track which makes them easy to fit/remove. This length shields the opening part of the window and the hoods themselves were easily assembled using plastic glue from a 'hot glue gun'. No doubt strong adhesive from a tube would be just as effective. A tip when assembling the end flaps — clamp them to the clear styrene sheet with aluminium strips (using nuts and bolts or rivets) while holding the flaps at right angles, the waterproof cloth then forming a hinge inwards. This makes them 'pack flat' for easier stowage when not in use. See exploded drawing for parts and assembly instructions.

Our second need was a 'vanity mirror', small but carefully positioned to avoid any contortions by the user. In our garage I found a couple of 12in x 6in mirror tiles, one of which I fitted to a good quality 1/2in ply backing with double sided tape and metal corner fixings. With the aid of cranked cupboard door hinges and a mounting pad of ply to raise the mirror, it fitted on the square box section above the sliding door. Folding down when on the move and in the up position when in use. A very safe and usable mirror.

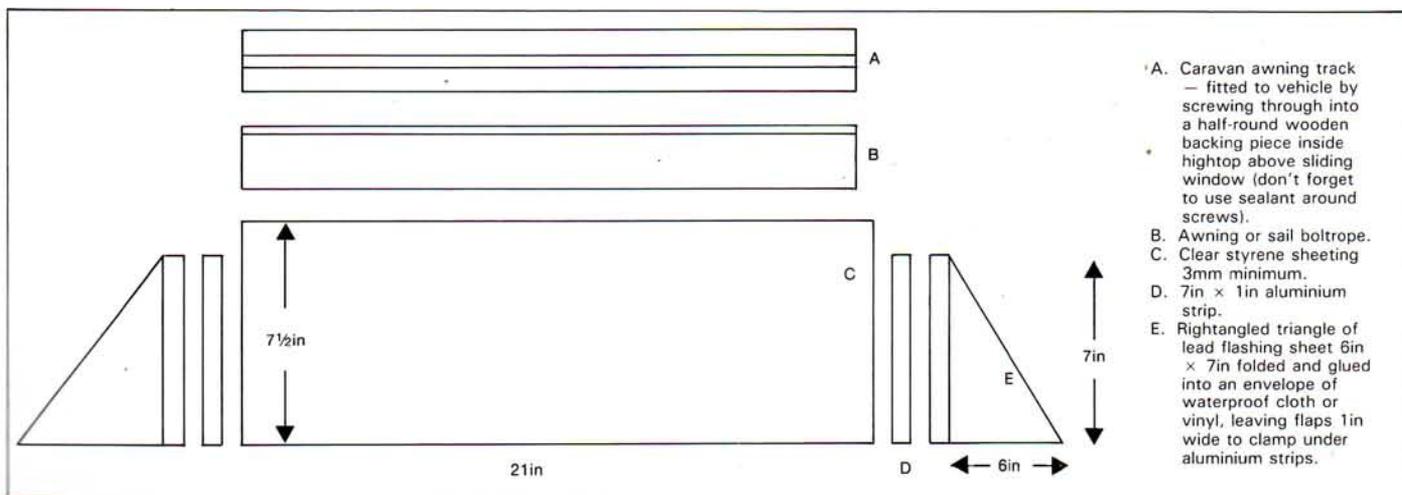
Next, we set about finding a suitable area in which to store our plastic tumblers. Just enough space was found to allow



Awning track above window.



See-through hood repels rain.

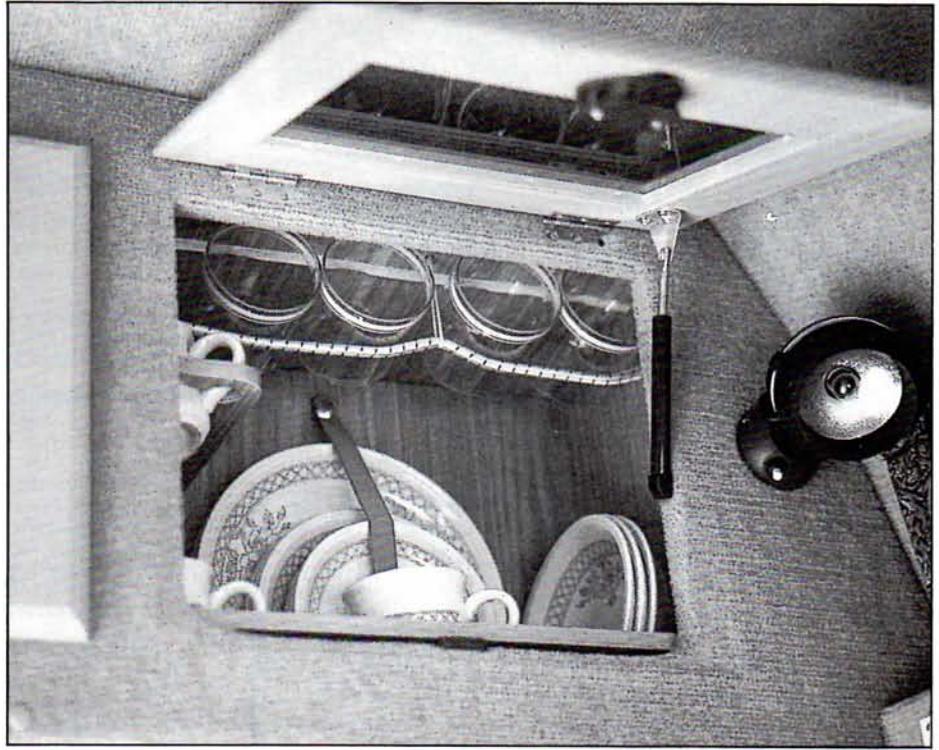


me to suspend them in the upper section of the crockery cupboard. This was accomplished as follows:

Drill a $\frac{1}{4}$ in hole in each side wall of the cupboard 1in less than the diameter of the tumblers from the top and about half the tumbler length from the front of the cupboard. Pass a length of small 'bungee' cord through the holes and bring the offside end back over the top of the cupboard, tying or clipping the ends together with a little tension on the rubber. Then manoeuvre the 'bungee' so that the join disappears into the top of the cupboard.

It will be seen that to support four plastic tumblers you will need to secure the centre of the bungee cord to the roof of the cupboard. This I have done by drilling a hole in line with the bungee and tying a piece of nylon line in a loop around both top and bottom sections of the bungee cord so that the lower one remains horizontal without the tumblers fitted. They haven't dropped out yet!

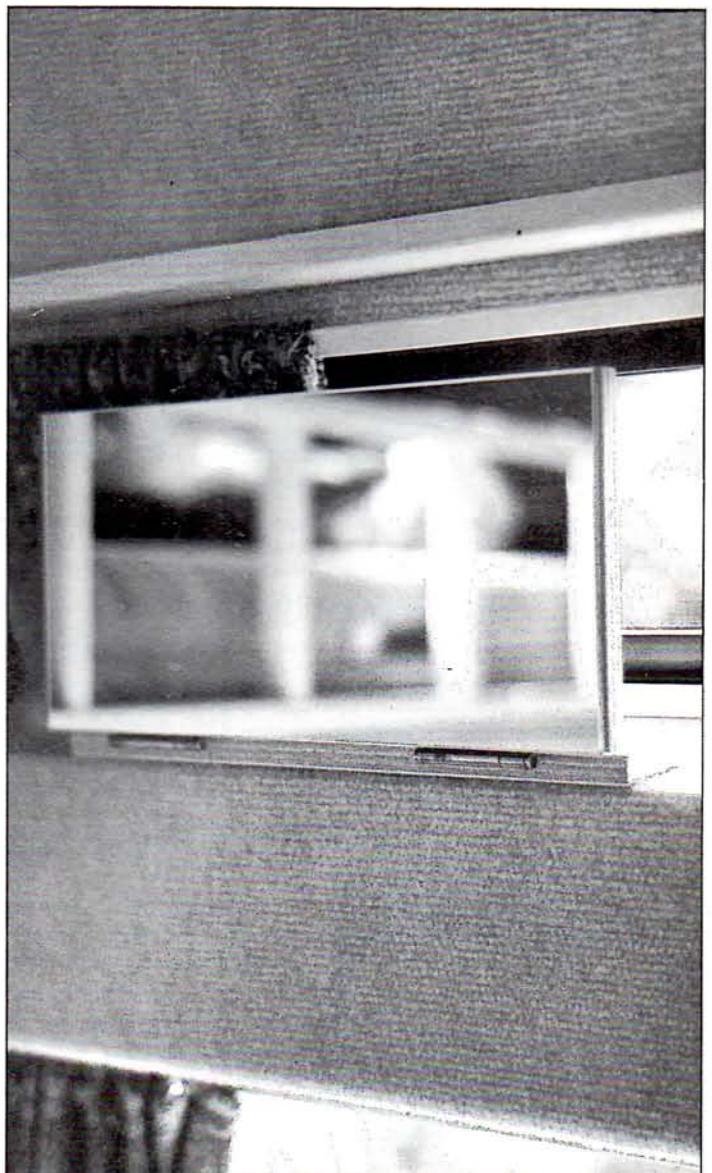
Caution: Whenever a mirror is fitted inside a motorcaravan it should be backed (as is the author's) with some sort of adhesive material so that glass fragments do not fly in the event of an impact. JH.



Bungee holds drinking tumblers.



Mirror in travel position.



Mirror raised for use.