



Beaulieu's Caravan For The Community

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unity - a Sprite 400 takes centre stage!

They tell us:

(Note: All photographs from Beaulieu).

The National Motor Museum at Beaulieu has recently acquired one of the most popular



caravans of the 20th Century - a Sprite 400 touring caravan. Built in 1971, the caravan will be used by the Museum's Learning Team to enable families to step back in time both at the Museum and further afield.

With its original four-berth interior intact, it is undeniably 1970s in style with wood-effect Formica cupboards, sleek cupboard catches, a gas-powered twin-burner hotplate and even its bold Sprite issue curtains. The Museum plans to restore the caravan's exterior and return it to its former glory with help from a local community group and kindly sponsored in part by the Caravan and Motorhome Club.

Curator of the Caravan and Motorhome Club Collection Angela Willis explains "By the early 1970s the popularity of British caravan holidays had exploded, with Sprite becoming a household name. It's incredibly exciting that we have been able to acquire this caravan,



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The Museum's Learning Manager, Benedick Swann, explains the future plans for the caravan "The idea for a mobile National Motor Museum that can pop-up with ease in and around the local and wider community has been presented in many forms over the years, but none have been so well received as in the form of the Sprite 400. This enigmatic little caravan will allow us reach new audiences in a location close to their homes and help us to create fun and engaging content that connects the lives of these audiences with the ever-evolving story of motoring."

Originally founded by two brothers under the name of Alperson Products in 1947, the Sprite caravan range quickly developed after Sam Alper OBE (1924 - 2002) identified a gap in the market for affordable touring caravans in the post-war years. Launched in 1960, the compact Sprite 400 model offered 'comfort, convenience and good value', forming part of



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The Caravan and Motorhome Club Collection is the UK's most significant collection of material relating to the history of the leisure caravan and motorhome holiday. The unique collection, which spans from the birth of leisure caravanning in the 1880s through to the present day, has been hosted at the National Motor Museum since 2006. An array of objects, publications, photographs, film footage and sound recordings reflects the history of Europe's premier touring organisation and the one million caravan and motorhome owners



that it now represents.

The National Motor Museum Trust Limited is a charitable organisation founded in 1972, which runs the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu in the New Forest. Continuing the work of the flagship Montagu Motor Museum, the Trust has a world-famous collection of 250 vehicles and associated motoring items, which are on display in the National Motor Museum. The nearby Collections Centre houses and cares for a vast array of motoring artefacts, photographic images, specialist reference library and film and video library. For more information about its collection and services see www.nationalmotormuseum.org.uk

Visitors to Beaulieu can enjoy a full day out with features including the ancestral Montagu home Palace House, 13th century Beaulieu Abbey and grounds and gardens. Tickets can be bought in advance. For tickets or more information see www.beaulieu.co.uk or call 01590 612345.

A full calendar of events and exhibitions is held at Beaulieu by the National Motor Museum, including Collection Centre Open Days, Classic Grille Evenings, Meet the Curator events and Transport Torques. Details are available at www.nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/events

Kim adds: "I was especially interested in this story, since by coincidence I am the owner of another 1971 Sprite touring caravan, the smaller 'Cadet' model (which tows beautifully behind my 1955 Austin A30). I look forward to seeing the Sprite 400 at Beaulieu, in due course (and it might give me clues regarding the original interior decor within my own Sprite of identical age!)."