

DIY



The 4 corner uprights and around the top edge were 2¼" diameter aluminium tube. The rest of the frame was 60 x 30 top hat aluminium section. This was all TIG welded.



The front (above) and rear (below) lounges which converted to bedrooms.



'We would do it all again'

bathroom and toilet."

It wasn't all plain sailing however. When Les pumped up the hydraulic suspension system, he discovered the vehicle sat down at the back.

"So I purchased another Austin 1800 and set the rear wheels from that behind the original set. This tandem axle configuration worked extremely well."

After seeing the unpainted unit in the backyard for so many years, we could hardly believe our eyes when we saw our motorhome complete with its smart new paint job.

All Yvonne could say was "Wow!"

"As the motif on the sides depicted, our wheels had wings, we're on the road, we're up and away at last."

But not quite . . .

The next job was to give the motorhome a test run so off to Wairoa we went. All went well until Morere hill on the way home. It refused to climb the last 100 metres so we had to rely on a tow to the top. Then I discovered that this model car had been produced with either 14 or 13 inch wheels and ours had the 14 inch ones. I obtained 13 inch wheels for the front (being front wheel drive) from the auto wreckers and a second test run over Trafford's Hill to the Waioeka

Gorge went smoothly — to our great relief."

Retiring from his hospital job at 61, Les and Yvonne hit the road in 1997 for the next five years, travelling the length and breadth of the North Island, visiting their son, daughter and grandchildren and stopping wherever they fancied.

"Heading out on the open road for the first time, we had a sense of total disbelief. After all those years, it was absolutely marvellous. "We had sufficient water and power for three days so we were independent could camp wherever we wanted to."

They joined the NZ Motor Caravan Club founded by Gisborne man, Andy Anderson, and made many friends while travelling.

In 2002, Les sold the motorhome and their Gisborne home in order to buy a property in Papamoa.

"It was so comfy, spacious and convenient, we were very sad to see it go," say Les, 82, and Yvonne 79, who have just celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.

Les and Yvonne look back with fond memories on their years on the road and recommend the travelling lifestyle without hesitation.

"We would do it all again without a doubt," they say.



Les and Yvonne Spicer in their Salvation Army uniforms in front of their beloved 'pad' in Gisborne.



The kitchen in the motorhome looking towards the lounge area at the rear.

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