



It's a plane... no, it's a CARAVAN

MY late father, Frank Olney, made this caravan from a Martin Mariner seaplane, one of several left at the Lake Boga seaplane base after World War 2, more than 45 years ago.

He paid fifty pounds for the plane, minus the engines, and towed it 80 kilometres behind his tractor to his farm at Berriwillock.

To get a permit to travel the roads, he and my brother chopped off the wings and tail fins with axes.

Even then any vehicles they met on the road had to drive under the wing stubs. The power lines were high enough for the plane to pass safely underneath, but some telephone lines had to be lifted. Dad stood on the plane and propped them up with a stick as it was towed slowly beneath them.

The caravan-to-be was then cut from the forward part of the plane, just behind the pilot's cabin. All the caravan furniture was made from sections of the aluminium and fitted with some of the thousands of nuts and bolts removed from various fittings. All light fittings and the wiring also came from the plane.

The van drew many looks and comments when we towed it on holiday behind the old Holden EH.

CARAVAN



The caravan kept the wartime pin-up painting from under the cockpit.

Many uses were found for other sections of this large seaplane.

The gun turret made an excellent cabin for the tractor, a boat was made from one of the floats, and the long wings were used for a windbreak in the garden.

The voluptuous pin-up girl was on the fuselage when the Martin Mariner was bought in 1948.

Doreen Coote,
Caloundra, Qld.

The aircraft was towed 80km home behind the farm tractor.

