

COOL BARNDOORS.

Here is something about cool barndoors i.e. I'd like to focus on the ways used by Volkswagen (or others) to bring more fresh air in the type 2. Of course those rare beasts are also real cool!

First of all, you must remember that the first barndoors produced were all panel vans. If you consider their early evolution, there is already a fresh air device. It was not for the driver but for the rear compartment: louvers (on the top of the side panel). The first 2817 barndoors had no louvers at all.

After chassis 20-02818, on 11 September 1950, short louvers were added: 175 mm long. Then, on 3 August 1951 these slits were lengthened to 350 mm (same size as the lower ones used for the engine cooling). The first so equipped barndoor bore chassis # 20-015400.

Considering louvers a funny addition (if it can be so called as you will see) was the "delete option" M116. This option allowed you to have a Transporter without the upper louvers.

Air circulation was still judged critical on some buses. This was particularly the case for the ambulance but also for the Transporters used for perishable goods transportation. So VW used several systems to improve this.

Miesen made the first ambulances in 1951 (only 7 were produced). They had a rotary fan on the roof or two air intakes. The rotary fan was also available as an option under the code M55.



A very nice Transporter with the M55 rotary fan. This one has the 175 mm long louvers. Type is 213 or 215. Also note lockable cargo doors. [1]

VW produced their own ambulance in 1951 (production began on 3 December).

Research for bringing more air continued and the Behr airscoop was introduced for barndoors (except pick-up) under the code M93. Chassis # 20-047102 seems to be the first to have been so equipped (produced on 10 March 1953).



On the left: this one looks like a Miesen ambulance because of the two air intakes on the roof. It has no rotary fan. [2]

On the right: an inside view of a Miesen ambulance. The rotary fan on the roof is visible and there is no air intake. You can also note the side step, which slides in a sill extension. [3]



On the left: a Behr brochure explaining how cool their product was. Behr was an outside company. [4]

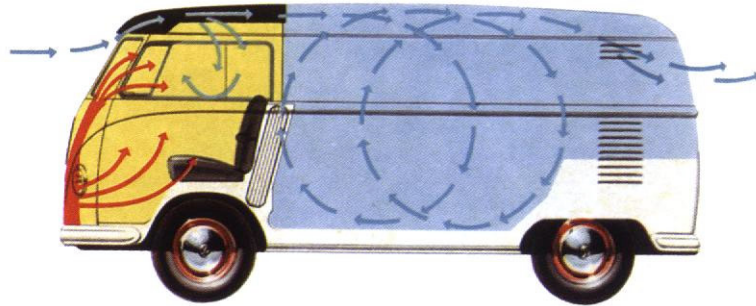
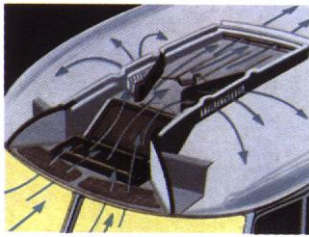


Above left, an inside view of a Behr equipped barndoor [5].



Above right: The Air Police was a Police needing air... [3]

After 1955, every type 2 (including pick-ups) had a “flat cap” including airscoop; much more integrated this time (see below [1]).



The Behr airscoop was one of the ways to bring more fresh air into a barndoor under hot climates. Indeed, you can imagine that it was much more needed in South America, Africa or Portugal for instance.



Transporter louvers were sometimes added on Kombis and Microbuses. This was true for every Portuguese windowed barndoors.

Another famous extra existed for those wishing to receive fresh much air directly to their face: Safari windows.

Look closely at the picture on the left and you'll see Transporter louvers, Behr airscoop and Safari windows.

This extraordinary barndoor is nicknamed ‘Rita’ and all this equipment is stock as on many Portuguese barndoors [6].

Considering Safari windows they were available under M113 and M132 (the latter with laminated glass). Barndoor Safaris are special.

You could also have more air opening the deflectors. You must know that after 1953, they are of the swivelling type (as on the Beetles after October 1952) allowing you to point air directly to you.

But up to late 1952 that was not possible. That's why some inverted the deflectors.

The first picture I saw was the one reproduced on the right. [7] This Transporter is 20-006609 has side windows and indicators added. It also features weird Rossi-like headlamps.

I first thought it was a homemade Brazilian modification because there are other updates.



But I saw other pre-1953 barndoors with the same modification including a Miesen ambulance. So, I think it was something common, maybe made locally (anyone knows out there?).



Both these two barndoors have their inverted deflectors open. On the left is a Miesen ambulance [3] and on the right a wreck seen in the USA [8].

Pop outs are quite common on Beetle but much less on windowed Barndoors. You could get them with M25 or M114. Here is a nice period picture [9].



We shouldn't forget Golde sunroof. This wasn't really an option but it was available on Microbus (type 225, 228, 285), Kombi (type 235, 237 and 238).

The Deluxe Microbus a.k.a. Samba (type 241, 241 and 251) had it stock along with multiple windows. But you could order one without all this (type 24S as early type or later known as M130).

On the right: a picture of an early type 235 or maybe a prototype.

Note the 175 mm louvers. [2]



Finally, I wanted to show you pictures of a Belgium barndoor which was part of a 25,000 km raid in Africa in 1950 by Pierre D'Ieteren, Christian Nicolai de Gorhez, Jacques Cortvriendt and Jacques Swaters. A sunroof Beetle was the other car. The only change was higher ground clearance and greater capacity fuel tank (the Beetle also had a gearbox from a Kombi).

The most interesting thing is the way air was taken inside the Kombi. First, the deflectors were inverted and so-called "crotch coolers" had been installed in the front doors.



On the picture above [10], you can easily see the crotch coolers (closed) whereas below [3] they are open (as are the deflectors).



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Pictures come from:

- [1] Le Combi de mon père (Patrick LESUEUR, E.T.A.I. ed)
- [2] Super VW Magazine n°34
- [3] VW Bus, The First 50 Years 1949-1999 (Keith SEUME with Michael STEINKE)
- [4] VolksWorld, June 2000 issue
- [5] HotVWs, July 1999 issue
- [6] BulliExpress (in 1995)
- [7] I.V.V.M. volume 7.2
- [8] Super VW Magazine n°130
- [9] I.V.V.M. volume 9.4
- [10] Cox en stock (Fabien SABATES – Jacky MOREL)