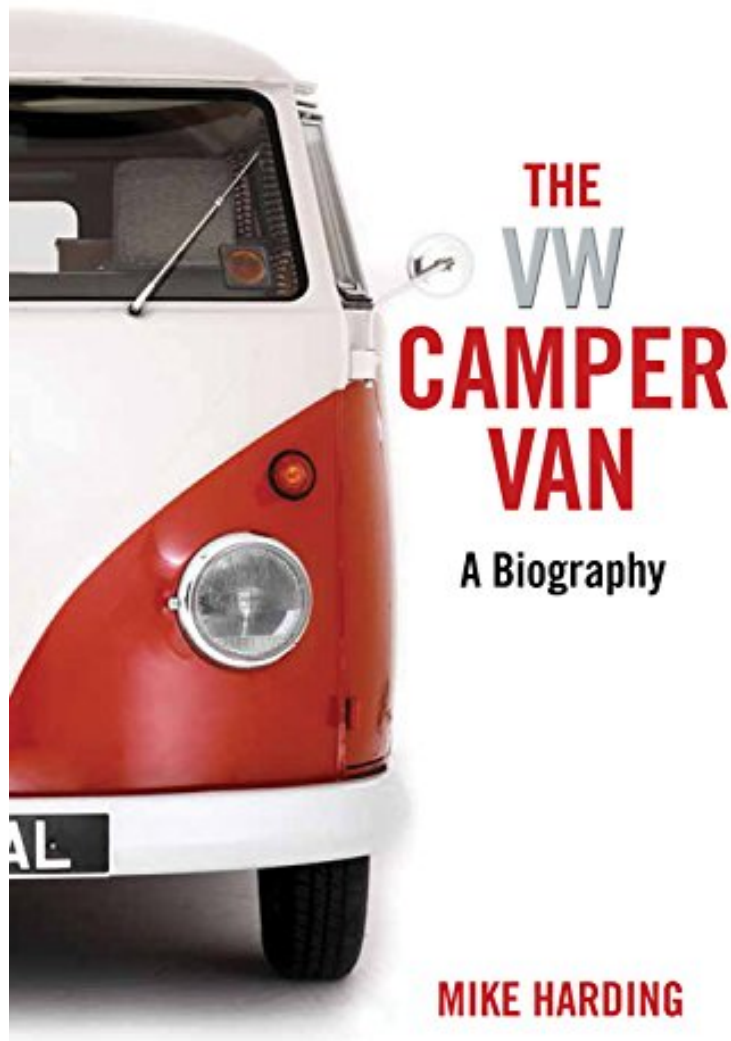


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## The VW Camper Van: A Biography

*Mike Harding*

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**Mike Harding : The VW Camper Van: A Biography** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The VW Camper Van: A Biography:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. I owned one Westfalia for 25 years... and several others... By Jon I thoroughly enjoyed my experiences ... on several continents Africa, north and south America Europe from Finland to Turkey.. I thought I would like this book but I did not... I could not connect with the writer or his experiences... 500,000 miles in Westies was much more interesting than anything that book had to say... Deadly dull 1 of 1 people

found the following review helpful. A second opinion  
By Robert M. Dunshee "There is not accounting for tastes". Or is there?  
Contrary to the other reviewer, I very much enjoyed the book. My wife and I own a 1991 Vanagon. We have not traveled to Africa or South America; only to Québec (from Seattle) often with a canoe on the roof or bikes on bumper rack. Or both. Perhaps owning a VW camper van is like having children: talking about it/them may not be very interesting to those who don't have one/them? In any case, I liked reading about the "genealogy" of these vehicles: the inspiration of a Dutch bicycle, for instance, with the "power" (the cyclist) in the rear and the cargo space up front: the moving of the cyclist (the steering) to the front, leaving the cargo space in the middle and the power in the rear. Thus, the VW camper van. And I liked reading about what other people are doing with their camper vans, like the woman who stages plays in hers. But then, the Vanagon is my "baby". Finally, four stars compared to what books? Five compared to some novels I can think of; three compared to books by Jonathan Raban. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Bought for a friend, loves it!!!!  
By Las Vegas Bought for a friend, loves it!!!!

It was invented immediately after the war, in the factory a far-sighted English military man had set up to turn the German economy from making machines of warfare to more pacific products. By the seventies that dream had been amply fulfilled, as the VW Campervan became the conveyance of choice for West Coast hippies, Australian surf bums and Europeans taking the overland route to find enlightenment and good karma in India. It had also become, indeed, still is, the first choice for any couple, or family, seeking a cheap camping holiday with wheels attached. So never mind the oddly off-centre driving wheel, the vagaries of the air-cooled rear engine, the VW Campervan had become more than a vehicle; it had truly become a way of life. Mike Harding's first ride in a Volkswagen Camper Van was back in 1961, when it was the carrying around the gear and band members of his rock band the Manchester Rainmakers. Finally, in 2009, he could wait no longer, and bought his own, a 2001 Type 2 bay window Brazilian import Danbury conversion in hot orange and off white. Add in the endless curiosity of the author of eight monographs on church architecture, and the hilarious sense of humor of one of Britain's best stand-up comics, and you have a wonderful social history of the postwar years through the prism of a single transport icon.

'Harding writes as a fan.'