



**AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS' CLUB**

Newsletter



No. 146

November 2000

Chairman's Chat



Your Committee meets Ian Capes

BEFORE THEIR MEETING on Saturday, 30 September, the members of your Committee met Ian Capes, CEO and Managing Director of the Auto-Sleeper Group.

Ian spoke of his enthusiasm for encouraging even closer links between the Company and the Club, and of the value to Auto-Sleepers Limited of encouraging Club members to make comments and suggestions which would help in evaluating and improving the Company's products.

The new group's aim is for Auto-Sleepers to become more dominant in Great Britain, whilst expanding into Europe with motorhomes built specifically for the continental market.

In reply to questions from the Committee, Ian said that a range of Auto-Sleeper approved accessories was being considered, with mounting points being built in during manufacture. A higher degree of all-weather insulation could be offered and it was hoped to develop a network of dealers for 'one-stop' servicing of the whole vehicle.

Other ideas were discussed, and it was clear that Auto-Sleepers Limited intend to maintain their traditional values and quality and, with the help of their customers, offer even better motorhomes in the future.

The Club will, of course, remain autonomous and there is no question of it being controlled in any way by the Company. In fact, our relationship with Auto-Sleepers Limited should remain as before - but better.

Ray Whiley

From Charles Trevelyan

Opening up the channels

AS RAY WHILEY has told you, your Committee was delighted to meet Ian Capes at Moreton-in-Marsh on 30 September, prior to the last Committee meeting. In talking to him later, he told me that he found the meeting most refreshing, and enjoyable, too - underlined by the fact

that he spent over two hours with us. Ian started by explaining the organisation of the Auto-Sleeper Group and then learned much from the Committee about their views on ways in which our current motorhomes could be improved. This was a very lively conversation and enormously interesting. Ian certainly left with a very clear understanding of the high levels of expertise and knowledge that exist within the Club.

Of course the subject of the relationship between the Club and the Company was raised. Since the Club's inception the relationship has been very special, allowing the Club to grow as it wished with minimal, if any, interference from Auto-Sleepers. Ian assured the Committee that this very special relationship would continue, but at the same time he was most anxious that we as a Company should work more closely with the Club than in the past, particularly in incorporating new ideas and proposals from Club members. He wants to use this in-depth knowledge and experience to the full.

The Committee has welcomed the proposal that Stephen Small, A-S Design Manager, will join the Club at the 2001 AGM Rally at Banham, to run one, if not two, seminars where owners will be able to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their Auto-Sleepers with him, enabling the Company to learn and improve the products still more. Nora Venables, who so effectively heads the AGM Sub-Committee, has kindly undertaken to find a room of sufficient size. This will be the first of several brainstorming sessions with owners, and will, I feel, enhance the AGM weekend enormously. Even at our relatively brief meeting at Moreton, several excellent ideas were picked up and have been passed to Stephen and his team.

Talking to many Club members, I find there is a feeling that the Company will 'take over' the Club. The Club is, and always will be, run by its Committee, and whilst I am the direct interface between the Club and the Company, please be assured that it is the Committee who run it and not the Company. As your President (an appointment I am most honoured to hold) I don't even have the right to vote at meetings!

For my part, I really feel that for the first time the true value of the Club is being recognised, and that delights me. Not before time, over coming months, our two organisations will come much closer, and the wealth of knowledge each Club member has will, where possible, be used to the full. I look forward to the future with much enthusiasm, and I know your Committee does, also.

Notes and queries

NOT EVERYONE will be able to go to the AGM rally at Banham, Norfolk, from 20 to 22 April 2001, and so won't take part in the seminars Auto-Sleepers are arranging to find out how we think the vehicles could be improved. Full marks to A-S for being prepared to listen to their users.

But what about members who won't be there? After all, rallying is not the whole of motorhoming by any means, and non-ralliers also have comments and experiences to pass on and perhaps get some feedback about. It seems to me that *ASOC Newsletter* can help. From next month we will have a regular 'Notes and queries' section to which you can write with your questions and to pass on items of information about your van's performance. As large a sample from the postbag as space permits will be published each month, with, if possible, reactions from the Factory. However, whether individual contributions are published or not, they will *all* be sent on to Charles Trevelyan for reference to the appropriate department. If answers about current models are known, they will be published here later.

I hope 'Notes and queries' will provide a useful forum for all members to air ideas about their motorhomes, as well as helping improvements be made to the next generation of Auto-Sleepers.

Ian Day

Not too much to expect?

MICHAEL RETIRED IN MARCH. After thirty years of caravanning, and with advancing years, we decided to invest some of his hard-earned pension in a motorhome. In July we purchased a new A-S Duetto LE.

Knowing nothing about motor-caravanning, we read *Motor Caravan Magazine*. In its August issue there was an article on rust-proofing carried out by Rustbusters, a firm near Bournemouth. Although we read the article with interest, we didn't place too much importance on it as we thought our new Duetto would have been rust-proofed before it left Willersey. After all, the dealer had assured us that Auto-Sleepers were at the top end of the market. However, after reading the article, Michael

thought he would have a look underneath our new pride and joy. Imagine his dismay when he discovered that the only seal was a piece of chewing gum stuck on one of the box sections - presumably by one of the Dagenham Demons.

We found this rather upsetting, because we had just parted with £27,000 and these days would not even contemplate buying a £7,000 car that was not undersealed, with less than a three-year warranty. However, having got over our upset and anger, we took the Duetto to Rustbusters where Philip Lewis, the boss, did a very good job at a cost of £475.

Two words of warning about the process: Expect to spend a few hours removing the inevitable overspray of Waxoyl from the paintwork, which is easily done with white spirit or car polish, and don't sleep in the vehicle the night after it has been treated because the smell is very pungent.

Shirley and Michael Carrington

Disappointment about the 'as delivered' detail of an A-S for these new Club members. Lack of undersealing is often discussed when owners meet. Perhaps the Company will take the Carrington's complaint on board when they look to improve. Meanwhile we welcome them - Ed.

Clarice has a make-over

WE'VE BEEN MEMBERS of ASOC for just under a year and the 10th Anniversary Club and Company was our first rally, where we were treated like favoured friends with our Classic Auto-Sleeper - Clarice.

Clarice is a 1975 Bedford CF 2.3 automatic with an Auto-Sleeper conversion and sliding cab doors. The interest shown in her makes us think members might be interested in the trials and tribulations we went through to restore her. We bought her in August 1998 for £80. Although some of the original cabinets were intact, the rest of her inside had been completely gutted, and the outside was rotten all the way up to the body line. Her engine was running, but billowed smoke from its exhaust and leaked oil from just about everywhere.

Renovation started by cutting off all the outer main body panels. Dave, doing all the bodywork himself, fabricated sills up to the body line, wheel

arches, door bottoms and floor pans (to name but a few), from scratch. We were new to the motorhome game and didn't know that panels were still available. He did all the paintwork, including prepping, painting and lacquering while Melanie stripped the interior woodwork prior to revarnishing. It was in a dreadful state with many coats of varnish splashed on haphazardly at different stages of the van's life.

Using a 'donor' van, another Bedford CF, but with hinged cab doors, we were provided with fridge, cooker, bed base units, rear doors and all the other trimmings like seat cushions and curtain rails.

Meanwhile, Dave had removed the engine and completely stripped it down. The crank was re-ground and new big ends and main bearings put in place. New piston rings were fitted and the cylinder head rebuilt.

After eight months' work restoration was almost complete. We had 240v AC electrics installed, together with a fuel catalyst to allow us to run on unleaded fuel and went off on our maiden trip over May Bank Holiday. She behaved beautifully.

Having decided that motor caravanning was definitely for us, we took Clarice off the road again in September 1999 for further restoration.

Because the wooden frame supporting the roof was rotten in a couple of places, it was completely removed and Melanie's stepfather, who is a carpenter, made a new frame using the old pieces as a guide and a lot of guesswork where the wood had disintegrated. We painted the fibreglass roof to match the bodywork and made a new roof lining to replace the original which had been ripped where the roof was leaking.

Then we fitted new front seats and a strong box under the driver's seat to hold valuables. Rear leaf springs, shock absorbers, brake shoes, wheel cylinders and the brake servo were all replaced. We tried to eliminate as many knocks, bangs and rattles as we could, which meant re-glazing the roof side pieces and tightening all the door catches. Of course with a van her age, we know we will never get rid of all the rattles and she will always have arthritis.

This second bout of restoration took seven months, but we were ready in time for our outing to the Peterborough Show.

Dave Still and Melanie Hurley

Icy service

WE HAVE JUST returned from a most enjoyable rally at the Northern Motorhomes Show on York Racecourse and would like to make other members aware of the very good service provided to us on 8 September by Pat Richmond of Brownhills, and especially, by Colin and Mike of TCB Caravan and Motorhome Repair Centre, Darlington. Our fridge failed and they did everything in their power to get it working.

When we rang the Leeds office of Electrolux Service Centre, the woman there was very offhand. Because we were not able to give her the post-code of the racecourse and it was not her job to look it up on our behalf, she at first refused to send out an engineer. After much discourse, she eventually agreed to look the postcode up and took various details, but then said an engineer couldn't call until 11 September - which wasn't much use because that was the day we were going home, and in any case the fridge and freezer were full of goodies for the weekend.

Colin and Mike of TCB came to our rescue and set about trying to find out why our fridge would not ignite. The fault was found in the ignitor box - which Electrolux Service Centre could not supply. As our Excelsior is the second vehicle we have bought from Brownhills, we asked Pat Richmond if she could help us out by letting Colin remove an ignitor box from a new vehicle on the understanding that we would replace it later. She readily agreed. Within four hours our fridge was back in working order, at a very reasonable cost.

We arranged a habitation check with TCB and the fitting of a bike rack, which Fiamma were unable to do at the Show. They carried it out on 11 September when we stopped off on our way home. When we reached their workshop we were driven into Darlington to have lunch and do some shopping, being collected later when the vehicle was ready.

Because of the friendly, courteous and efficient manner of all at TCB we would not hesitate to recommend their service.

Bill and Marlene Tait

Someone's after-sales service needs defrosting - Ed.

'You know you're getting old when the candles cost more than the cake.'

- Bob Hope

Site seen

FOSSWAY FARM Bed and Breakfast Camping and Caravanning Club certificated location, Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos. is a level field with hook-ups, toilets and shower. Charges are £6 a night, plus £1.50 for electricity. Approach along A429 from Moreton. In half a mile take the first right after Esso garage. Five minutes' walk takes you back from the site into the centre of Moreton, where the market day is Tuesday.

We have stayed here several times. The owners, Sandra and Mo (0160 865 0503) are very helpful, run a good, clean site and allow the use of washing machines and a barbecue. Not to be missed is the 'Campers' Breakfast' they put on at £3 a head.

Sylvia and Norman Brice

Light on 12-volt consumption

THIS YEAR WE CAMPED from May to the end of August - over 70 days in total. The majority of our stops were one-nighters, with a maximum of three in any one place and we used only three hook-ups, in May.

During August's poor weather we had to have the interior lights on quite early, which got me thinking about how long the lights would last before the battery was flattened and need recharging. That led on to wondering which of the fitted Lab Craft Tri-Lite fluorescents (2 x 8 watt tubes) and filament spots were the most economical lights to use.

The Legend's battery is rated at 71 ampere hours. For those not versed in techno-speak, that means that theoretically a new and fully-charged battery will last 71 hours when supplying current at 1 amp, 35.5 hours at 2 amps, or 142 hours at 0.5 amps, and so on. Although these are described as 'rated figures', in practice you will find that the higher the amount of current drawn battery at any one time, the more quickly output (amps v time) will drop off.

I did a current check on the two types of lights with this result:

<u>Lamp type</u>	<u>Consumption</u>	<u>Battery Life</u>
Fluorescent	0.58 amps	122.4 hrs
Spot light	0.8 amps	88.75 hrs

As you can see from these results, it is much better to use one fluorescent lamp than one spot. Also, one fluorescent seems to give a higher light output than one spot light.

Robin Gardner

Thanks, Robin. A lot of members will be pleased to have this evidence to persuade their significant others to 'Put that light out!' - Ed.

Thanks

I WOULD LIKE to pass on my appreciation to the numerous members, past and present, who sent cards, flowers and telephoned during my recent hospital visit. Brian was a great support, as I am sure he will be in the months to come.

We hope to get many more rallies in between hospital visits.

Vera McLean

Contrans follow-up

WITHIN DAYS of writing about the troubles with my tyres and before October's ASOC Newsletter had been published, Continental Tyres had agreed to provide five new tyres at no cost to me except the fitting charge.

Geoff Bowen

Seeking a sun-shade

WHEN WE WERE IN GREECE a few years ago, we came across a local family who kept the direct sun off their caravan with an 'over all', or drive-in, awning. It had no walls, just an overlapping top to ensure no direct sunlight hit the caravan, and was supported by a frame and guy ropes. We were impressed at its effectiveness and noted that it was standing up well to the sea breeze which was adding to the cooling by its venturi effect. The owner's wife and children were clearly very happy with this shelter on what was an absolutely scorching day.

The owner had bought the caravan from a British couple but had no idea who had made the awning. I have come across fixed awnings on Mediterranean campsites, but not individually-owned ones. Although I have made some inquiries in the UK, there has been no useful result. I would be interested, therefore, to find out whether any Club members know of a manufacturer, and if so, what opinions they have on serviceability, practicality and price. I can see positive advantages for our Amethyst.

Brian Weeden

Sounds ideal for long-stayers on superheated sites. Has anyone come across these? - Ed.

Ugh!

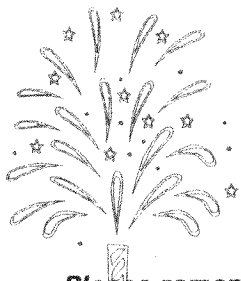
BECAUSE OF THE SMELL when I emptied the waste water tank after the York Show, I decided to remove the tank and give it a good clean. With a struggle I got it down and found the bottom covered in foul-smelling sludge. But what surprised me was that the interior of the tank's roof was covered with a black carbon deposit which was quite difficult to remove. This must be the cause of the black bits Eric and Vivienne Alper found coming from their waste tank (September ASOC Newsletter).

I think the deposits must be formed from washing-up liquid, which is oil-based. Could we ask Auto-Sleepers to make it easier to remove the waste tank for cleaning, please?

George Gilchrist

Good and bad news, George. Good news: Auto-Sleepers are looking at this problem and hope to move the inspection hatch from the top (where it can't be got at) to the side or bottom of the tank where, on most models, it will be accessible without the necessity of taking it off for internal cleansing. The bad news is that it can't be done on the vehicles we are running about in at present without replacing the tank and possibly making other modifications - Ed.

This year? July had been blown out like a candle by a biting wind that ushered in a leaden August sky - Gerald Durrell.



NOVEMBER 2000

RALLY SUPPLEMENT

Please remember that only Club members are allowed to attend our rallies.

Please remember to complete **both** sides of the Rally Slip before sending to the appropriate rally marshal with the rally fee & site fee, if applicable.

Rally slips are required to be sent to the rally marshals at **ALL** rallies & Shows with the exception of the **A.G.M. & Club & Co.**

Note that **ALL** rallies start and finish at **12.noon** unless otherwise stated in the rally information.

I am looking for volunteer marshals for a new Motorcaravan Show to be held at the Harrogate Show Ground on 4th - 6th. May 2001.

This show will be organised by Stone Leisure.

If you are interested then please contact me for further information.

Proposed Rally in France 2001

11th - 22nd June 2001. Camping Les Deux Vallees, Vezac, Dordogne, France.

If you are interested in attending this rally please contact Sheila & Ivor Barnett for further details **as soon as possible. Tel.No. 01584 890 428.**
Early application is essential.

Please remember that if you are interested in attending this rally then you will have to book your own ferry places as well as any insurance that is required.

3rd - 7th.November.(Friday to Tuesday 4 nights). Somerset Carnival, Burnham On Sea Holiday Village.

Site Tel.No.01278 783 391 (Emergency only).

Probable limit of 25 vans.

SORRY BUT NO DOGS ALLOWED ON THIS SITE.

Rally Marshals: Linda & Brian Ellis.

Site Fee:£27.00 (includes electricity). Rally Fee:£2.00

Booking/Rally slips to:Mr.B.Ellis,52 Golf Links Road,Burnham on Sea,
Somerset.TA8 2PP.

Cheques payable to:B.Ellis. Tel.No. 01278 784 524.

Attractions: Site on sea front,easy walk to town centre and shops.Burnham

Carnival Monday evening through town centre. Burnham firework display Sunday evening 5th Nov. on beach. Highbridge open air market Sunday, 15 mins. walk from site.

Directions: M5 junction 22 Edithmead, Burnham on Sea. **Straight across** big island. About 1 mile, **straight across 2nd island**, Tesco supermarket to your left. At mini island junction, petrol station ahead, **turn left**. Follow this road about ½ mile to another mini island (Petrol station to your right). **Turn right** into Marine Drive. About ¼ mile, **turn left** into Burnham on Sea. Holiday Village. Additional nights can be arranged through site.

9th -12th . November. (3 nights). Oxon Touring Park, Shrewsbury, Salop.

Site Tel. No. 01743 340 868. (Emergency only).

Rally Marshals: Helen & John Greenwood.

Site Fee: £9.75 per night. **This includes electricity.** Rally Fee: £1.00 per person.

Booking slips to: John Greenwood, 5 Ellesmere Road, Mynydd Isa, Mold, Flintshire.

CH7 6UJ. Tel./Fax. 01352 754 794. Mobile: 0701 0702 919.

Email: jdvw@jdvw.freerve.co.uk Cheques payable to John Greenwood.

Attractions: The site is reasonably flat, hard standings, Park & Ride to Shrewsbury next to site!! Full site facilities.

Directions: From the A5 from N,S,E & W follow the signs for OXON Park & Ride and follow the international camping sign.

We need a minimum of 25 Vans for this rally.

31st. December -2nd. January. Hidden Valley T.P. New Year Rally.

If interested please contact the marshals; Sandra & Bernie Wisely, 12 The Laurels, Village, Barnstaple, North Devon. EX31 3QY. Tel.No. 01271 346 400.

If you are thinking of running a rally please remember to check the availability of dates with me **before** booking with a site. We depend on volunteers within the Club to act as rally marshals. If you know of a suitable site why not think about running a rally. It is not difficult and help is available. It is important that all potential rally dates and venues are checked with me first as, unless they are approved by the Club, no rally can be held.

I will require dates of rallies for 2001 by the end of November if they are to be included in the provisional list issued with the January Newsletter

Please note that **ALL** information concerning rallies, dates, booking of sites and rally details for the Newsletter should be sent to the Rally Co-ordinator:

***Neil C. Rogers,
3 Appleby Close,
Aldbrough St. John,
Richmond,
North Yorks,
DL11 7TT.***

Tel./Fax. No. 01325 374 540

E-Mail. ncr@nasuwt.net

Local assistant: Jerry Haxton (01 483 223 476) Woking, Surrey.
E & O. E.

Rally : Date:

Your name and address(Please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Phone No.: Van Reg:

Membership No. Day/Time of arrival

In the event of an emergency at the rally whom should we contact?

Name Phone No.

Please complete both sides of the form!

f

Rally : Date:

Your name and address(Please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Phone No.: Van Reg:

Membership No.: Day/Time of arrival:

In the event of an emergency at the rally whom should we contact?

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Rally : Date:

Your name and address(Please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Phone No.: Van Reg:

Membership No.: Day/Time of arrival:

In the event of an emergency at the rally whom should we contact?

Name Phone No.

Please complete both sides of the form!

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes No
Number of people in your van: Adults..... Children.....

Names of Adults.....

Names of Children (including ages).....

Extras: Please indicate which you would like, if available:

Electricity: Yes No Saturday night meal if any: Yes No

Have you any special needs? Yes No If Yes please specify:-

Full payment MUST accompany this slip-cheques payable to the marshal.
POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 10 DAYS BEFORE EVENT,IF POSSIBLE PLEASE!

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes No
Number of people in your van: Adults..... Children.....

Names of Adults.....

Names of Children (including ages).....

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Full payment MUST accompany this slip-cheques payable to the marshal.
POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 10 DAYS BEFORE EVENT,IF POSSIBLE PLEASE!

Kudos for CCC travel cover

FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS we have used the Camping and Caravanning Club's foreign travel personal and vehicle insurance quite often as it gives up to 183 days cover with no limitation on the duration of any one trip up to the total cover period.

As an example, a couple of years ago we used this multi-trip insurance for a six week winter trip in our motorhome to France and Spain, an early spring journey to the Netherlands and a short package deal to the Mediterranean by air.

Recently CCC Multi-trip covered us for a journey to Scandinavia which took us to Bergen and other places in Norway, including the Lofoten Islands, through the Arctic Circle and up to Europe's northernmost point, Norcapp. From there we moved on into Finnish Lapland, visiting Savoloni for its annual opera festival, and passing through Kupio to reach Helsinki. Having gone that far it seemed a shame not to carry on into Russia, but the CCC cover did not include that and it was necessary to take out world-wide insurance.

We went by rail to St Petersburg after finding secure parking in Helsinki for our Executive. We are glad we went on to the old Russian capital. St Petersburg will now become the benchmark against which all other visits will be measured. Our visit to the ballet to see 'Swan Lake' helped make it a truly magical trip, which we urge anyone with the opportunity to make.

From Helsinki we drove through Turku to enjoy a wonderful daytime sail through the hundreds of small islands and skerries for a few days in Stockholm before driving through Gothenburg and Malmo to cross over the new bridge now linking Sweden with Denmark. After Copenhagen it was over to Odense and on to Esbjerg for the night boat to Harwich.

Because our Executive behaved impeccably we had no need to call on the insurance, but knowing we had it gave us complete peace of mind. Friends have often told us how efficient CCC cover can be when problems do arise. Last year a close friend's clutch gave up within 50 miles of the Channel. He chose to have it repaired in France. Within an hour of ringing the contact number given by CCC, he was taken to a local

garage, given a fully-fuelled hire car and booked into bed and breakfast accommodation for two nights while the garage did the repair. Another satisfied customer.

Michael and Joyce Thomas

With the nights now drawing in, many of us are planning next year's trips. What drawbacks did you find with this year's? Let's know so that others can be warned - Ed.

All hands to the pump

TWO HOURS after arriving late at the York Show in my recently-acquired 1995 Duetto, the water pump ceased to operate. As it served both the sink and the Thetford loo, that was pretty awkward for me because I'm on four prescribed drugs a day and needed the water.

After checking the fuse and still being unable to hear the pump running, I casually mentioned the problem in conversation. In next to no time, five good men arrived to pool their knowledge and ability in what turned out to be an unsuccessful attempt to get it going again. Although the van was just out of warranty, the suppliers renewed the pump the next day, free of charge.

I've thanked the suppliers, but those five kindly members really warmed my heart - thank you to them, again.

Michael Mawer

Retiring springs

ONE OF THE MANY reasons for our choice of a Clubman was that the seat cushions had interior springing. For the first time we could enjoy sleeping comfort of a standard similar to that at home. Two years on we realised that this comfort had gradually diminished and springs were becoming very evident. Something had to be done if we were ever to get a good night's sleep again.

Whilst at the Club and Company rally we spoke to the exhibiting upholstery companies. Alison, at Peter James Leisure Upholstery, could not have been more helpful and we booked up to have foam fitted in place

of the creaking springs. All was ready to start work immediately when we reached their immaculate Derbyshire workshop. Two hours later the job had been completed most professionally. We can now sleep again in comfort without offending ironwork sticking into us.

Anyone else suffering the same problem could do much worse than follow our example. In the fitting, we enjoyed one of those rare experiences of superb service with nothing being too much trouble.

Bob and Rosemary Morris

Fuel and flood rally havoc

WE WOULD LIKE to thank all the people who attended the Shepton Mallet and Unity Farm rallies. They not only coped with the fuel shortage to attend, with many (including us) arriving without even enough to get home again, but also had to contend with heavy rain, gale force winds and flooded pitches at Unity Farm - everything except snow, in fact. (We will *not* be choosing a boat for the rally plaques again). Our thanks to all who helped, particularly our fellow marshals.

To get there we drove through the centre of London, instead of around it, to save fuel and expected only a few vans to turn up, but most of the members booked in, arrived. Here's hoping for better weather next year - like the hot and sunny day when most had gone back home.

Stella and Ian Ross



WE WOULD LIKE to thank Stella and Ian Ross, together with their assistants, for the two wonderful rallies at Shepton Mallet and Brean Sands. Despite the atrocious weather, a good time was had by all.

Bob and Ivy Smith

Brecon Fitness

HELEN AND GEOFF GRAY, ably assisted by Elizabeth and Bryn Morgan, organised a wonderful week's rally in September at Brynich CP.

Despite all of us being caught out by a lack of fuel because of the petrol dispute and having to use our bikes or feet more than usual, everything was laid on to give us a week to remember *and* sent us home a lot fitter.

We hope soon to meet again the many friends made that week.

Rhona and Jack Bamber

Isn't it refreshing to read of such a positive response to difficulties? - Ed.

Fancy a day across the Channel?

ALTHOUGH THE AGM SEEMS A LONG WAY OFF, here's good notice that after the AGM rally at Banham in Norfolk, there will be a follow-on rally, also at Banham. Its dates will be 23-26 April 2001.

There is a possibility that the site management may be able to offer ralliers a day's shopping trip to France via Euro-Tunnel at a very reasonable price, using an executive coach with w.c. There are two possible trips - one to Belgium and a French hypermarket, the other to the hypermarket only.

If you are interested and would like further details, please send a stamped and self-addressed envelope to the rally marshals, Barbara and Ray Whiley, 21 Ellcar Rise, Eaton, Norwich NR4 6HR (016 0345 2593). Firm commitment and payment will be needed a month or so before the rally.

Tantalising Brittany

PAT AND I had tried to holiday in Brittany before, but cold weather drove us further south to end up in the warmer climate of the Dordogne. This year we were determined to see it whatever the weather, and went suitably equipped. But still it was not to be.

After a day's drive from Cherbourg via the Auchan Hypermarket and a night's stay near Concarneau, we travelled on no more than another mile to La Forêt Fouesnant where we found a site, Manoire de Pen ar Steir, about 150 yards from the main street. It was so pleasant we decided to book in for a few days and explore the area. The site has an award-winning garden entrance, about twenty touring pitches with

electricity, TV point and water tap, and two adjacent toilet blocks. It was about a third full, mainly with British visitors. There are a number of static vans, the majority British-owned, mainly hidden amongst bushes and trees. The whole site is well looked after by its pleasant and helpful owners, Denny and Marie-Helene, and is quiet and not prone to vandalism.

The town itself is very pretty and smart, and has a bakers, butchers, chemists, five bars and restaurants and an attractive church. There is a coastal footpath, a golf course and a smart marina with a large beach on its other side.

We ended up staying two weeks, because the day before we intended moving on I developed an abscess *sur la derrière* which meant two days in hospital and a period of recovery needing a visit to the nurse each day. The local residents were very helpful during my period of being unable to walk, let alone sit. The site owners took me the kilometre each way to the doctors, and static owners, Jeanne and Alan, drove me to Quimper hospital and collected me afterwards, meanwhile taking Pat out for the day. Many others offered help and we were happy to be 'stuck' in that particular spot. Pat, although offered accommodation with Jeanne and Alan, felt quite safe alone in our van.

The trouble is that we didn't get the chance to visit other areas in Brittany. We will definitely be revisiting Manoire de Pen ar Steir, and recommend members travelling in that area to try it, too.

David Mayne

Review

Nial's Easy Cook Book

NIAL REYNOLDS has forwarded to us a copy of his *Easy Cook Book, Second Edition, 2000*, which he has produced in response to the many enquiries he received at the Club and Company rally.

Those familiar with the earlier editions of Nial's cookery books (which are now surely standard equipment for most Club members) will immediately notice that the new version's 4 x 6 inches size is much more manageable. With laminated covers and a comb binding that enables it to be laid flat on the kitchen work-top, it will be welcomed for its ease of

use and because it will comfortably tuck into a small corner for storage when it is not in use.

Cooks and would-be cooks alike will find much to enjoy in its 64 pages. Recipes range from soups through main courses to sweets and small cakes. Amongst them are the simple 'open the tin and heat' type so beloved by many campers, which Nial enhances with his flair for taking motorhome basic store cupboard ingredients and adding interest, but there are also more elaborate recipes, such as his version of 'Coq au Vin' to encourage the more venturesome, while the famous recipe for boiling eggs ensures the most culinarily-challenged can try something.

If there is one minor criticism of an excellent publication, it is that the use of metric measures without imperial equivalents may confuse some of us 'oldies', but what may be lost in that direction is more than made up in others.

Nial's Easy Cook Book is available from, Dr Nial Reynolds, 49 Arden Way, Market Harborough, LE16 7DB, at £2.50 including postage and packing. Despatch is usually within a day or so if Nial is not away in his van. His website: www.arleseycom.com/nial'scookbooks gives further information, but is a bit problematic as he is having a little difficulty with it, although he hopes to clear that up shortly.

What's in a name?

IT'S TIME TO WIND UP this series on motorhome names. Thanks to everyone who has given pleasure to the rest of us by revealing how and why your motorhomes got their names. Here is one last item, followed by a sidelight about van naming 12,000 miles away.

Judy and Jim Andrews are occasional authors and often play with words, which is why they simply had to call their 1998 Topaz, 'Winkle' or, in full, 'R. van Winkle' (think about it). So it's a 'him', not a 'her', and really does winkle his way through extremely narrow lanes and village streets. He can be recognised by the 3-inch high black winkles adorning the sides and rear of his high-top, and 'Winkle' lettered on the front. The Andrews ask you to wave if you see him out, or visit if he is stopped.

They say that he now has a tiny pet of his own called 'Smiley' which his

soul-less promoters, AA, Vodafone and TrafficMaster, describe as a 'Personal Roadwatch 1800'. The Andrews reckon he was a good investment. Apart from giving them useful and timely warning of road-clogging ahead, he has a cheery bright red LED and beeps every time 'Winkle's' engine is started or the door is slammed, and at other times as well.



The Kiwis are at it, too

THERE ARE NEARLY 4,000 members in the New Zealand Motor Caravan Association, all of whom receive the Association badge of a 14 inch wing motif in red and silver when they join. Every two years a membership list is issued which includes the name, address and membership number of every member, together with their vans' names, sorted by geographical area. The gentle pace of life and touring in NZ, makes it easy to identify members seen on the road and to appreciate the names.

With about 1,700 van names listed, there have to be duplicates. 'The Beast', 'Trail Blazer' and 'The Good Life' all appear three times, but there is only one each of 'Small Torque' and 'Suetsus'.

The majority of vans out there are home conversions, often based on Japanese ex-school buses, or ex-rental vehicles, and this sometimes shows in names like 'Maid It' and 'Itildo'.

Leo Soble

It seems motorhome owners share the same sense of humour wherever they are - Ed.

Wanted

TRIDENT 2.5 TDI. Private purchaser. Phone Gordon and Maureen King 0189 523 3971 (Middlesex).*

'BEAULY WELLS' UPHOLSTERY MATERIAL. for 1988 Legend (beige background, broken diagonal stripes, green, maroon, black). Have you any seats/cushions/mattresses, or are you about to re-upholster? Phone Mark Hart, evenings, 0142 332 4565 (North Yorkshire).*

For sale



SILVER SCREEN, LEVELLERS, FEET. Exterior Silver Screen for Talbot Express Rambler: £25 ono. Pair of yellow levellers: £10 ono. Telescopic feet for table: £10 ono. Phone George Griffiths 0130 482 0974 (Kent)

BOXER POLLENSA 1.9 TURBO DIESEL, March 1999.

Under 5,000 miles from new. Specified interior trim finish as Ravenna Blue. Factory-fitted extras include Fanmaster blown-air heating extractor fan, CD player, Fiamma 3-bike rack. Garaged from new. Non-smokers. Offered at £27,500. Phone David Matthews 0776 883 1428 (Somerset).

SCOOTER 50cc 2-SEATER. 'P' reg., red. Alarm, storage box. 80 mpg. FSH, MoT, tax, full tank. Can be used with normal driving licence. Cost £1600, will accept £600. Phone or write Michelle Sessions (0113 274 6187, mobile 0795 048 6579) 4 Monkbridge Mount, Meanwood, Leeds LS6 4HT.

MOBILITY SCOOTER, Lark model 4351, 3-wheeler. Folds up. Shop basket, arm-rest, swivel seat, new battery. Good little runner. £400. Phone or write Michelle Sessions (0113 274 6187, mobile 0795 048 6579) 4 Monkbridge Mount, Meanwood Leeds LS6 4HT.

TALBOT TALISMAN GL 2-LITRE PETROL. 'H' reg., April 1991. Under 32,000 miles. Full specification 2-4 berth, with fitted captain's chairs. Enhanced vehicle security: immobiliser plus vehicle alarm. Excellent condition. FSH and vehicle log. One owner, non-smoker, no pets: £13,000 ono. Phone Peter Jacklin 0127 632 867 (Sandhurst, Berks).*

TALISMAN, PETROL. 'H' reg., 1991 (facelift version). 30,000 miles. MoT to June 2001. Un-modified. Immaculate. £12,250. Phone Les Phillips 0161 962 2153 (Cheshire).*

FORD AMETHYST 2.5 TURBO-DIESEL. 'N' reg., 1996. 55,000 miles. Van Bitz alarm, immobiliser and pager, deadlocks, Fiamma bike rack, extractor fan, Wax oiled from new. Lovely condition. Beautifully

maintained by one owner. Regularly serviced by TB Turbos. No smokers/pets. £19,000. Phone Paul and Veronica Thompson 0151 327 7260 (Wirral).*

BACK BOX, HOPE SAFE-T-BAR. Combination back box (top loader) Back Paka, 30in x 24in x14in approx. Hope Safe-T-Bar with towing attachment, cycle rack, requires no holes drilling in bodywork. Quick release. To fit Trident, Trophy or Topaz. This combination attracts admiration from all. As new. Cost £850. Will sell for £400 ono. Phone Christine Simpson 0127 087 3191 (Stoke-on-Trent) after 6.30 pm or at weekends.*

BOXER SYMPHONY 2-LITRE PETROL, 'P' reg., 1997. 16,000 miles. All usual A-S fitments. Thatcham immobiliser. No pets, non-smokers. Excellent condition. One owner. £19,500 ono. Phone Phil Baker 0121 355 3223 (Birmingham).*

VW TRANSPORTER VAN AWNING. Eurovent, complete with ground sheets, curtains and poles. Almost new condition. Bargain at £250. Phone David Matthews, 0776 883 1428 (Somerset).

VW TRIDENT T4 2-LITRE PETROL, 'K' reg., August 1992. 31,000 miles. Alloy wheels, Hope Safe-T-Bar, Kenwood CD system, blown air heating, mudflaps, car bra. Comprehensive service history. Absolutely as new and immaculate, garaged from new. Summer use only. One owner; non-smoker, no pets. Excellent buy at £14,495. Phone Kelvin Chambers, evenings, 0172 232 7594 (Salisbury). Can garage for winter if required.

BOXER EXECUTIVE 2.5 TURBO DIESEL, March 1996. 31,500 miles. Omnistor awning, Fiamma bike rack, Beeney Box, AirRide suspension, alarm/immobiliser. Vcg. One non-smoking careful owner. No pets. £22,500 ovno. Phone or e-mail Roger Whitting, 0130 526 2674 (Dorset), whitting@casterbridge24.freeserve.co.uk

*Note: Advertisements followed by a * means the advertiser has made a contribution to Club funds. To each we say, 'Thanks for the donation'*

- Ed.

Contents

Committee and Ian Capes	2	Thanks	9	Brecon fitness	13
Opening up the channels	2	Contrans follow-up	9	Day across the Channel	14
Notes and queries	4	Seeking a sun-shade	9	Tantalising Brittany	14
Not too much to expect?	4	Ugh!	10	Nial's Easy Cook Book	15
Clarice has a make-over	5	Kudos for CCC travel	11	What's in a name?	16
Icy service	7	All hands to the pump	12	The Kiwis are at it, too	17
Sites seen - Moreton	8	Retiring springs	12	Wanted	17
Light on 12v consumption	8	Fuel & flood rally havoc	13	For sale	18

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