



AUTO-SLEEPER  
OWNERS' CLUB

# Newsletter

HAPPY

NEW

YEAR

TO

ALL OUR

READERS



No. 148

January 2001

*From the Editor*

## **That dreaded VAT**

ON PAGE 17 we publish a letter in which the comment is made that 'the Club's decision to become VAT registered has ... made the organising of rallies ... too complex.' Conversations with other members have shown that that opinion is fairly widespread, which is unfortunate for the Club and those who organise and attend rallies because it is based on a misunderstanding.

The position is not that the Club 'decided' to become VAT registered, but that it had no alternative. Every organisation with a turnover (money collected and paid) above a laid down limit is required by the Inland Revenue to register for VAT and to charge that tax for services rendered, whether it be for building the Dome, selling a packet of tea or running a caravan rally. The Club's turnover takes it well into that category. In return, when anything on which VAT has been charged is bought for the organisation - in our case, ASOC - the tax can be recovered *provided a receipt showing the seller's VAT number is obtained.*

While it may seem a bit petty to ask rally marshals and others to get VAT receipts showing sellers' VAT numbers for packets of biscuits etc., when those receipts aren't obtained the Club can't recover the tax. Although individual amounts involved may be small, added up over a year they can total a considerable sum.

Our Treasurer, John Tidbury, and our Rally-Co-ordinator, Neil Rogers, have produced guidance notes for rally marshals designed to explain exactly what is needed if John is to satisfy the VAT Man and get back what is due to the Club. Unfortunately the tax is a fact of life for us all. It would be a pity if we ended up paying more than we need.

*Ian Day*

---

*From the Membership Secretary*

## **Membership renewal**

A REMINDER to those who have yet to send in the pink Membership Renewal Form included with last month's ASOC Newsletter. If this is not

received in the next couple of weeks, this month's will be the last newsletter sent to you. Don't forget: I need to hear from *all* members (except those whose membership numbers are 4045 or higher), including those who pay by standing order. If you have lost the pink form please phone, or e-mail me at: [ianross@zoom.co.uk](mailto:ianross@zoom.co.uk)

**Ian Ross**

---

***From the Secretary***

### **Nominations and resolutions**

INSTEAD of doing the decorating or garden whilst you are stuck at home during the grey and wet winter months, why not put those jobs off a little longer and think about your Club and how it should develop in the 21st century, bearing in mind that those who run it are all volunteers and like rallying themselves? It's time to start thinking about who you would like to see serving on your Committee. Some of us have completed our term of office and will be standing for re-election but it is always good to have new blood. If you, or someone you know, have expertise which you think might be useful to the Club, why not have a word with Ray Whiley or me? Remember that you must ask the permission of the person first, and the nomination will need a proposer and seconder and *must* reach me, at 4 Southbrook Road, Havant, Hants, PO9 1RN, by 6 March.

If you wish to submit a resolution to the AGM, please send it to me, again no later than 6 March. Your Committee works hard to do its best for you, but if there is something you feel might be changed, the AGM is the place to try to do it. Banham Zoo is an excellent site - we had a wonderful time last year - so make sure you keep 20 to 22 April free to have a great weekend and at the same time make a contribution to the running of your Club by saying what you want, at the AGM and Open Forum.

***Pam Davies***

---

*Touring Technique:* 'A-roads would be tolerated, and minor roads looked upon with favour, if only because they provide the opportunity for dawdling without the embarrassment of a queue of frustrated motorists forming up at one's rear.' Anthony Burton in *Slow Roads, a leisurely journey through England, Scotland and Wales*.

## Chairman's Chat



## An important AGM

A HAPPY NEW YEAR to you all.

This month's *ASOC Newsletter* includes the notice calling the Annual General Meeting and the booking form for members wishing to attend the AGM Rally and Dinner Dance.

During the year, the Committee is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Club, and its members need to take decisions in what they believe to be the best interests of the Club as a whole. The Annual General Meeting is the members' opportunity to comment on the actions of the Committee and to question what has been decided during the year.

This year's AGM will be an important one, as the Committee will recommend a number of amendments to the Constitution. However, it is for the members to decide whether those recommendations should be accepted - their acceptance requires a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.

It is not only the Committee that can propose items for consideration by the AGM. Any motion, properly proposed and seconded and reaching the Secretary before 6 March, must be debated at the AGM and a decision made. This is your chance to have a real influence on your Club.

During the Open Forum which follows the AGM any matter may be raised for discussion and recommendations made to the Committee, but they are not binding.

Some AGMs and Open Forums are notable for an almost total lack of members willing to speak. Is that a sign that the Committee is doing well - or of apathy? Please come along and have your say.

**Ray Whiley**

---

'And when you stick on conversation's burrs,  
Don't strew your pathway with those dreadful '-ers'  
- Oliver Wendell Holmes

## ACCEO - what?

ACCEO, the Association of Caravan and Camping Exempted Organisations, is the umbrella organisation for clubs such as ours which are able to arrange rallies without having to apply to local or other authorities for permission. It exists to look after the interests of its member clubs by, for example, resisting attempts by central or local government and non-governmental organisations to reduce the length of rallies we hold. With 200 member clubs and 36,500 camping or caravanning families as members, ACCEO can speak for us all expecting that what it says will carry more weight than if each club (some of which have very few members) stood alone. It is governed by an Executive Committee whose members are elected by its AGM on a rotating basis. Its expertise is available to member clubs, for which it can also arrange insurance.

In addition to Club membership, individuals can also join and take advantage of discounts on such things as ferry tickets and LPG supplies.

Apart from its 'political' role, ACCEO also has a social side. It arranges an AGM rally and also tries to hold a national rally, although that did not happen in 2000.

The 2000 AGM was held at Holt Heath, Worces. in October. Our Chairman, Ray Whiley, was the Club's voting delegate, while I and our respective wives went as observers. The meeting received officers' reports, elected committee members and spent a long time discussing changes in its Constitution. Unusually for such organisations, the Executive Committee is not bound by any decision of the AGM. Although it may take note of any recommendation from that meeting, it is not required to take any action. ASOC's view is that that is a wrong way to carry on ACCEO's affairs because it means in practice that the EC can do what it likes. Resolutions from one club designed to make the EC more accountable, with some of which ASOC agreed, were presented to the meeting. Unfortunately the Chairman called for a vote on all the resolutions as a package and our vote could not be used in support.

I'm bound to say that the EC of ACCEO believe only they know best and give short shrift to ideas not their own. Their own ideas brought about the financial near-collapse of ACCEO in 1999, needing cash transfusions from the clubs (including ours) to survive. ACCEO is at present a necessary organisation for our Club, but this observer came away

believing that we should make our continued support conditional upon greater accountability.

Since that AGM, your Committee has decided to continue membership next year to see if promised improvements come about.

*Ian Day*

---

*From the Press Officer*

### **Photographic competition**

DON'T PUT YOUR CAMERA AWAY just because the bad weather is here. A photographic competition will be held at the Club and Company rally next year and you never know when you will snap that special moment. All that is asked is that the photograph be Auto-Sleeper related and that the Company, who are sponsoring the competition, will have the right to use your entry in their publicity if they want. More details will be given nearer the time.

If you haven't yet reclaimed your photos from last year's competition and would like them back, please send a suitable stamped and self-addressed envelope to me at 33 Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster, Essex RM14 1DL.

*Stella Ross*

---

### **Duetto draughts and gas duration**

THIS WILL BE my first winter with my R reg. Duetto and any tips on keeping the interior free from draughts would be gratefully received. I am planning a four week trip to Portugal in February and am concerned whether my two 3.9 Kg gas cylinders will last out. Advice from anyone who has experience of such a journey would be appreciated.

As a new-to-motorhoming traveller whose late husband used to deal with anything technical, any advice (however basic) would be most welcome.

*Diana Aston*

*Full marks to Diana for having a go by herself. I'm sure members will be pleased to help. Her phone number is 019 5241 422 - Ed.*

## **Savings when you phone home**

A NOTE for those who go south for a warmer winter, in case they haven't found out about the BT Prepaid Calling Card Service, which provides cheap phone calls home.

When in Spain dial 900 94 89 25 (a freephone number). A friendly voice will tell you about the service, give you another 900 number to make calls, a PIN of twelve digits (so have pen and paper ready) and extract a minimum of 2,000 pesetas from your credit card. This will give you 40 minutes of phone calls to the UK, regardless of time of day. You can top up your account through your credit card at any time, but must do so every eighteen months, again with a minimum of 2,000 pesetas.

This is very much cheaper than using a slot phone or a UK BT Phone-card.

*Jim Cresswell*

---

## **Guide to the Dordogne**

THOSE PLANNING to visit the Dordogne region of France this year may well find *Dordogne Visitors' Guide* by Mike Smith, published in the Landmark Visitors' Guide series useful. Sold at bookshops for £9.95, it gives detailed information in a good, readable form.

*John Cox, Founder Vice-President*

---

## **Caravan Club National 2001**

THE CARAVAN CLUB National Rally will take place this year at Burghley Park, near Stamford, Lincolnshire, over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, Friday 25 May to Tuesday 29 May - four nights.

It is open to both members and non-members of the Caravan Club, and ASOC members are most welcome to join us in the Norfolk Centre lines. If you wish to do so, please write asking for full details and a booking form to: Events Department, The Caravan Club, East Grinstead House, East Grinstead RH19 1UA. Information will be sent out by the Caravan Club in early January and completed booking forms, together with the

correct remittance, should be returned to reach us, at 21 Ellcar Rise, Eaton, Norwich NR4 6HR, no later than *Friday, 9 February*. Cheques must be made payable to *The Caravan Club* and you will need to give *Norfolk* as your Centre lines. We will send all forms received by 9 February in one envelope so that all ASOC members will be pitched together. Booking acknowledgements will be sent direct to you by the Caravan Club.

***Barbara and Ray Whiley***

---

### **Talisman sign-off**

I CANNOT let my retirement from motor-caravanning pass without recording my thanks to all who make the Club that success it is. The newsletter has been so helpful to me over the years, although whenever I saw an article on the Boxer I had trepidations that my Talisman would be affected, but I am pleased to say that by the time I bought my van in February 1998 the problems had all be resolved and I had no trouble at all from the Boxer base unit.

I did have one little hiccup when I tried to fix the *optional* passenger door map pocket through the door panel and found that the inserts to take the fixing bolts hadn't been inserted in the door frame before the panel was attached, and the panel had to come off. It wasn't made to come off easily as the fixing clips were stronger than the panel material and tore it badly. However Brownhills of Newark fixed a new panel under warranty from Peugeot and I had a nice acknowledgement from Peugeot for my helpful suggestion that map pocket inserts should be fitted as standard on the passenger door frame.

I shall miss the camaraderie of caravan sites and the cheery waves and light flashes from oncoming motorhomes on the road. If you see a flash from a retired gent in a red Toyota Corolla and wonder why - it might well have been me.

Best wishes for many happy motorhoming years ahead.

***Leighton P. Jones***

*Leighton sold his Talisman by advertising in ASOC Newsletter and has now sent a donation to the Club. We thank him for that and for his good wishes, hoping he has many good years ahead Corolla-ing along - Ed.*

## Gas - Mark 1

*Alan Curry, A-S Quality Technician, tells us what we need to know about LPG. In the first of two articles he deals with what LPG is, leaks, safety and how cylinders work. In the second, to appear next month, he discusses cylinder sizes and housing, pipework and van ventilation - Ed.*

UNTIL a few years ago many of us resigned ourselves to putting our motorhomes to bed for the winter. Now this seems more an exception than the rule. Increasingly, campsites, tourist attractions and leisure facilities remain open throughout the year and more of us take the opportunity to extend the season - for some it never ends.

As cooking and heating facilities are increasingly important, it is as well to know about the gas systems in our vans.

What is LPG and where does it come from? 'LPG' stands for Liquefied Petroleum Gas, of which the most widely used are butane and propane, belonging to the C3 and C4 family of hydrocarbon gases. LPG is a by-product of the oil industry and for many years was seen as waste to be burnt off in flare stacks. However research into possible uses showed it would liquefy under moderate pressure and it was introduced into the UK as an easily-transportable gas fuel in the early 1930s.

Today it's a high value energy source and an important industrial and domestic fuel. The gas isn't toxic in the sense that it poisons, but it will kill by suffocation if breathed instead of air. It's one of those odd gases that is heavier than air and will collect at low level, like the bottoms of cupboards and bed boxes - a point worth remembering if you are looking for a suspected leak.

If you find a gas leak, what should you do? Gas escapes must be dealt with immediately they are discovered and take priority over everything else. These are the priorities: Ensure safety of life, ensure safety of property, locate and repair the escape, and leave the installation safe.

In 99.9 per cent of cases turning off the valve on the gas cylinder will stop a leak, but if the cylinder itself is leaking and turning the valve off doesn't work, take the cylinder, *making sure it is kept upright*, to the lowest point at the far end of the site. Then tell the site manager. Don't put the cylinder near any possible source of ignition and keep it away

from drains, because leaking gas vapour pours like water and could cause an explosion in the drain.

If the leak is liquid, leave the cylinder alone but get everyone out of the area. Tell the site manager immediately and see that he contacts the local gas supplier to come and deal with it. Don't mess about trying to fix leaks if you don't know what you are doing - I did many years ago and saw my father's caravan go up in smoke as a result.

LPG is normally stored in fixed bulk tanks or cylinders. Some vehicles are fitted with small tanks, but usually the only containers you have to deal with will be the familiar red or blue ones which are available in sizes from about 950 grams to 47 Kg. Contrary to popular belief, the bottle's colour doesn't tell you which gas is in it, although it is usual for those containing butane to be blue and those propane, red. All cylinders must be stored and used in the upright position, and when not connected to a system they *must* be fitted with valve caps. These simple rules save lives and property and apply to *all cylinders at all times*, whether they are full or empty. Only cylinders designed to provide a liquid rather than a vaporous off-take, such as those seen fitted to fork-lift trucks, can be used on their sides, but should never be used as a motorhome supply.

Cylinders are designed to cater for different sizes of system - the bigger the system, the bigger the cylinder needed for its operation. This is because the amount of gas a cylinder can supply at any one time is directly related to its size and, in particular, to its 'wetted area' - the area of the cylinder's side in direct contact with the liquefied gas. That interface allows the environment's heat to be transferred to the liquid, causing it to turn to vapour. It works like this: The cylinder's temperature is the same as the surrounding air until gas is drawn from it, when its temperature drops as heat is consumed by evaporation. The cylinder then draws more heat from the surrounding air to keep evaporation going and will do so until its temperature matches that of the air around it. We have seen cylinders fitted with woolly coats to keep them warm but, instead of improving the cylinders' performance, they actually make it worse by insulating the bottle from the air and preventing it from absorbing the heat it needs to drive the evaporation process. No more woolly coats, please.

**Alan Curry**



## January 2001 Rally Supplement



Please remember that only Club members are allowed to attend rallies and membership cards should be carried.

Both sides of the Rally Slip must be completed before sending to the appropriate rally marshal with the rally fee & site fee, if applicable.

Proposed Rally in France 11<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2001. Camping Les Deux Vallees.  
The application list for this rally is now closed.

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

15<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> February (3 nights). Grouse & Claret, Rowsley, Nr. Matlock,  
Derbyshire.

THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL.

Directions: On A6 between Matlock & Bakewell.

An application form for the National Motorhome & Tourer Show to be held at Peterborough in April will be in the next Newsletter.

### A Guide for new ralliers.

Any member in the Club may rally but there is a procedure to follow.

1. If you see a rally that you wish to attend advertised in the Rally Supplement of the Newsletter then complete a rally slip which you will find in the Rally Supplement.
2. Complete ALL sections on both sides of the rally slip. Ensure that ALL family members attending a rally are listed on the slip, the number is subject to the sleeping capacity of the van.
3. Calculate the amount of money to be sent to the Rally Marshal named in the rally information. This includes site fees for the number of nights of the rally and the Rally Fee. The Rally Fee is a one off payment for a rally, NOT a per night fee.
4. Return the RALLY SLIP and the CHEQUE for the total amount of the cost of the rally to the Marshal, whose address is given in the rally information. If you wish to have confirmation that you have been accepted on the rally please enclose a SAE.
5. Return the rally slip and cheque as soon as possible to the named marshal as rallies are very popular. If you find that you cannot attend the rally then please inform the Marshal as soon as possible as they may have others waiting to attend. We always try to give a telephone number for the site or the Marshal's mobile. If you are delayed please telephone the Marshal on site, if possible.
6. The only rallies that this system does not apply to are the Club A.G.M. & the Club & Company Rally. THE APPLICATION FORMS FOR THESE TWO RALLIES ARE SENT OUT WITH THE NEWSLETTER. All relevant information is given on these forms including closing dates.
7. REFUNDS. The rally fee will have already been used so there will normally be no refund. Site fees may only be refunded when it is possible to fill the vacant pitch. This will be subject to the terms agreed with the site owner by the rally marshal.

8. For large Show Rallies ie. Peterborough, York, Stratford, Shepton Mallet & Detling the bookings are made through the Show organisers and payment should be sent to them, using the appropriate forms to be found in Motorhome magazines, before the closing date. Forms for Peterborough & York Shows are now being issued with the Club Newsletter. Special Club site fees are sometimes available and these are advertised in the Rally Supplement in the Newsletter. When you have sent your application form and fee to the Show organisers then send a completed rally slip to the Club's Marshal with the appropriate rally fee. You *cannot* book with the Organisers at the special Club site fee and then rally elsewhere on the site.

9. Please remember that rallies start and close at 12 noon, unless otherwise stated. Failure to keep to these times can cause the Club problems with the Exemption Certificate used on green field sites.

Early arrivals can also cause the marshal problems. To avoid causing embarrassment please arrive at a rally *after* the given start time.

10. Extra items such as trailers, cars (with vans) etc. may only be accepted on site with the *prior* agreement of the marshal.

Finally if you have any problems with booking for a rally then please contact the Rally Co-ordinator. The address, telephone number & e-mail are at the end of the Rally Supplement. If the Rally Co-ordinator is not available please leave a message on the answering machine or send a fax or an e-mail and your enquiry will be dealt with as soon as possible.

Please remember that all our marshals are volunteers and that they give of their time freely so that we may enjoy ourselves.

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.

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 at least 3 months before the actual rally.

*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 (01483 223 476) Woking, Surrey.

E & O. E.

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).....

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).....

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!**

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!**

✂

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!**

✂

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!**

## Scandinavian gas

FURTHER TO 'It's a gas' in December's Newsletter, I was faced with a similar situation earlier this year in Norway. Initially I found that neither Progas (available from Esso stations) nor the Statoil gas bottles on general display would go through the doorway into the gas compartment of my Symbol. Further enquiries revealed that Statoil sell propane in 2 Kg bottles. I bought the first of my pair (which I've kept for further Scandinavian holidays) on the outskirts of Trondheim and was able to buy a regulator from a larger Statoil shop at nearby Stjørdalshalsen for NOK 145.

I was only in Sweden and Finland for a total of three weeks and didn't need to replenish my gas supplies in either country, but I did note that there were a few Statoil filling stations in Finland. It's possible that these sell gas in the same type of cylinder available in Norway.

*Michael Wallace*

---

### *Notes and Queries*

## Continental tyres

ANOTHER SAD TALE about these tyres. On our way in our June 1988 Ravenna (16,000 miles) to the Club and Company rally on the A27 dual-carriageway, the off-side rear tyre collapsed. I managed to get into the side, and put the spare on with the help of a traffic policeman. Returning from the rally, a white van driver signalled as he drew alongside and together we pulled into the side. Our near-side wheel had been all over the place and we saw that it, too, was collapsing. Fortunately we'd replaced the first destroyed tyre in Malvern and had a spare.

We took the faulty tyres to Becks, our Peugeot agent in Eastbourne, who sent them to Continental Tyres for assessment. We've since received £116 in compensation for the failures, which is quite a bit less than we paid for the replacements. What should we do about the front tyres which still have plenty of tread? A local tyre company would only say they needed replacing every three years irrespective of wear. Is this true? I've read the period is five years. Although the tyre man said Continentals were superior-quality tyres, why are there these failures on motorhomes?

On a different topic, one of the most valuable recent additions to our van has been buying a cheap plastic stool to give access to the Luton, so that we can leave the heavy and rather clumsy ladder at home. We also carry a curve-handled walking stick to hook anything out of reach.

What is members' experience of using split-level door mirrors. Are the separate images big enough to be effective in situations like joining motorways in Europe?

**David and Betty Anderson**

*The full version of this somewhat shortened letter has been sent on to Charles Trevelyan who advises that it and all other known complaints, with owners' names and addresses, have been passed to Peugeot. He asks those concerned to be confident that the matter is being considered in detail. As soon as a positive answer is forthcoming, the owners affected and ASOC Newsletter will be advised.*



## Harmony hiccups

MARILYN LAWS' comparisons of Harmony models in last month's newsletter has caused Charles Trevelyan to take steps to ensure A-S's quality control see that padded headrests are not fitted back to front in other vans.

Regarding crockery storage, he comments that following market research at 1999's Club and Company rally, A-S got the very clear message that mugs were preferable to cups and saucers, and ten inch plates to eight inch. The Design Department is reviewing all crockery storage to see what can be done to prevent plates hanging down into the lower part of the compartments, and also considering the use of elastic straps with press studs instead of Velcro.

Harmony wheel arches were rounded to improve appearance and give more room in the shower compartment, particularly when the toilet is in use. The Design Department have been made aware of the desirability of a positionable kitchen water spout.

The rear entrance to all panel vans must be of a 450 mm minimum width. It is desirable for A-S to work to this minimum width to allow the shower

to be of maximum size - especially when it is opposite the kitchen unit whose depth is normally constrained by the refrigerator depth. The possibility of fitting or retro-fitting an additional work surface would be detrimental to the width of the shower, but again the Design Department are looking at this.

Draughts over the kitchen sink are inexcusable and the Quality Manager has been alerted to the problem. - C.T.



### **Inboard water tanks, insulation, drains**

AS MEMBERS ARE AWARE, this option is only available on Styrofoam models. However the desirability of the option, together with winterisation, have been advised to the Design Manager who will consider them for new models. Interestingly, even with global warming, winterisation is a subject raised more than ever nowadays. In addition, the desirability of waste tanks having access panels on the underside for cleaning with drainage points accessible on the skirt and not on hard-to-get-at clips, and for the water drain to be quick, speedy and effective, have also been stressed. - C.T.

*We are obliged to our President for the care he has taken to deal with points raised by members. The exchange of information helps Auto-Sleepers and owners together improve quality and confidence in the marque. - Ed.*



### **Sad Symbol**

GEOFF AND SHEILA HUNT have sent a list of difficulties they've had with their 1999 Symbol, commenting wryly that 'We have not had a motorhome before and were recommended by other Club members to go for an Auto-Sleeper - these friends having had many trouble-free years with their own vehicles.' Their letter has been passed on and comments from A-S will be published when received.

## Thanks

FOLLOWING THE SAD LOSS of my dear husband, Jeff, who passed away on 21 October, may I express my heartfelt thanks to all our friends in the Club for the many cards, phone call and most generous donations which I shall be forwarding to the Yeovil Dialysis Unit.

The many messages of support and condolence have brought much comfort.

**Barbara Worley**

---

## Brake judder on Fords

HARRY TONER'S DIFFICULTY (*ASOC Newsletter*, December) rang a bell. I had the problem of brake judder when braking in my Duetto in its first year. When I was travelling back from Scotland I had to brake firmly going downhill and judder nearly shook the steering-wheel out of my hands. I contacted my local Ford dealer who changed the front discs and cured the problem. I had that van for four years with no more brake problems.

**Ven Venables**



WHEN OUR PREVIOUS VAN, a Duetto, was fifteen months old it, too, developed brake judder on braking at high speed although not at low speeds.

The service manager of our local Ford main commercial dealer took the trouble to put the van on ramps and show us, using four dial gauges, that the discs were warped or unevenly worn. He also contacted Ford, who agreed to meet 90 per cent of the cost of replacing the two discs as the van was only three months out of warranty. We had no further brake trouble after that.

**David Davis**

*Our tame mechanic says that although many vehicle makers no longer specify running-in periods, brake discs need very gentle treatment during their first 500-1,000 miles to bed in properly - Ed.*

## Ode to Park Cliffe Rally

We came on our first ASOC rally  
Not knowing just what to expect,  
The rain, it was pouring so heavy,  
The road in was just like a beck.  
At the gate we were met by good Peter  
With a big friendly smile on his face.  
Who said, 'Drive on up that hill there  
And someone will show you your place.'  
Up the hill stood this che-erful chappie,  
In the rain but not caring too hoots,  
For he was sporting a very smart get-up:  
Yellow oilskins and Wellington boots.  
Peter had handed to us a big wallet,  
Its contents to read when we pleased.  
So we brewed the obligat'ry cuppa  
Then opened the package with ease.  
And what do you think we found in it?  
A welcoming letter or two  
A word search and various menus  
With a list of things we could do.  
We met for a coffee at seven,  
Introduced by our James, and he then  
Told us, if we intended to ramble,  
To gather next morning at ten.  
The ramble turned out to be rugged  
Over stiles, up hills and through brooks,  
But just when our spirits were flagging  
We'd coffee and biscuits - Thanks, cooks!  
The last night found all of us gathered  
In 'Squirrels' to eat a great dinner.  
From a chef who was master indeed  
And no-one went home any thinner.  
As we came to the close of the rally,  
We thanked all those wonders who  
Made everyone wonderfully welcome -  
The marshals, James, Jill, Pete and Sue.

**Allan and Moira Blackstock**

*A lengthy poem, its inclusion justified because it was written by new ralliers and captures the intrepid spirit all ralliers needed in last year's rain - Ed.*

---

'English puddings are eaten to keep out the cold' - Len Deighton.

## Comparisons are ...

THE PART of Ian Cape's item in December's ASOC Newsletter referring to helping A-S compete better with imports from the rest of Europe particularly took my eye. In my view such a policy is only just in time.

We have just returned from Greece where early November saw us on the Greek island of Evia, the second largest and least well-known. We were camping wild and, as is so often the case, we attracted close to us a Laika, a Pilote, an Elnagh, a Eura Mobil (the first we've seen) and a Rapido. The Pilote and Laika were *en route* to Crete for the winter. The others were, like us, enjoying the Greek Indian summer before heading home. We all enjoyed four days of sun, swimming and socialising, visiting each other and, of course, comparing vans.

Pauline and I have had four Auto-Sleepers, the first second-hand followed by three new ones, so we're loyal to the Company. But seeing those three European jobs every day at close quarters, we regretfully came to the conclusion that our Pollensa wasn't the first class motorhome we thought it was. In both design and build it only came a good second.

**Russell Rogers**

*That puts a cat amongst the pigeons, doesn't it? If Russell would detail the differences he thought improvements on A-S practice and let us have them for Notes and Queries, we'll pass them to the Company - who will certainly be interested. All judgements are subjective of course, but perhaps members would like to comment - Ed.*

---

## Sizzling service

My Amethyst was fitted with a Battery Mate in 1995. An undetected fault in the electrical system caused the unit to fail. After receiving help and advice over the phone from a very patient knowledgeable person at Vanguard Motorhome Installations of Dedham, Colchester (012 0632 3678), I sent the unit to them hoping it could be repaired. Within a week I'd received a replacement, which is now installed and working perfectly. The help and minimal cost was greatly appreciated - I know who I'll approach first when I need anything electronic in future.

**M E Pegg**

## Earlier Newsletters on offer

TWO MEMBERS are offering their collections of ASOC *Newsletters* free to anyone able to collect them. Roy Mumford (014 0637 1255) has a complete set from numbers 1 to 124 inclusive, while Joan Joselyn (012 7358 2909) has a run from October 1992 (issue number 49) to date. Roy lives near Spalding in Lincolnshire and Joan in the Brighton/Newhaven area. Newer members (or even those less-new) interested in seeing what has happened in the Club's earlier years, or in reading the hints, tips and comments published over the years, should make arrangements direct with whichever of these generous people lives nearest to them.

---

## A steaming success

WHAT A GREAT WEEKEND the rally at Quorn and Woodhouse railway station was. It was like stepping back in time on the stations and steam trains, and was so interesting. A great venue, and a very friendly rally. Our thanks to Elizabeth and Bill Grimsley, Jeanne and Mike.

*Pat and Dave Mayne*

*It seems we're all Railway Children at heart - Ed.*

---

## Retirement

MANY THANKS to all those members who have supported our rally at the Shoreham Air Show over the past five years. It has been great fun and we have enjoyed helping both ASOC and the RAFA. The contribution to RAFA in 2000 was £1,128, bringing the total over the five years to £4,000. A splendid effort.

The Club's decision to become VAT registered has, in our view, made the organising of rallies by willing volunteers too complex. We have decided that the 2000 rally at Shoreham was our last.

The collecting of VAT receipts and charging our friends for a free buffet service is a shade ridiculous.

We hope Tony and Lyn will carry on with it this year.

**Barry and Yvonne Loveland**

*We are sorry the Lovelands feel unable to continue organising this rally. Their efforts over the years have been very much appreciated by the Club and all those members who have attended Shoreham. VAT is dealt with in the leading article on page 2 - Ed.*

---

### **Lamps that flicker**

WE HAVE a problem with two of the 12-volt fluorescent lights in our Duetto. Every time we switch on, they flick out for a few seconds, then re-light. Only the two lights are affected. Brownhills could not find any obvious fault. Has anyone any ideas please?

**Jeff and Sheila Scott**

---

### **Wanted**

**VW TRIDENT 2.4L DIESEL.** Low mileage. Must have full MoT and blown-air heating, preferably also PAS, alarm, immobiliser, awning, etc. Must pass inspection by AA/RAC and PVMC. £15,000 to £18,000 available for right vehicle. Contact Dan Berry, 10 Hall Close, North Cornelly, Mid-Glamorgan, CF33 4EB.\* [Dan is wanting to join the Club but needs a vehicle - Ed.]

---



### **For sale**

**FORD EXCELSIOR DIESEL 2-BERTH AUTOMATIC.** P Reg., June 1997. 19,000 miles. ABS braking and many extras. Full service history, excellent condition throughout. Non-smokers, no pets. £25,500. Phone/fax or write Beryl and Ken Douglas (019 03775 540), Flat 4, Broadmark Beach, Rustington, W. Sussex BN16 2JF.

**PASHLEY TRIKE** (Adult three-wheel bike). Lovely condition. Ideal for disabled person, someone with walking difficulties (esp. for shows, holidays, etc.), or an older child or teenager. £225 ono. Phone Chris or Ivan Simpson, 012 7087 3191 (Stoke-on-Trent) after 6.30 pm or weekends.\*

**BACK BOX, HOPE SAFE-T-BAR.** Combination back box (top loader) Back Paka, 30 x 24 x 14 ins approx. Hope Safe-T-Bar with towing attachment, cycle

rack. Entire equipment needs no holes drilling and fits directly onto chassis. Quick release. To fit Trident, Trophy or Topaz. Admired by all. As new cost £850. No reasonable offer refused as space needed. Phone Chris or Ivan Simpson (012 7087 3191 (Stoke-on-Trent) after 6.30 pm or weekends.

**BOXER SYMPHONY 2-LITRE PETROL.** 'R' reg., 1997. 11,500 miles. MoT and tax to October 2001. Standard A-S specification, plus bike rack, back box, Fiamma awning, alarm/immobiliser, Silver Screens. No smokers or pets. £19,000. Phone John Rex, 011 7968 1503 (Bristol).\*

**SILVER SCREENS, HEADLIGHT PROTECTORS.** Set of 4 internal Silver Screens for the rear of VW T4 Trident: £35. Pair of plastic headlight protectors for a pre-1998 VW T4: £15. Phone Dave Titchener, 019 9370 4416 (Oxon).

**SWIVEL SEAT BASE, CYCLE CARRIER.** Swivel seat base fits Boxer Executive and Ducato-based motorhomes. Sportscraft - superior German manufacture. £50. Cycle carrier, two bike by Paddy Hopkirk. Suitable for most hatchbacks and rear door motorhomes: £15. Phone or e-mail Roger Whitting 013 0526 2674 (Dorset), whitting@casterbridge24.freemove.co.uk

**S/STEEL BUMPER BAR** to fit Clubman. Delivery mileage only. Unmarked. New cost: £140. Sell at £80. Phone Geoff Rothwell, 012 8270 2249 (Lancs.)

**VW T4 CLUBMAN 2.4 DIESEL 4-BERTH,** M reg., May 1995. 45,000 miles. Taxed until April, MoT to May. One owner. Normal A-S spec. Extras incl. Strikeback Alarm by Vanbitz, Fiamma awning, two bike rack, TV aerial and interior socket, heater (frost) element in fresh water tank, outside light by rear door, pullout step. VW Agent-serviced 6-monthly. New main battery and 4 new tyres Oct/Nov 1999, new full exhaust March 2000. Well maintained, kept under cover. £21,000 ono. Phone Elizabeth and Bill Grimsley, 011 6269 2220 (Leics).

**VW T4 2.4 DIESEL TOPAZ 2-BERTH.** N reg., November 1995. 41,000 miles (retired couple's only vehicle). Taxed, MoT. Fiamma awning, Full VW service, accommodation and Skyball alarm servicing records. Excellent clean condition. Non-smokers, no pets. £19,950 ono. Phone John Hutchings 018 0375 2389 (Devon).\*

**FORD DUETTO 2.5 DIESEL.** M reg. 1995. 62,000 miles. Fiamma awning, tow bar, roof extractor fan. £16,950. Phone Brian Melville 015 9956 6242 (Highlands, but can be viewed Edinburgh/Glasgow).\*

**CYCLE RACK.** Brutsaert Carry All for 3 cycles to fit VW T4. Almost new: £75. Phone Brian and Vron Spencer 017 6877 2531 (Keswick).

*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

That dreaded VAT	2 Talisman sign-off	8 Comparisons are ...	16
Membership renewal	2 Gas - Mark 1	9 Sizzling service	16
Nominations & resolutions	3 Scandinavian gas	9 Earlier Newsletters on offer	17
An important AGM	4 Continental tyres	11 A steaming success	17
ACCEO - what?	5 Harmony hiccups	12 Retirement	17
Photographic competition	6 Inboard water tanks	13 Lamps that flicker	18
Duetto draughts & gas	6 Sad Symbol	13 Wanted	18
Savings phoning home	7 Thanks	14 For sale	18
Guide to the Dordogne	7 Brake judder on Fords	14	
Caravan Club National	7 Ode to Parke Cliffe rally	15	

---

## Committee Members

President	Charles Trevelyan	013 8685 3338
Chairman	Ray Whiley	016 0345 2593
Vice Chairman & Rally Co-ordinator	Neil Rogers	013 2537 4540
Secretary	Pam Davies	023 9248 4972
Treasurer	John Tidbury	012 3553 8593
Membership Secretary & Regalia Officer	Ian Ross	017 0822 8075
Minutes Secretary	Barbara Potter	018 4427 4021
Chief Rally Marshal	Ben Mansfield	017 2336 9769
Chairman, AGM Sub-Committee	Nora Venables	019 0233 2105
Committee member	Andrew Entwistle	014 2284 3057
Chairman, Club & Company Rally Sub-Committee	Baz Wellard	013 2923 1259
Press Officer	Stella Ross	017 0822 8075
Newsletter Editor	Ian Day	014 2388 0233

Contributions for publication in *ASOC Newsletter* are welcomed and need to reach the Editor: **Ian J. Day, 10a Kingsley Road, Harrogate, HG1 4RB, North Yorks.**, or by e-mail to: [james@smooth.demon.co.uk](mailto:james@smooth.demon.co.uk) no later than the tenth of the month. Telephoned contributions cannot be received. While every effort will be made to publish acceptable material in the following issue, no guarantee can be given. Contributions or notices may be shortened or otherwise edited.

Notices of items wanted or for sale are printed free, but small donations towards Club expenses are appreciated and will be acknowledged on publication. Please make cheques payable to 'Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club' not 'ASOC'.

© All material in *ASOC Newsletter* is copyright - apply to the Editor for release.

**IMPORTANT:** Details of any modifications described or advice given in members' contributions are published in good faith. However, none has been tested by the Editor, the Club or the Company and no warranties are expressed or implied nor indemnities given. You try them at your own risk..