



AUTO-SLEEPER  
OWNERS' CLUB

# Newsletter



at 40

No. 154

July 2001

## **Auto-Sleepers at forty**

FORTY YEARS' SUCCESSFUL TRADING in the motorhome market is a considerable achievement. Other marques have come during that period, found the competition too fierce or the market too small and have disappeared, their products seen only occasionally now as enthusiasts' restorations on sites or, more probably, as rusting remains pushed away out of sight in down-market dealers - reluctantly bought as trade-ins when the market was slow.

But Auto-Sleepers have flourished. From early beginnings they progressed to producing a wide range of vans, including the distinctive monocoque grp coachbuilt models for which they have become famous. Amongst British manufacturers and converters they have no equal for quality and finish and enjoy a high reputation amongst dealers and motorhome owners. That is not to say their products are always perfect, because buyers of new A-S vehicles still complain about defects missed by quality control procedures. However the number of existing A-S owners who choose to exchange their vehicles for others from the Auto-Sleeper stable is evidence of a high level of customer satisfaction.

There is every sign that the motorhome market is expanding rapidly. Sales are buoyant and the demand for hire vehicles is rising. With this trend comes increasing competition. A number of the UK's former caravan-only manufacturers are entering the market with their own motorhome models and makers in other European Community countries are expanding their dealerships in the Britain. With their new financial and manufacturing arrangements, and an attractive well-targetted product range, Auto-Sleepers are in a good position to take advantage of the situation and not be out-faced by the competition.

We will all want to offer congratulations to the Company on reaching this milestone and are pleased to be associated, as customers, with the UK market leaders.

*Ian Day*

---

Because we had to go to press a day or two earlier than usual, I regret that it was necessary to hold a few items over until next month - Ed.

## **Malvern's 'Gathering of the Clan'**



IT SEEMS HARDLY CREDIBLE that another year has passed and that only two weeks from the date of publication of this Newsletter around 600 Auto-Sleeper motorhomes will once again be gathered at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern.

Another superb weekend has been planned by Baz Wellard and his team. Two years ago we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Club. This year it is the fortieth anniversary of Auto-Sleepers Limited. We congratulate the Company on this achievement, which has led to their being the leading motorhome manufacturer in Britain, and we look forward to many more years of continuing success.

The 'Club and Company' is a weekend for all members to enjoy themselves and the wide variety of entertainment ensures that there is something for all. As always, our rally will be brought to a close by the service led by the Salvation Army. This is a time when members wish to listen to the words and music, and to reflect on their meaning. For that reason no photography of any kind will be permitted during the service, apart from official photographs authorised by the Club and Company Sub-committee Chairman. Members are also asked to avoid any other distraction during the service by switching off mobile phones and digital watch alarms.

Barbara and I look forward to meeting and talking to as many members as possible during the weekend. If you are a new member and see us, please introduce yourself. Whether old or new, please wear a name badge whilst you are on site - it really helps everyone to know who you are. New members can, of course, order a Club name badge during the rally from the Regalia Officer - until then a temporary one will do.

**Ray Whiley**

---

**WALKING:** Almost all those who write about walking ... obviously believe that there is some special merit in carrying your luggage on your back, in covering long distances, and in arriving footsore and dust-smeared at the end of the day - Robert Lynd.

*From the Chairman, Club and Company Sub-committee*

**Club and Company Ruby rally 13-15 July - Malvern**

AT THE TIME OF WRITING Charles Trevelyan and I are still finalising some of the contracts for entertainment at the rally, but hope it will include the Caribbean Steel Band, the Roving Jazz Band, a Strauss Quartet, a Male Voice Choir, a Silver Band, Morris Dancers, an archery display, a falconry display and a parachute drop. We also hope to have two special displays in the main arena. Hot air balloons will be subject to restrictions because of Foot and Mouth Disease.

Club hobbyists, new Auto-Sleeper motorhomes and the Company shop and hospitality area will also be on offer. There will be a good selection of traders, including a static grocery trailer which will be on site for the whole of the weekend.

Friday evening will include the Quiz and Worcester Jazz Orchestra, while on Saturday night the Charity Raffle will be drawn and the Tony Strudwick Band and Singers will entertain. On both evenings a quiet lounge will be available with tea and coffee on sale.

Please don't forget to bring those cakes, books, bric-a-brac and bottles. It is not too late to contact Stella Ross for the recipe for the cake competition [See 'What's cooking?' on p.7 for the address - Ed]. If you have surplus camping equipment to sell, why not bring it along and place an advertisement on the 'For Sale' board. A small contribution to the charity if the sale is successful, would be appreciated.

Dogs are welcome on the showground, but Three Counties management insist that they be kept on a lead at all times - even in the exercise area outside the yellow gate. Animals are not permitted in any of the halls.

Because it is Auto-Sleepers' Ruby anniversary, we think it might be fun if we could all wear something red (ruby?) on Saturday. Please join in the fun and bring something to wear. Small spot prizes for a lady and gentlemen will be presented on Saturday afternoon.

Finally, please do not come too early. There is plenty of room for everyone. And do enjoy yourselves.

***Baz Wellard***

*From the Treasurer*

## **Good news on VAT at rallies**

IT'S ME, writing about VAT again. But this time it's good news. The VAT Office has finally agreed that we may use something called 'the Tour Operators' Margin Scheme' when the site used by a rally is not VAT registered.

Put simply, this means we do not have to pay so much VAT to the Inland Revenue, and it reverses the advice given in the April Rally Supplement. In future the Club will have to pay VAT only on the money it *makes* on selling campsites to our members. As we don't *make* any money on site fees (the difference between what marshals pay the site and what members attending are charged), we do not have to pay any VAT on that amount.

Therefore, rally marshals need charge members only whatever the site charges them, get a VAT receipt where the site is VAT registered, and an ordinary receipt where it is not.

If rally marshals organise a coach outing or other transportation, we can now use the same scheme for those outings and save paying VAT. Again, the rally marshals pass on the coach hire fees, collect a receipt and no VAT is involved.

Sadly, the VAT Office has not agreed that the provision of a meal at a rally is free of tax, so marshals must still charge VAT on meals (even on those they have prepared themselves), if one is provided.

This may seem complicated, but applying these rules to last year's rallies has allowed me to claim back about £330 more from the VAT man. It will now be easier for marshals because they will not need to calculate how much VAT to allow for. However, VAT receipts are still required for items bought out of the rally fee.

That's all from me for now, but if you have any questions, I'll try to answer them if you will phone me at the number shown on the back page.

***John Tidbury***

*A lot of hard work by John has achieved this improvement - Ed.*

## *News from the Factory*

### **Willersey re-organisation latest**

JUNE IS UPON US ALREADY - 'Where has the first half of the year gone?' I hear you asking. Down here in good old Willersey we don't seem to have been able to catch our breath since the turn of the year. Firstly, we have had major office moves within the Company with the purchasing and after sales offices relocated in the main office block. No more complaints about the wet weather when travelling between offices.

Then, before we could turn around, we had a new telephone system with lots of direct dial numbers. If you have phoned us you will have noticed that the wishy-washy version of 'Greensleeves' used while calls were on hold has been replaced with classical offerings from the likes of Bach, Beethoven and Handel. As I write, stores staff are busily re-locating all the parts at present in our own version of the Millennium Dome into a building adjacent to the current stores.

Finally, to complete the initial stage of the re-organisation, Charles Trevelyan and his repair shop staff have moved to new offices and workshops at other premises on the industrial estate.

You will be pleased to know that work is well under way preparing for the Club and Company rally at Malvern. Our furniture sub-contractors are storing all the reasonably-sized timber off-cuts for the bargain basement. Letters have been sent and cheques received from our suppliers to help sponsor events throughout the weekend. Charles has booked a number of events and is still working to find further attractions to make the weekend even more memorable. Something that hasn't yet been done and which always seems to be left to the last minute is writing the questions for the Friday night quiz. One of the main reasons for this is that if I set down a question today (30 May) asking 'Who is the Chancellor of the Exchequer?' the answer may have altered by Friday, 13 July.

I hope the spell of fine weather we are currently experiencing continues, and look forward to meeting as many members as possible at the Club and Company rally.

***Phil Bennett, Materials Manager***

## **What's cooking?**

THERE IS STILL TIME to get the cake recipe to enter the competition to be judged at the Club and Company rally, and perhaps win one of the prizes. All the details were given in the May issue of *ASOC Newsletter*. You don't have to be an expert to enter and, who knows, perhaps a man will carry off first prize this year.

The recipe and details will be sent by Stella Ross if you write to her at 33 Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster, Essex RM14 1DL with a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

---

## **Auto-Sleepers want your photographs.**

AUTO-SLEEPERS are remodelling the Magazine they issue every year. The revised version will contain more reading matter and illustrations, and fewer advertisements.

One popular feature to be retained is photographs showing uses to which owners put their motorhomes. If you see Charles Trevelyan scanning the entries in the Photographic Competition on display at this year's Club and Company rally, you may be sure that it will be not only to enjoy them as photos in their own right, but also to see whether any is suitable for reproduction in the Magazine. After the rally he will be in touch with anyone whose photos might be used.

Although it's now too late to enter the competition, if you have photos showing you, your family and friends enjoying using your A-S vehicle, and in which the van is included, and which you think might be considered for publication, send them to Charles at the factory, making sure you label each with your name and address and a brief description.

Auto-Sleepers will make a payment for every photograph used.

---

## **Limiting the liability**

IF THE CLUB became a limited company, not only would members be liable for deficits, but they would share the assets if it was wound-up,

thus benefiting from the efforts of past members.

Many years ago I wrote to a Club official suggesting the formation of a limited company. I had in mind an issue of shares of, say, £100 each, the annual sub. being reduced by a third for each share purchased, with a maximum shareholding of ten shares. Owning three shares would eliminate payment of future subs and give the owner the equivalent of a five per cent return on the investment. The money raised would have bought or leased a smallholding in, perhaps, the Severn Valley, to be used as a Club site. Farm buildings would have been adapted to suit Club needs, with the farmhouse let rent-free to a Club member on a 'tied house' basis, in return for help with Club administration, including maintenance of the share register.

Every year, after a professional valuation of the assets, the share value for the following year would have been set and been the price at which shares were traded, less an administration charge of, say, 25 per cent to cover administration.

My suggestion was ridiculed on grounds of inability to maintain a share register, cost etc., so I am amused at the *volte face*. It should be borne in mind that small clubs sometimes grow - like the Caravan Club, the RAC.

**Arthur Smith**

*My head's spinning, but a copy of Arthur's e-mail has been sent to our Secretary to be considered by the expert sub-committee - Ed.*

---

## Radio silence

SEAN HOLLANDS is anxious to get the expert advice for which he asked in last month's *ASOC Newsletter*. You'll remember the problem is poor reception due to the stubby wing-mounted aerial on his 1995 Boxer Executive. If you know the answer, could you please get into touch with him direct, either by phone at 01622 758043 or at his e-mail address: sean.hollands@which.net

Because others have the same problem, sending a note of the solution to your editor after it's been sorted out will ensure wider publicity and help those members, too.

## Stopping awning drips

WE HAVE RECENTLY fitted a Fiamma F45 awning (as recommended by Auto-Sleepers) which is fine until it rains when, due to the gap created by the securing brackets, water pours down the back - ably assisted by the side roof drain - making entry and exit to the van a rather damp experience. We had thought of buying the safari room that fits the Fiamma awning, but we needed to seal the gap.

Neither Fiamma nor Auto-Sleepers were able to assist with an off-the-shelf solution, although A-S did offer to have their factory's Service Department fit a permanent seal of either aluminium strip or rubber, both of which involved using sealants on the van body. We contacted the factory's service team, who told us that they had fitted one van, but they were not sure that it was an entirely satisfactory answer.

Our own solution uses Swish Deluxe curtain rail and a strip of heavy-duty tarpaulin or similar material. (We can supply materials to any member wanting to make the adaptation).

*Parts required are:*

- 2 x 1.5 m lengths of Swish Deluxe curtain rail
- 1 x 3 m strip of heavy tarpaulin cut to 40 mm width
- 1 joining piece part no. D312W
- Good quality liquid adhesive.

*Method:* (See sketch on p.10)

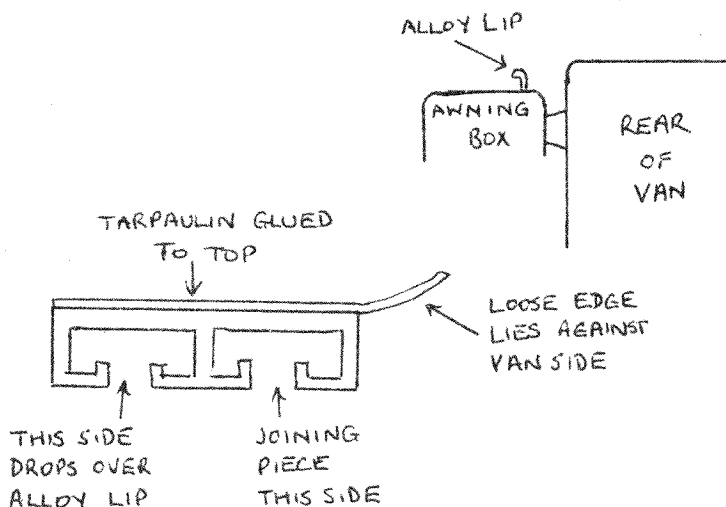
1. Assemble by first fitting the joining strip, then placing the tarpaulin strip over the rail with the overlapping edge over the joining side of the rail.
2. Glue along the whole top flat surface of the rail
3. Once the glue has set, the joining piece can be loosened and pushed to either side and the whole rail folded to leave a 1.5 m length for storage.

When assembled, fitting is by sliding the unblocked side of the rail section across the lip on top of the Fiamma awning box. When in position it can be pushed downwards, locking the rail on the lip and pushing the overhanging tarpaulin against the vehicle body like a wiper blade.

When fitting to the vehicle, the bed ladder was used, taking care to pad

its ends to avoid damage to the vehicle sides.

Do not drive with the seal in position unless a permanent fixing has been made.



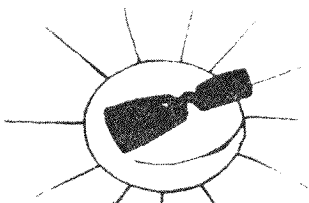
*Wif and Anne Cooper*

*A-S agree that this could be a solution to the gap problem - Ed.*

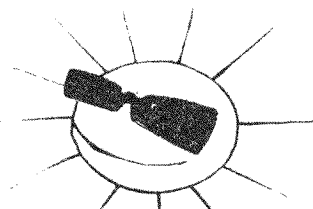
## **Camping and Caravanning centenary**

THE CAMPING AND CARAVANNING CLUB is celebrating its first hundred years of existence this year. The occasion is being marked nationally and locally, and the opportunity taken to publicise the benefits of the open air life to those not yet converted or who were put off by poor facilities experienced when they were young. That great changes have come about in the quality of modern camping and caravanning equipment, the flexibility the hobby gives to get away for short and longer holidays and the friendliness to be found on sites are being emphasised.

At Spring Bank Holiday weekend, the Club expected to create a world record by having a quarter of a million campers staying on its sites. Many of our own members also belong to the C&CC and took part in the record-breaking attempt.



## JULY 2001 Rally Supplement



*Because of the Foot & Mouth outbreak please check with the relevant marshals, who will be following Maff guidelines, as to whether a rally is taking place. If you are attending a rally and the site becomes an infected area then you may find that your van may be placed in quarantine for a period of time.*

**\*\*\*\*\*CHANGE OF DATE. Park Cliffe, Nr. Windemere. The new dates are 16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> October. Full details in the next Newsletter.**

**Three Counties Show 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> August. Nobody has approached me to act as rally marshal so that means that there will NOT be a rally at this show.**

**NEW RALLY 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> October. Hartsholme Country Park, Lincoln**

**31<sup>st</sup> December - 2<sup>nd</sup> January New Year Rally. Hidden Valley, North Devon. If you are interested then please contact Sandra & Bernie Wisely at 2 Mount Pleasant, Bishops Itchington, Southam, Warwickshire. CV47 2QE. Tel. No. 01926 614 194**

**13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> July (2 nights). CLUB & COMPANY RALLY, Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Wores.**

**Application forms for this rally were in the May Newsletter. The closing date was 29<sup>th</sup> June.**

**26<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> July (3 nights). Beacon Park, Lichfield, Staffs.**

Rally Marshals: Tricia & Ted Pratt ( 01283 538818) assisted by Barbara & John Cox ( 01262 671 762).

Site Fee: £4.00 per night. No Electricity. Rally Fee: £2.35. Both inclusive of VAT.

Booking slips & cheques payable to Mrs. P.M. Pratt, 3 Grafton Road, Stapenhill, Burton upon Trent, Staffs. DE15 9DN. Tel. No. above.

You may arrive on Thursday p.m.. This is virtually a GREEN FIELD site although toilets & disabled toilets are available in Beacon Park.

**Get together.** On Saturday evening includes Jacket Potato meal, dessert & drink. £4.00 per head, pay with booking slip.

**Attractions:** Park is adjacent to Lichfield City Centre & Cathedral. Park attractions include small golf course, pitch & putt, tennis & bowls.

**Directions:** Beacon Park is situated in Lichfield just off the A51 Tamworth to Rugeley Road. Go round the island with the Bowling Green Pub in the middle, take the A51 Rugeley/Stafford Road, turn immediately **right** down Walsall Road then **left** into Lower Sandford Street, follow signs for Car Park. Beacon Park is through car park keep to **right**

**PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE**

**30<sup>th</sup>. July - 2<sup>nd</sup>. August. (3 nights). Woodlands C.P., Devil's Bridge,**

**Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, Mid Wales.**

Site Tel.No./Fax. 01870 890 233. Emergency only.

Rally Marshals: Margo & Colin Lumb; Gill & Bill Hopkins.

Site Fee: £7.00 Electricity & T.V. £1.75. Awning: £1.00, Dog: 0.25p all per night incl. VAT.

Rally Fee: £2.35 couples: £1.75 singles; plus 60p per adult in excess of two. All incl. VAT.

Booking slips & cheques payable to: Mrs. M.G. Hopkins, 46 Elizabeth Crescent, Chester. CH4 7AZ. Tel.No. 01244 675 180.

Site has good toilets, showers + disposal point - non electrics some part sloping. Site on hill above entrance. Good shop and daytime café at entrance.

**Attractions:** Waterfalls 300yds; Hotel 500 yds downhill; PO/shop in village ½ mile; Rheidol Valley Steam Railway to Aberystwyth 12 miles by road/rail. Power Station: Silver/Lead Mines Museum; Red Kite country; Strata Florida Abbey; plus much more else.

**Directions:** From South A470, & from North East A483/489/470; both to join A44 from south east towards Aberystwyth; just past Dyffryn Castell turn **LEFT** onto B4343 then **LEFT** again onto A4120 - from junction site is on **LEFT** in two miles (if you reach waterfalls/bridge you've missed it!)

From Aberystwyth take A44 eastwards to Ponterwyd; turn **RIGHT** onto A4120 and follow as above.

Send S.A.E. for confirmation of booking/and/or map directions.

**2<sup>nd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> August. (3 nights). Peacock Inn, Cutthorpe, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire.**

Site Tel.No. 01246 232 834 (Emergencies only Landlord).

Rally Marshals: Pam & Ted Hancock & Jan & Vic Hicklin.

Site Fee: £4.00 per night. (incl. VAT). NO ELECTRICITY. Rally Fee: £1.35 + 50p per person. (incl. VAT).

**BLOCKS ESSENTIAL ON FIELD.**

Use of toilets in daytime otherwise GREEN FIELD Site.

Booking slips to: Mrs. J. Hicklin, 381 Manor Road, Brimington, Chesterfield.

Derbyshire. S43 1PP. Tel.No. 01246 236 157. Cheques payable to Mrs. J. Hicklin.

**Attractions:** Bar meals available. The site is on a bus route to Chesterfield - famous for its Crooked Spire. Open air markets Friday & Saturday. The site is on the edge of the Peak Park, 6 miles from Chatsworth House & Park and close to Bakewell & Matlock.

**Directions:** 3 ½ miles west of Chesterfield. Take the B6051 out of Chesterfield - signposted NEWBOLD. BARLOW for 2 ½ miles. At crossroads turn **LEFT** into Cutthorpe B6050 signposted BASLOW. Site 1 mile on **LEFT**.

**16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> August (3 nights), Siddington Village Hall, Nr. Macclesfield.**

Emergency only tel. No. 0789 0676 859.

Rally Marshals: Elizabeth & Bryn Morgan & Nora & Ven Venables.

Site Fee: £3.20 per night. (incl. VAT). Rally Fee: Singles £3.00, Couples £4.50, (incl. VAT), this includes the use of the village hall.

Cheques payable to B. Morgan. SAE for confirmation of booking & site directions to B. & E. Morgan, 44 Mersey Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, SK4 3DJ.

Tel. No. 0161 432 4869.

This is a **GREEN FIELD SITE**. Use of the Village Hall toilet facilities during the day. Two outside toilets open 24hrs. Most of the pitches are ***SLOPING SO LEVELLERS ARE ESSENTIAL***. Nearest shop & Pub, 2.5 miles.

**Dogs allowed on leads.**

**Attractions:** Jodrell Bank Telescope & Arboretum - 4 miles. Macclesfield market town & Silk Museum - 5 miles. Capesthorne Hall - 1 mile. Redesmere ¼ mile.

Saturday. American Supper. Please bring some food to share on the communal buffet table and your own drinks

**Limit of 30 vans, Minimum of 25 vans.**

**24<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> August. (4 nights) Van Bitz, Cornish Farm, Shoreditch Nr. Taunton, Somerset.**

Site Tel. No. 01823 321 992 (Emergency only).

Rally marshals: Betty & Andrew Entwistle.

Site Fee: £3.50 per night. NO electricity. Rally Fee: £1.50 per person (both fees incl. VAT).

Booking slips to: Mr. & Mrs. M.A. Entwistle, 8 The Dell, Mytholm, Hebden Bridge, West Riding of Yorkshire, HX7 6DP. Tel. No. 01422 843 057.

Cheques payable to: M.A. Entwistle.

**Attractions:** Taunton the county town of Somerset with castle and many historic buildings. Nearby is Wilton House, there are many small villages worthy of a visit.

**Directions:** From M5 junction 25 follow signs for Taunton. At first set of traffic lights at Creech Castle turn **left** s.p. Corfe B3170. Take 3<sup>rd</sup>. **left** into Ilminster Road again follow signs for Corfe. Bear **right** at roundabout onto Blackbrook Way. Bear **left** at next roundabout and follow road to the end "T" junction which is the B 3170. Turn **right** and then take the next **left** into Killams Drive. Take 2<sup>nd</sup>. **left** into Killams Avenue and follow

the road passing housing estate and finally over motorway bridge. Cornish Farm is immediately after the bridge on the **left hand side**.

IGNORE the first entrance to the main house and proceed to the second entrance (with C.L. sign) which is a little further along the road into the orchard.

**LIMIT of 30 vans.**

### **29<sup>th</sup> August - 3<sup>rd</sup> September. ( 5 nights) Shoreham Air Show, Sussex.**

On site mobile: 0771 284 8716.

Rally Marshals: Shirley & Chris Sturgeon.

**Nightly** donation to R.A.F.A. £2.00. Rally Fee: £2.35 (incl VAT).

AirShow Tickets cost £14.00 Adults, £8.00 Child. Saturday & Sunday inclusive. payable in advance.

NO Electricity. GREEN FIELD Site with water tap & Loo emptying.

Booking slips & cheques payable to A.N.Fowler, 20 Hawkins Close, Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex. BN43 6TL. Tel.No. 01273 594 479.

Saturday evening buffet meal available £3.53 each, incl. VAT. Please state and pay in advance if interested. Send S.A.E. for confirmation of booking.

Please state van model for organisational purposes.

**Attractions:** 2 day AirShow with on ground entertainment, bicycle rides & dog walks from site (Dogs MUST be on leads at all times).

**Directions:** On A27 between Brighton & Worthing, leave A27 at traffic lights opposite the Sussex Pad Hotel and turn into Airport This is the ONLY entrance for motorcaravans).

**Please DO NOT arrive before 10.00a.m. Wednesday. Restricted to first 30 vans.**

### **7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> September. ( 2 nights). Ludlow's Food & Drink Festival. Ludlow**

#### **Secondary School, Ludlow, Shropshire.,**

Rally Marshals: Sheila & Ivor Barnett & Nora & Ven Venables.

Site Fee: £6.00. ( incl. VAT). NO ELECTRICITY. Rally Fee: £ 2.35. (incl. VAT).

Rally slips to Mr .I. C. Barnett. Highlevel. Farden, Bitterley, Nr. Ludlow,

Shropshire. SY8 3HV. Tel.No. 01584 890 428. Cheques payable to: I.C. Barnett.

***Please include a SAE.***

**GREEN FIELD SITE** with all level hard standings. Heated Hall for evenings. Leisure Centre adjacent. 20 mins. walk to town centre. Bus service available.

**Attractions:** This weekend is Ludlow's Food & Drink Festival which is held on the Saturday & Sunday. There is a Sausage Trail, Bread Tasting, Ale Trail etc..

**Directions:** On A49 from South follow "South Shropshire Leisure Centre" signs. At 2<sup>nd</sup> roundabout turn **left**. Following signs go under railway bridge and turn **right** at the signs and **left** into Leisure Centre car park. Then follow A.S.O.C. signs.

On A49 from North follow "South Shropshire Leisure Centre " signs on the B4361. Turn **right** into Leisure Centre car park, follow A.S.O.C. signs.

Limit of 30 vans. Rally closes at 4.00 p.m. Sunday.

**No arrivals before 4.30 p.m. Friday.**

**13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>. September, ( 3 nights ).Shepton Mallet Motorcaravan & R.V. Show,The Royal Bath & West Showground.**

Site Tel.No.07751 598 028.( Marshals' mobile).

Rally Marshals: Stella & Ian Ross & Dorothy & Baz Wellard.

Site Fee: Special Club prices.Arrival day Thursday £23.00, Friday onwards £18.00. Rally Fee: £2.35.( incl.VAT).

Send Rally Fee £2.35 with rally slip & SAE to Mrs.S.Ross,33 Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.Essex.RM14 IDL.Tel.No.01708 228 075.Cheques payable to Mrs.S.Ross.

By return you will get a special booking form, which should be sent to the organisers *with the site fee* to obtain tickets.

There will be a "For Sale" board so bring along your motorcaravan related items for sale and put up a postcard.The rally ends on Sunday but you may stay on site until 12.noon Monday.

**Rally limited to 100 vans.**

**20<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup>.September (3 nights),Northern Motorcaravan Show,York Racecourse.**

Emergency Tel.No. 0771 409 1349 (Marshal's mobile).8.00 - 10.00 am & pm.

Rally Marshals:Pauline & Neil Rogers & Evelyn & Ben Mansfield & Jean & Ian Sellers.

Rally Fee:£1.75 (couples),£1.25 (singles) Both incl.VAT

The special Club rally fees are:arrive Thursday £24.00, arrive Friday £22.00, arrive Saturday £20.00.

The rally ends at 12 noon Sunday but you may remain on site until 12 noon.Monday 24<sup>th</sup>.September.

You may either use the form enclosed in the Newsletter or fill in an application form from MMM or Which M'Van using the special fees and mark the form *A.S.O.C* in large letters. Send this form back to the organisers, Warners, **before 24<sup>th</sup>.August.**

Applicants after this date cannot rally with the Club.

This rally starts on Thursday and finishes on Sunday 12 noon but you may remain on site until Monday 12 noon. ***Please remember to send a rally slip with a cheque for the Rally Fee*** (payable to N.C. & P. Rogers)

to: N.C. & P. Rogers,3 Appleby Close, Aldbrough St.John.Richmond, North Yorks.DL11 7TT. Tel.No. 01325 374 540.

**21<sup>st</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> September ( 2 nights).Penybont T & C.P.,Bala,Gwynedd,Wales.**

Site Tel.No.01678 520 549.

Rally Marshals:Helen & John Greenwood..Tel.No. 0701 0702 919 (Mobile).

Site Fee:£8.95 including electricity per night. Rally fee:£1.50 per person.Both incl.VAT.  
Booking forms & cheques to: John Greenwood,5 Ellesmere Road, Mynydd Isa,  
Mold,Flints. CH7 6UJ. Tel./Fax. 01352 754 794.E-mail jdvw@jdvw.freeserve.co.uk  
The site has hardstanding ,camp office & shop,heated toilet block.Very close to  
the town and Bala lake.A site that we have used before now upgraded to  
4\* status.Full site facilities.

**Directions:**From A5 take the A494T to Bala..On entering Bala from N.E. follow  
B4391 and site is on *right after ½ mile round sharp bend.*

*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

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!**

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 14 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 14 DAYS BEFORE EVENT IF POSSIBLE PLEASE**

## 'Yes' to showers

I WAS SURPRISED to read Clinton Grant's letter (May issue) about his occasional use of the shower. We chose Herman, our Harmony, for the length of the beds and for the shower compartment, which gets frequent use. We always stay on CLs. If there is a shower, well and good, but more often than not we both have our morning sprinkle in Herman.

Storage space is a problem, but we load the compartment with cases, boxes, water bottles, etc. during travel, then store it all in the awning when we make camp. We also take heavy duty polythene sacks to stash gear under the van overnight - risky, but we've been lucky so far, probably because there is nothing of value to nick.

Clinton asks if the shower unit could be optional. I'm surprised it isn't. Do all Auto-Sleepers have one as standard?

Strip washes are all very well but, personally, I couldn't do without my morning shower and my husband agrees 100 per cent.

*Jill Harrison*



WE WOULD SAY that we have used only our own showers regularly since they were introduced, first in trailer vans, then in motorhomes, and have always found them invaluable. We have never been happy about the hygiene in public showers and toilets.

*Dennis and Edna Lucas*

---

## 'Why do/don't you ...?'

INTERESTING AND RELEVANT questions were asked by members taking part in the Technical Forum arranged by Auto-Sleepers at the AGM rally. At one point in the two hour-long session more than 100 members crowded into the room where Tony Campbell was standing in for Stephen Small, who had been injured in an accident.

The atmosphere was reported to be constructive with members anxious to tell A-S what they wanted in their motorhomes and to assist in

pinpointing problems needing attention, although there were occasional sharp exchanges when long-standing complaints seemed not to have been recognised by the Company.

Amongst other matters raised, questioners asked for battery chargers to be fitted with indicator lamps to show if they are on or off when connected to electric hook-ups, for better quality inspections to ensure faults are cured before vehicles leave the factory, for better communication between A-S and dealers to make the options available on vehicles more widely known, and for better attention to be given at the design stage to avoid the designing-in of problems such as hot exhaust pipes too near to water pipes and tanks.

Problems with the heights of lockers and bike racks on some models, getting curtains unhooked for cleaning, the heating-up of shelves over fridges, cold draughts from Ford cabs, and the desirability of fitting loose carpets as an option, were all mentioned.

The dismantling of furniture needed to get at leisure batteries in some models was criticised, as were the bad positioning of blown-air controls, water heater switches, and under-sink and toilet doors hung on the 'wrong' side in others.

There was a call for more lockers for extended use, and the point was made that some owners bought vehicles with overhead beds to gain more storage space. Possibly not unconnected were requests for lockers large enough to take bigger gas bottles, a 240-volt ring on the cooking hob, and for better winter/summer insulation.

There was considerable support for a complaint about poor lighting caused, it was said, by the use of down-lighters which did not illuminate lockers. Someone wanted an 'instant' hot water system, while someone else asked A-S to provide conversions using gas instead of petrol/diesel.

Handbooks came in for criticism, mainly because they were felt to be insufficiently detailed or clear.

Amongst the 'hardy perennial' points made was the need for A-S management and designers to 'live' in the vehicles they produce as a means of helping them achieve better design detail and greater practicality of use. The need for better access to spare wheels was also drawn

to attention. There was general support for the suggestion that A-S should carry out night-time reversing tests [presumably in dark locations - Ed.] to discover how inadequate reversing lights were.

The enthusiasm of members for their vehicles was apparent in the meeting. It ended with expressions of thanks and appreciation and members saying they would like consideration to be given to further such meetings in the future. A-S are actively considering all the points made.



## Finishing touches

I WOULD LIKE the Company to install as standard a storage place where a large vacuum flask can be firmly held, a strong coat hook either in the shower or where a bowl can be placed to catch the drips from a long, heavy, wet coat. The option of a fourth, belted, seat instead of the sofa in high-top vans, would also be welcome.

**Marjorie Thompson**

*Now you've read what members at the AGM rally raised at the Technical Forum, what else would you like to see put into your vans, done away with, or altered to improve your motorhome experience? Send them in - we'll print them and pass them on - Ed.*

---

## Rallies round-up

WE ENJOYED the AGM rally. The AGM was interesting; there was very good food and service at the dinner, and the fine music group rounded off the evening very well. That more than made up for the very boggy conditions on the rally field. Well done, Nora and the rest of the team.

Our thanks to Barbara and Ray Whiley who organised the follow on rally which enabled us to see more of the zoo and the locality.

After that, a boggy start to the Peterborough rally where the Club was not so fortunate, with the pitches located a considerable distance from the nearest showers and toilet block. They were always busy because non-booked ralliers had to share them too. Still, it was a great weekend

with excellent entertainment and we continued to smile through gritted teeth and spend money. We were a bit disappointed at the lack of Auto-Sleepers on show. We think it would be better if manufacturers were more involved - you get a better idea of motorhomes if you can see them in daylight, instead of the extra lighting used at indoor shows.

We've just returned from the Severn Gorge rally run by Barbara and Alan Potter. This was also a very busy and enjoyable weekend with lots to see in the area and get-togethers in the barn each evening. Thanks, Barbara and Alan. It's a brilliant site we would recommend to anyone wanting to visit the local attractions [like the Iron Bridge Museums - Ed.], not forgetting the nearby pub where reasonably-priced meals are served on large plates. The site is all-year with mainly hardstanding pitches and a high standard of facilities. We wish we could have spent more time there.

*Patricia and David Mayne*

---

### **Mixed feelings about Brownhills**

BEFORE LAST MONTH'S ASOC *Newsletter* appeared with our item on Brownhills charging extra for tracing a gas smell to a leaking cylinder when they carried out a habitation service, we received a letter from Les Boddy, their Service Manager, saying that the charge was a mistake. Early in June we received a refund cheque.

This is a pleasing outcome, tending to show that at least one company takes the trouble to read the questionnaires it asks customers to complete. However we still think that Brownhills would improve customer satisfaction if they produced a chart showing the jobs to be done in the habitation service and afterwards gave it to the customer as a record of exactly what work had been carried out.

*Jean and Ian Day*

*Unfortunately our experience with Brownhills differed from that related on the next page by Wilf and Shirley Johnson. A copy of their e-mail on warranty service has been sent to Brownhills for comment and we hope to publish a reply from Newark next month - Ed.*



READING Jean and Ian Day's item regarding value for money at Brownhills reminded us that we, too, have had problems with them.

We bought a new Clubman GL VW Auto-Sleeper in September 1999, which was delivered in February 2000. We asked for the passenger seat to be fitted to swivel around. At the end of March the vehicle was delivered to us with a twelve-month warranty. During the year 2000 we returned to Brownhills several times with complaints about the swivel seat.

To cut what is a long story short, the seat was eventually refitted by Auto-Sleepers who gave their opinion that the wrong seat was fitted in the first place. We are now well satisfied with it.

March 2001 arrived and we enquired regarding the service check on the vehicle before the warranty ran out. They informed us we had to pay £130 to have this done. Surely this was not right - but they insisted that it was. We decided not to let Brownhills do the work.

On 30 May the service was done by our local VW dealer group, who told me that the service should have been done by Brownhills free of charge. We were very satisfied with the price charged - much less than Brownhills wanted.

*Wilf and Shirley Johnson*

---

### **Found at Banham**

A GREEN MAT was found on site after members had left the AGM rally field at Banham Zoo in April.

If the owner will telephone us at 01603 452593, we would be pleased to take it to the Club and Company rally.

*Ray and Barbara Whiley*

---

### **More storage drawers**

FOLLOWING THE RECENT INTEREST in ASOC *Newsletter* about Beeny Bits drawers, there is a company in the North who undertake this type of modification. Although I have not used them, I've seen their work,

which is absolutely first class. Indeed, when I spoke to the chap who does the work he told me that his first concern was quality. If a job doesn't feel right he won't take it on, because he values his good name - a refreshing view in this cost-conscious society.

Anyone interested could contact J.H. Caravans, Unit 11, Low Mills Trading Estate, Lowmills Lane, Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury WF13 3LX (01924 495 436). There is a website at: [www.jhcaravan.co.uk](http://www.jhcaravan.co.uk)

**Andrew Entwistle**

---

### **Another tyres experience**

TYRE PROBLEMS AND BLOW-OUTS were mentioned at Banham. While I don't have much in the way of records, my story is briefly this:

In November 1994 we were travelling on A14 at about 55 mph when the near-side rear tyre blew out. I moved to the side of the road (there was no hard shoulder) and changed the wheel. In March 1995, as we were travelling along M25 at about 60 mph, the off-side rear tyre went. It was a bit difficult as the traffic was heavy and we were at a point where three lanes of a slip road came in on our left. I pulled up on the hard shoulder and phoned the rescue service. Because there was no grassy bank to get out on to, only a cold, wide and deep river, we stayed in the van and had a cup of tea.

Both experiences were quite frightening but there were no problems in controlling the van. I just took my feet off the pedals and let her come to rest.

I got two new tyres at a depôt of ATS Southern Ltd. The manager told me that the basic problem was that the original tyres had been intended for light loads and short journeys - typical town delivery work. The replacements tyres were for heavy loads and long distances: Michelin 185-14 MICH XC4S 6PR VAN TL which cost a little over £60 each.

The basic problem was that my tyres (five years old) had perished on the side walls. I think the moral is to look very carefully at tyres and seriously consider changing them every five years. I know that some people have had very serious problems with blow-outs.

**Nial Reynolds**

## Really carefree

WE SO ENJOYED Keith and Daphne Garnsey's item in the March Newsletter [about using farm sites and travelling light] and totally agree.

We've travelled thousands of miles over the years, always in a 'pop-top'. We never worry about finding a campsite until about six o'clock - often much later. If we don't find one, so be it. We find it's much more fun not knowing just what's around the next bend in the road. As for the so-called modern facilities - we just forget them. We, too, belong to the Caravan Club and just love those CL sites.

As well as touring all over the UK and Ireland we've been to Australia seven times, always renting a bog-standard, no-frills camper. All we need is gas and a good leisure battery. Our golden rule is to always leave the site tidy and cleaner than we found it.

We've just returned from Spain and what a treat it was to find the good old ASOC Newsletter on the mat. We love it.

*Clive and Lyn Denton*

*Have Clive and Lyn found the recipe for contented motorhoming? Thanks for the appreciation of the Newsletter - everyone who writes for it, take a bow. You make it what it is. All I do is put it together - Ed.*

---

## Competition

### Flying flags

WE SEE THEM ALL THE TIME, but do we really know how national flags are made up? Ian Capes, CEO of the Auto-Sleepers Group, and his family have put together the quiz printed on the next page. The first correct entry drawn out of the hat will win another great prize presented by the Company.

To allow time for as many members as possible to take part, the competition is open longer than the one we published last Christmas, but entries must be received by Auto-Sleepers no later than 31 July 2001.

If you don't want to cut your copy of the Newsletter, photocopies of the entry form will be accepted.

## FLAGS COMPETITION

---

*Cross out the answers with which you do not agree.*

1. Every country has at least two colours in its flag  
TRUE / FALSE
2. All Scandinavian countries have a cross in their flags  
TRUE / FALSE
3. The Vatican's flag has a big cross in it  
TRUE / FALSE
4. The Union Jack appears only in the UK flag  
TRUE / FALSE
5. If you spilt red paint on the star in the Jordanian flag, you would have the Palestinian flag  
TRUE / FALSE
6. While animals appear on some countries' flags, none has a legendary animal  
TRUE / FALSE
7. The flags of France, Chile, Cuba and the UK have nothing in common  
TRUE / FALSE
8. All national flags are rectangular or square  
TRUE / FALSE
9. The flags of Switzerland and the Red Cross are identical  
TRUE / FALSE
10. The Qataria and the Bahraini flags have the same pattern  
TRUE / FALSE

Send the completed form or a photostat to Charles Trevelyan, Auto-Sleepers Ltd, Orchard Works, Willersey, Broadway, Worcs WR12 7QF marked 'Competition' to arrive by 31 JULY.

NAME .....

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

.....



## For sale

**WHEEL TRIMS, BUMPER.** Two wheel trims to fit Peugeot face-lift Symphony. As new: **£8** the pair. Tubular S/S bumper to fit Clubman. Delivery mileage only: **£85**. Can bring to Club and Company rally. Phone Geoff Rothwell 01282 702249 (Lancs).\*

**GENERATOR, HEATER.** Honda 1000 generator. Little used, good condition: **£375** ono. Thermix gas heater 900. Latest model, up to required standards. As new: **£75** ono. Can be viewed at Club and Company rally. Phone Michael and Glenna McLaughlin 01425 619961 or mobile 0779 058 8684 (Hants.).

**SYMPHONY 2-LITRE PETROL**, on 320 chassis. 'N' reg., 1995. 25,000 miles. Equipped to usual A-S standard, plus Fiamma awning and Status aerial. Full service history. Taxed and MoT until October. In good clean condition. One owner; non-smokers, no pets. **£17,600**. Phone or e-mail Ken House 01 803 551811 (Devon), ken@symphony.freeserve.co.uk \*

**TROPHY VW T4 2.4 DIESEL 2-BERTH.** 'L' reg., 1993, 44,000 miles. Tax and MoT until August. Extended SWB hi-top van conversion with shower room. All usual A-S refinements. Additional family member forces reluctant sale. VW dealer serviced for last four years. Very good condition; many extras. **£14,000**. Phone or e-mail Jonathan Woods 01324 832700 (Falkirk), WoodsJ@bp.com

**RAMBLER 2-LITRE EXPRESS.** 'L' reg., 1993, 36,000 miles. Main dealer serviced. Waste water tank, alarm, double bed conversion. Good condition inside and out. One owner. Also free-standing NR Motor Chalet. **£10,250**. Phone Edwin Fletcher 01695 575838 (S. Lancs).\*

---

*Note: Advertisements followed by a \* mean that the advertiser has made a donation to Club funds. To each we say 'Thanks for the donation'. Our thanks, too, to the member (of whose name I regret I didn't note) who stopped me at the AGM rally to give me a donation for an ad. that had already appeared - Ed.*

## Contents

Auto-Sleepers at forty	2	Radio silence	8	Mixed feelings	14
Gathering of the Clan	3	Stopping awning drips	9	Found at Banham	15
Club & Company Rally	4	Camping & Caravan 100	10	More storage drawers	15
Good rally VAT news	5	Rally supplement	Centre	Another tyres experience	16
Willersey re-organisation	6	'Yes' to showers	11	Really carefree	17
What's cooking?	7	'Why do/don't you?'	11	Flying flags competition	17
A-S want your photos	7	Finishing touches	13	For sale	19
Limiting the liability	7	Rallies round-up	13		

---

## Committee Members

President	Charles Trevelyan	013 8685 3511
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	Norma Caley	017 7263 2734
Minutes Secretary	Barbara Potter	018 4427 4021
Chief Rally Marshal	Ben Mansfield	017 2336 9769
Chairman, AGM Sub-Committee	Nora Venables	019 0233 2105
Chairman, Club & Company Rally Sub-Committee	Baz Wellard	013 2923 1259
Press Officer & Technical Information Group Liaison Officer	Brian Smith	014 8784 1786
Regalia Officer	Andrew Entwistle	014 2284 3057
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..