



AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS' CLUB

Newsletter



No. 155

August 2001

Variety is the spice ...

ONE OF THE PERKS of editing *ASOC Newsletter* is that almost every morning the postman brings a rich assortment of letters, advertisements and announcements from members and would-be members, as well as from companies and public relations firms hoping to get free publicity for their site or product. Switching on the computer downloads e-mails and there are often messages from members on the answerphone, too. Almost everything is to do with what one blurb described as 'the motor-home experience' - although I'm not quite sure where a press release about stairlifts fits in with that.

Because of our policy that the newsletter is intended to be written by and for members, and that no-one but members (or people wanting to buy an Auto-Sleeper with a view to becoming members) can advertise in it, much of the mailbag not from members goes straight into the recycling bin. That is as it should be - the newsletter stays focused on the Club and its activities. Wider views are supplied by the commercial motor-caravanning magazines. I hope most members manage to see copies of one or other of those, whether or not they subscribe to them, because they help broaden our horizons by letting us know what the latest developments are on the manufacturing side, suggesting places we might like to explore in this country or abroad, and, not least, by giving details of other clubs' activities.

Belonging to a club and getting wrapped up in all it does can be very satisfying, but it can sometimes lead to a narrowness in outlook and loss of perspective that take away the enjoyment and appreciation of all that motorhome ownership can bring as a life-enhancing (and -prolonging?) experience. Unfortunately there is sometimes evidence of a failure to understand that - as with a recent note from a member instructing me not to include any accounts of members' holidays in Europe in *ASOC Newsletter* 'because holidays are nothing to do with the Club'. I found that rather sad.

In February's newsletter I suggested that perhaps we should run a Club campaign encouraging caravanners to relax and be laid-back in order to enjoy our hobby more. There's certainly a need for it.

Ian Day

Chairman's Chat



Becoming a Company?

AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and in the May newsletter, I reported that your Committee was considering whether to recommend that the Club become a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG). I asked for members with specialist knowledge to serve on a small sub-committee to examine this question and to advise the Committee.

At the time of writing, no member has come forward to join this sub-committee, although three have put their views in writing. One member has resigned from the Club until such time as it becomes a CLG, having had previous experience of litigation. Nial Reynolds [June issue] supported the proposal, as did Arthur Smith [July newsletter], although Arthur's view of a limited company is rather different from what we envisaged. More written contributions to the debate would be welcome: please send them to either the Editor (for possible publication) or to the Secretary.

The Committee's understanding of the advantages of becoming a CLG is based on a discussion document prepared last January by Ian Day following considerable research, for which we are most grateful. If agreed at next year's AGM, the Constitution would need to be amended and would become the Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Committee would become a Management or Executive Committee and its members would become Directors of the Company for the period during which they serve. A Company Secretary would need to be designated, as would the address of a Registered Office. The Company Secretary would be responsible for notifying the names of the Directors and Company Secretary to Companies House, to which annual accounts and returns would need to be submitted.

Members would notice little if any difference in the day-to-day running of the Club. They would benefit from the extra protection offered by a CLG, especially the fact that their liability would be limited to a previously agreed sum, which could be as little as £1. There would be no need for the Club's name to include the word 'Limited' (except on the formal notice calling the AGM) and there would be no need to issue shares.

Members would, of course, still be responsible for their own actions (*i.e.* if they were personally in the wrong) - there is no way of avoiding personal responsibility.

With no sub-committee to advise us, the Committee has decided to now seek professional legal advice. A decision is urgent and should be made at next year's AGM. The decision is yours - be assured that you will be kept fully informed as we learn more.

Shares and site ownership

I AM GRATEFUL to Arthur Smith for his contribution in July's ASOC *Newsletter* on whether the Club should become a limited company.

Arthur refers to his suggestion 'many years ago' that a limited company be formed and is amused at the apparent *volte face*. However, it must be remembered that the Club and indeed the world have changed during those years, and there is now a greater need to protect members from any claim for damages.

Arthur suggests the formation of a company limited by shares, whereas what we (the Committee) envisage is a Company Limited by Guarantee. If his suggestion were adopted, it would be necessary for each and every existing member, as well as every new member (and there are as many as 350 new members each year) to invest in shares. With approximately 1500 members at present, the capital raised would be £150,000 - a very small sum to buy or lease and develop a smallholding for use as a Club site. It is likely that the provision of service facilities alone would need much more than that sum. I would not be surprised if the cost of developing a site were counted in millions, rather than thousands, of pounds.

As members left the Club (again, some 350 each year) their shares would need to be sold. The administrative work would be colossal! As for the house being let rent-free to a Club member in return for help with the Club administration, we are not exactly overwhelmed when we seek volunteers to serve on the Committee or Sub-committees. In addition, the site would need resident wardens - who would expect to be paid.

As Arthur says, small clubs sometimes grow. My hope is that ASOC

never grows to the size where staff must be employed. We would lose the friendliness and sense of sharing that is the essence of the Club. Sorry, Arthur, there is not really a *volte face* - just an attempt to recognise the increasingly litigious nature of society and to protect members as much as possible.

Ray Whiley

Improving the Executive

WITH 20 YEARS MOTORHOMING and caravanning behind us, during which I have built three motorhomes, I can claim to have very practical and logical views about them.

For us, there is no motorhome to better our Executive in meeting our criteria of a base vehicle that doesn't rust around the door and bonnet edges after a short time, has a full fibreglass body that doesn't develop leaks at the joints or corrode and is not too wide or long to prevent us parking in car parks, or getting down country lanes.

However, a Mk II version of the Executive would be improved if it incorporated a drop-down TV table to give more workspace when dishing up food, a pull-out cutlery and contents drawer in the narrow cupboards beside the wardrobe or fridge (that hideous drawer inside a door under the sink is an insult), an outside storage locker ('Beeney Box') under the offside skirt in which the leisure battery could be fitted instead of in its present unserviceable position under the driver's seat, a totally under-floor heater freeing up the base of the wardrobe for much more internal storage, removable carpets, and a built-in rubbish bin - I can't understand why they're not fitted in all motorhomes and caravans.

We visit the shows and, in our opinion, many more motorhomes are available which seem as good as Auto-Sleepers. If the Company want to stay ahead and keep their market lead, they must very seriously consider up-dating their old favourite models. It must be more economical to update a very good existing model than to plan and produce something entirely new.

Jack Bamber

We've sent Jack's constructive letter on to A-S to help their thinking - Ed.

'Are you receiving ...?'

REPLYING TO SEAN HOLLAND'S LETTER about poor radio reception in the June issue, he and others may find these notes helpful.

For best reception, the aerial should be mounted vertically in the centre of the roof with a large metal ground plate underneath. Of course, this is a bit impractical if the roof is fibreglass - in any case this type of aerial is mostly used when the vehicle is equipped with a transmitter.

The nature of radio waves is such the 'dead spots' (areas of poor reception) will be noticed, especially in a moving vehicle, but provided there is no actual fault in the radio or aerial, reception within the service area of the transmitter should be reasonable for most of the time.

Before replacing an aerial, it might be as well to check that the existing one is correctly installed by checking that its base and the outer braiding of the cable are making good electrical contact where it's clamped to the van, because corrosion is not uncommon there.

If it's possible to gain easy access to the connections on the back of the radio, check that the aerial plug is making a good connection either to the radio itself or to the customised tray into which most radios slide. If it's necessary to remake any connections to the aerial cable, please remember that the inner conductor is normally much thinner than a TV aerial's one and is a loose zig-zag fitting inside the insulation - don't pull it out.

If all the above fails to find anything untoward, the next step would be to do some checks on the radio itself - but how to go about that is another story.

N.B. Important. Don't attempt any of these suggestions unless you feel competent to do so. If you decide to call a service engineer, it's helpful to note (in writing) whether the problem is on all wavebands or not, or all programmes or not, and if there is interference present.

Albert Brown

Authoritative help from Albert, one of the stalwarts of 'Tiggers' - Ed.



IN 1995 I bought an Executive on the Boxer chassis and the radio would only pick up the FM wavelength. Despite letters to all concerned, I gave up and bought a small portable to use in the motorhome. I did, however, discover that a batch of vehicles had gone through with aerial problems and that making the hole bigger on the wing or re-siting the aerial was the answer. I didn't fancy a Peugeot dealership, who admitted they wouldn't know what they were doing, drilling holes in my new motorhome. The problem was solved when the Executive went in for modification to stop water ingress on the battery. A new battery was fitted and the radio worked. Nobody could say what was done and I didn't care - the radio now worked.

Eric Jones

We've sent copies of both Albert's e-mail and Eric's letter (of which the above is an extract) to Sean Hollands - Ed.

VAT's simple

WE'VE READ SEVERAL ARTICLES in which members mention the burden of VAT and we were particularly interested in John Tidbury's piece in June's *ASOC Newsletter* following a member's comment that it's a burden on rally marshals to get VAT receipts.

We've just run our first rally and could not see any burden. When you go into a shop or supermarket, they give you a till receipt which has its Vat number on it. If it hasn't, you ask for one. After the rally you list your income and expenditure, attach those receipts and post it all off to the Treasurer.

We have seen no great effort beyond keeping the receipts and listing them. The great bonus was that we had 28 super people saying complimentary things to us, and all of us having a great time.

Mike and Jeanne Hall

Good to have a positive slant on this. Perhaps it all depends where you do your shopping. Our thanks also to Mike and Jeanne for marshalling a rally for the first time - we hope it won't be the last. Incidentally, our Treasurer, and others, gently remind me that Customs and Excise are responsible for VAT, not the Inland Revenue. Sorry - Ed.

Riveting experience

THE FIRST TIME my wife and I used our Clubman GL in anger, the water pump failed to work as it should despite testing all systems prior to our trip.

On our return home I arranged for our dealer to sort the system. It was found that the fuse holder and the spade connector had parted company due to the rivet holding it failing. One new rivet and the problem was solved.

Our second trip out resulted in a complete failure of the van lighting circuit - not funny when trying to make up beds at 11 pm. In daylight I investigated and found one more rivet had failed, but this time I was able to jury rig the offending part, and all was well.

To sum up: should any member suffer a similar fate, to save a lot of time and aggro, check for failed rivets as well as for failed fuses.

John Ward

Stimulating showers

LETTERS REGARDING SHOWERS in recent months indicate how different we all are in our caravanning requirements. We've had caravans since the mid-60s - two trailers and four motorhomes. True, the first van had no shower facilities, but with all the other vans, we only used the shower once and that was in Italy. We used it then instead of the site's showers because young ladies seemed more than happy to use the gents' showers with their boyfriends if their own were full. Broad minded lot, those Italians.

Apart from delightful semi-naked young ladies rushing in and out of cubicles with poorly-fitting door locks, Peter's main recollections of the van shower were clouds of steam coming from the roof vent and lugging gallons of water both to and from the van, and generally swabbing everything out. We vowed then that only in a dire emergency would we again use the confounded shower. We haven't yet met up with that situation.

Most decent sites have excellent shower facilities and if they don't, the van facilities provide more than adequate ways of remaining reasonably wholesome.

Talking of wholesome, does Mike Hall [June issue] really drink water from the onboard water storage tank? Yes, we do take along an electric kettle. Many continental sites include electricity in the daily charge, so why use gas? If the amps are sufficient for the toaster, yes we use that too.

Our vote is most definitely for leaving out the shower facilities. Hope this adds to the arguments.

Peter and Georgina Durrant

Rally fee discrimination?

I FEEL I MUST WRITE to ask why single persons wishing to attend three of the rallies advertised in the June *Rally Supplement* are expected to pay a higher rally fee per person than couples. In addition I notice that one rally is charging only 60 pence per adult in excess of two. Surely as site fees are the same for both the single person and couples, so the rally fee should be the same per person.

Are we seeing discrimination against single people creeping into ASOC? I hope not, because at times it can be an uphill struggle to locate hotels that don't charge a single person supplement.

Harold Cartwright

I've found some sites do charge per person, but I leave rally officers to explain the no doubt complicated arithmetic they use to set rally fees. I'm sure it has nothing to do with discrimination - Ed.

Harmony cushion wanted

WE HAVE HAD our '92 Harmony for nearly a year and wouldn't be without it. We found it at Brownhills, for sale 'as seen' with 83,000 miles on it, but as it ran well and was within our limited price range, we took the plunge and haven't looked back. The four of us (we have two young daughters, who sleep in the overhead bed) have had four great holidays

in her, including a week in North Wales over Christmas when outside temperatures dropped to -10°C at night, with nine inches of snow, but we were toasty.

We've also enjoyed numerous weekends at shows, etc. using the flexibility of a motorhome. To protect the rear doors we had a Towtal t-bar fitted and this autumn are considering having air-suspension added as the rear springs are sagging a bit due to their age. If any members have had airbags fitted, we'd appreciate their observations.

The only problem we have is that the driver's side backrest bench cushion is missing. Because this forms part of the double bed, we've had to improvise with non-standard cushions bought at the Northern Show. We tried contacting Auto-Sleepers, but they couldn't supply a replacement, and we've had no luck searching the motorhome shows for a second-hand one. We'd be grateful if any member could help us with the problem. The cushions are blue/grey in colour, with a zigzag pattern, but we're not too worried about a match, just as long as it fits.

Martin and Diane Perry

Carver question

ON THE DAY I WRITE (4 July) my Duetto is just two years old. I've just paid a bill for £97.80 for the repair of its Carver P4 heater unit. This was to replace the combustion PCB.

The unit has worked only for about 40 hours in the two years I've owned the van.

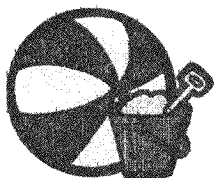
Am I unlucky, or has there been a problem with these heaters? If other members have had a similar experience, perhaps they would write in to *ASOC Newsletter*.

Alan Doggett

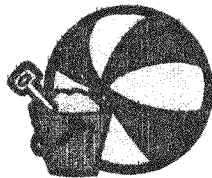
Is this a one-off, or have you suffered too? We'd all like to know - Ed.

'There's nothing like eavesdropping to show you that the world outside your head is different from the world inside your head.'

- Thornton Wilder



AUGUST 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.

2ND - 5TH August. Peacocok Inn, Cutthorpe, Nr. Chesterfield.
THIS RALLY HAS HAD TO BE CANCELLED.

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

31st December - 2nd 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

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

30th July - 2nd 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.

2nd - 5th August (3 nights) Peacock Inn, Cutthorpe, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire.
THIS RALLY HAS BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO THE FOOT & MOUTH OUTBREAK.

16th - 19th 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. Capesthorpe 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.

24th - 28th 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 3rd. **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 2nd. **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.**

29th. August - 3rd. September,(5nights) 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.Sat. & Sun.incl. 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.

7th. - 9th. 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.per night** (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.

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 2nd 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.

13th - 16th 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 & Eirwen & Ben Cox.

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 1DL.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.

20th - 23rd 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 24th.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 24th.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.

21st - 23rd 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.freeseerve.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.*

2nd - 4th October (3 nights). Hartsholme Country Park,Skellingthorpe Rd., Lincoln.

Emergency Tel.No. 077 68 16 45 22.(Marshal's mobile).

Rally Marshals: Janet Sutterby & Eileen Kellard.

Site Fees:£9.60 per night including electricity & VAT *Payable to the site warden on arrival.* Rally Fee:£2.00 incl.VAT. payable with booking slip to Janet Sutterby,3 Bilsby Road, Alford,Lincs.LN13 9EW. Tel.No. 01507 46 24 49.Cheques payable to Janet Sutterby. *Please book before August 18th ,if possible.*

Attractions:Small site with toilets & showers.Part of an extensive park and nature reserve with lakes and footpaths.Visitors Centre and Cafeteria.Local shops.Good bus service into city centre.A room is available for social gatherings in the evening.

Directions:Take the A46 Lincoln by-pass.Turn towards the city centre on the B1378. Watch for the Country Park sign on the **right** (easily missed!).Keep **left** inside gates. Arrival time - 12 noon on the first day. Numbers limited.

NOTE Change of dates 16th - 19th October.(3 nights).Park Cliffe Camping & Caravanning Estate,Windemere Cumbria..

Site Tel.No.015395 31344.

Rally Marshals:Jill & James Bertlin & Sue & Peter Coward.

Site Fee:£8.00 per night (incl.VAT). Electricity,if required,£3.00 per night.

Rally Fee:£2.35 (incl. VAT).

Booking slips & cheques payable to Mrs.J.Bertlin,The Rockeries,Lindale,Grange -over-Sands,Cumbria.LA11 6LQ. Tel.No. 015395 34500 *(N.B. We will not be contactable between 12th.Sept. 7 6th.Oct.)*.

Attractions:Situated in 25 secluded acres of fell land.Ideal location for walking,golfing & sightseeing or just being lazy!There is a fully equipped launderette,heated ladies & gents shower/toilet block,electricity to all pitches.Squirrel's a small licensed restaurant & bar with a take- away service and well stocked licensed mini market.On Thursday night a special meal will be arranged at "Squirrel's".

Directions: Leave the M6 at Junct. 36, follow A590 to Newby Bridge, then turn **right** at roundabout on to A592. After 3.3 miles turn **right** at signpost for site. Entrance to site is 1/3 mile on right. **Warning:** Approach from Bowness-on-Windemere is not recommended as the turn left to Park Cliffe is difficult to negotiate on busy main road.

25th - 28th October. (3 nights). Eastham Hall C.P., Lytham, Lancs.

Site Tel.No.01253 737 907.(Emergency only).

Rally Marshals: Kath & Norman Benyon, Barbara & Vic Kaye.

Site Fee:£10 per night.(Incl.VAT). Includes electricity and use of centrally heated hall.

Rally Fee:£1.50 per van + 75p per person.(Incl.VAT).

Booking slips to Mrs.B.Kaye,14 Firthwood Rd.,Coal Aston,Dronfield.S18 3BW.Cheques payable to: B & V. Kaye. Tel.No. 01246 412 679.

Attractions:All the fun of the sea-side at Lytham,St Annès,Fairhaven & Blackpool. Thursday.Coffee Evening.Friday 26th. A coach to Todds Motor Caravans for a social evening including refreshments.Large accessory shop.Cost between £2.00 - £3.00. per person for coach.DO NOT send money for coach. Saturday. Fish & Chip Supper in the Hall.We also exchange Christmas cards with friends(saves postage).Bring any spare camping equipment for a Bargain Table.Raffler Draw & Quiz.Please indicate on Rally slip if you wish to go on the coach trip also if you want Fish & Chips.

Sunday. Coffee & biscuits - rally ends.

Directions: A 584 to Lytham.On entering Lytham at first mini roundabout turn **right** over railway bridge to next roundabout.Turn **right** s.p. Kirkham.Site on **right** after ½ mile.

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?

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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:-

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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!

Tyre life

A LETTER from David and Betty Anderson about Continental tyres [January issue] contained a remark made by a local tyre company that the tyres needed replacing every three years irrespective of wear. This has been niggling away at the back of my mind, wondering whether it was sound advice and whether it related only to Continental tyres or to motorhome tyres generally.

In May's issue, Tony and Chris Bennet reported that their tyre depot had advised that because a tyre was three years old it needed replacement.

Please could we have some authoritative guidance on this point from the tyre manufacturing industry or the vehicle builders. It would certainly be news to me and, I guess, many other members, if all motorhome tyres should be replaced every three years irrespective of wear.

Alan Jones



IS THE PROBLEM with Continental Contrans tyres peculiar to Peugeot-based vehicles or to all Auto-Sleeper models?

In the June issue it was said that owners of these tyres should increase the pressures by 7psi above normal recommended pressures to allow for greater safety. In fact the maximum stated pressure for the Contrans 195/70 R15C LS23 tyres is 65psi, which is the normal running pressure of the rear tyres on my Gatcombe. Surely to inflate the tyres beyond that pressure could cause damage.

I am sure that owners of vehicles other than Peugeot will be looking for clarification that their vehicles are not affected.

Dennis Allen

These letters were sent on to our President, Charles Trevelyan, who received this reply from Roger Sanders of Continental Tyre Group:

Mr Alan Jones - Tyre Age

There is a general recommendation by both the British Rubber Manufacturers Association and the National Caravan Council that tyres on leisure vehicles should be replaced not later than seven years, but pre-

ferably within five years of the date of their manufacture. The reason for this is that tyres on leisure vehicles tend to spend more time in a static condition than tyres on cars for example. Because of this the ageing process that affects all pneumatic tyres is more rapid. Vehicles which normally reside in coastal areas are more prone to tyre ageing and consideration should be given to replacing them more regularly.

Mr D.J. Allen - Auto-Sleeper 'Gatcombe'

The reports received by Auto-Sleepers, Peugeot and Continental suggest the concern surrounded the combination of the Talisman, Executive, Boxer chassis and the Contrans tyre. Also the investigation into the causes of the tyre failures revealed evidence of under-inflation or overloading of the tyre. There have been no reports received which would suggest the concern goes any wider than this combination.

The recommendation to increase tyre pressures by 7psi is a general one and intended to increase the margins for error. The maximum inflation pressure marked on the tyre sidewall applies only to North America and is not applicable elsewhere.

The key message that has been highlighted by this issue is that of correct tyre pressure, vehicle maximum loads and load distribution. It is very important that when placing items in the vehicle the distribution of the load is as important as the physical load itself. This golden rule applies, of course, to all motor caravans irrespective of the make, model or tyre fitment.

Roger Sanders

With this I think we should bring the correspondence on tyres to a close, at least for a time. If you still have doubts about correct pressures, get into touch with the makers of the tyres on your vehicle, if possible letting them know the actual loading at which you travel - obtainable by a visit to the nearest public weigh bridge when you are in travelling trim - Ed.

Cutthorpe called off

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE has claimed another Club casualty. An outbreak in Derbyshire has made it necessary to cancel the Club rally scheduled to be held during the first weekend in August at the Peacock Inn, Cutthorpe.

From the President

Workshops and Amethyst

WE HAVE RECENTLY MOVED the After-Sales Department to a new, enlarged factory on the Industrial Estate at Willersey. It is quite splendid with a painted floor, compressed air ring main with extending air lines, a steam cleaner bay and there will shortly also be an hydraulic lift. New work benches, storage cabinets and racking already look first class.

The arrival of new software allows us to control our stocks, raise invoices, book in vehicles and keep a record of all that we do. We are, therefore, fully computerised - gone are the days of a hand-written diary - and a glance at the workshops will demonstrate the highest standards. Co-located are our new offices, equipped with new bespoke furniture. All our workshop and administration staff will be wearing logo'd clothing.

Our new workshop is the first of a series of country-wide motorhome service centres and all the standards we set are to be followed by the rest. The service we shall offer is much broader than in the past, and this may best be described as a 'one-stop shop' facility. We aim to take on all servicing, refurbishment and retro-fitting, with the latter ranging from under-floor lockers to reversing aids. We have a very loyal staff of three to whom will be added other personnel of equal quality. Already there is much interest in our, as yet, unadvertised facility.

For our loyal monococque customers, the Amethyst will be launched in the latter part of this year. This model is quite stunning and features continental-style furniture of an altogether new design. Longer than the traditional Amethyst, it lacks for little and is sure to be the favourite of many.

Charles Trevelyan

This is an extract from the address Charles gave at the AGM, during which he also outlined the progress made on the Continental Tyres situation, details of which were given in June's ASOC Newsletter - Ed.

Seen on a Borders signpost: 'Historic route to M6' - noticed by Bryan Oliver.

Brownhills reply

WILF AND SHIRLEY JOHNSON wrote last month about problems they had had with Brownhills. We sent their letter to that Company, and gave them an opportunity to respond. We have sent a copy of this reply to Wilf and Shirley.

I was very disappointed to read that such a relatively simple matter as a swivel malfunction could not be satisfactorily resolved. There are a number of different types of swivel available and I have asked our Service Manager to look into the differences between our own and Auto-Sleepers'.

I believe there was confusion between ourselves and Mr Johnson with his service request. There are actually two parts of the vehicle, mechanical and habitation, which ought to be checked after twelve months. We currently charge £130 to undertake an annual habitation and safety check and £179 for an annual mechanical service. We appreciate the mechanical service may be more than a VW or Peugeot garage; however we perform additional work as an acknowledgement of the nature of the use a motorhome usually receives, *i.e.* long periods of inactivity. I have contacted our local VW garage who say the vehicle at twelve months should have had an annual inspection mechanical service, which is over £100. I cannot, therefore, understand Mr Johnson's reference to the service being free of charge.

I would welcome the chance to talk to Mr and Mrs Johnson directly in an effort to resolve this matter to their satisfaction.

Rest assured we are making a huge daily effort to ensure information and the work undertaken in our service department is professional, efficient and value for money. My sincere apologies to Mr and Mrs Johnson.

Jeremy Pearce, Aftersales Director

Garlic: 'I didn't realise what it had done to my breath - one doesn't with garlic - until this afternoon when I stood waiting for someone to open a door for me and suddenly noticed that the varnish on the door was bubbling.' - Frank Muir.

A rattling good job

WE HAVE A GATCOMBE which is almost a year old. Here are one or two suggestions and comments resulting from its use.

Of the six motorhomes we've had, I've never driven one with so many internal rattles. All the cupboard doors rattle, although we've found tightening the catches has helped a little. On top of that, we have a squeaky side bench, but I can't trace the cause. Any ideas on dealing with both these points would be welcome.

The drinks cupboard is not only effectively heated by the fridge, which is something I thought had been sorted before now, but the bottle clips are screwed into plywood - bad practice in my book. I'm glueing a 2 x ½ inch strip of wood across the plywood and will screw the clips to that in the hope that they don't fall off again.

The instruction book tells us to keep the back door away from the fridge vents, but there is no provision for this if you like the door open. I've therefore made a strut about 8 x ¾ x ¾ inches with a square cuphook in each end. A hole is drilled through the bracket on the van and the hooks fit the hole and the bracket on the door. Perfect.

Apart from these things, we find the improvements above the Clubman we had, make for a super vehicle, and the TDI diesel engine is a must and performance at around 31mpg, not bad.

David Morris

Auto-Sleepers do make a spacer for use between vehicles' doors and sides, but it seems not many people know that. Certainly it was news to a number of members attending the Factory Seminar held at the AGM rally - Ed.

Club website

DEVELOPMENT of an internet website for the Club is well under way, 'bringing the Club into the 21st Century,' as Ray Whiley put it at a recent Committee meeting. Input from members with experience in designing such sites will be welcomed. Contact Baz Wellard at the phone number on the back of this issue.

Talisman swivel seat?

I OWN A 1999 TALISMAN GX and would very much like to fit a swivel to the front passenger seat. I've seen several for sale at shows and even seen a couple fitted in Executives, which are virtually the same vehicle. However, what I should like to know is whether it is possible to get a swivel for the Peugeot which is like the one I used to have in a Trident. In particular I want the runners to turn with the seat. I've seen the very type in a Harmony, but perhaps the seat base was different.

I spoke to someone from Auto-Sleepers at the Stratford show, who led me to believe that their swivel would be as I wanted, but when I called at Willersey I was told that the runners do not turn, but stay on the base.

I await responses from members or other experts with eager anticipation.

Alan Schofield

Ravenna rhapsody

DURING OUR RECENT month in Provence, and whilst camping for a few days at Tarascon on the Rhone, we befriended a retired Dutch couple. He was a retired architect and was extremely interested in our Ravenna on the new Ford Transit chassis. His comments regarding the body design, and the overall quality and finish, were exceptional. He said that he had not seen another motorhome that impressed him as much as ours. Their son, a designer, was equally impressed when he visited a few days later.

Incidentally, Tarascon becomes quite lively during the third week of June when it is festival time, with concerts, massed bands, bull running, parades, fairs and markets. The campsite is in the middle of the town and in the shadow of what is reputed to be the finest fortified chateau in France.

John and Jan Geeson

'Punctuality is something that when you have it, there's often no-one around to have it with you' - Hyida Baker (Contributed by Elizabeth Grimsley).

Low power-steering level

I HAVE HAD my new Executive with its 2.8HDI Peugeot engine since April this year and have done about 1,300 miles. When I checked the levels I noticed that the PAS reservoir level was below the minimum. I took the van to Becks of Eastbourne who confirmed that there was a small leak and arranged to fix it.

One does not expect the PAS fluid level to change and perhaps it is not always checked as often as the engine oil or the brake fluid. In addition, the dealer told me they have seen another two or three newish vans, both petrol and diesel with X or Y registration marks, with a similar problem. Members may like to check that their PAS level is where it should be.

David Pocknee

Thanks, David. His e-mail was sent on to us by the Chairman of the Technical Information Sub-committee, Ian Ross, who can be contacted at 33 Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster, Essex RM14 1DL, phone 0170 8228075, e-mail ianross@zoom.co.uk

Sites seen

Camping Pfronten, Bavaria. Situated a short walk or cycle ride from the town of Pfronten and just one kilometre from the Austrian border, this pretty site sits in a valley surrounded by alpine peaks. There is good walking in the area, gondolas on a nearby aerial ropeway take you up to the mountains, where hang-gliders swoop and swerve down to the valley bottom. Oberammergau and Garmish-Partenkirchen can be reached by train or road and Innsbruck makes a good day out. We discovered this site ten years ago and re-visited it earlier this year to find that its standards were even better than on our first trip, but credit cards are still not taken.

Jean and Ian Day

Happy decade ends

WITH REGRET we have to succumb to one of this couple's depreciation

of legs and hip through fair wear and tear. Walking to a bus stop and our destination, and back again is now too much. With sorrow we have sold our Medallion, the best of four Auto-Sleepers we've had over ten years, and returned to our original touring caravanning, embarked on 44 years ago. Our first love was a small car and caravan, so the 21-month-old small Renault has now been upgraded to tow a small Lunar.

When we first joined ASOC we felt immediately accepted. They were such a friendly group with no sign of backbiting. We decided it was down to the Newsletter, which cemented the membership throughout the country. This was mainly due, we discovered, to two hard-working couples who put everything they could into making the Club a success - with the assistance of many others, who *all* subsequently became very dear friends. So many that we could not mention all their names.

It is with great reluctance that we part company with these friends, especially our Northern family and including those at Willersey. We hope to caravan for some time yet and trust that some of us will meet up on a site, at a show, in a town, or maybe Bluewater/Lakeside or similar.

Wishing you all the best in the future.

Dennis and Edna Lucas

We're sorry to lose Dennis and Edna after such a long association, and for the reason that has prompted their return to towing. Everyone will wish them well for the future. - Ed.

Obituary

Ann Wilcox We are sorry to learn of Ann's death on 25 June. She and Barrie bought their Pollensa last August as a token of hope when Ann's cancer was in remission and in anticipation of Barrie's retirement. We hope he will feel able to continue using the van.



For sale

GATCOMBE 2.5 TDI AUTOMATIC, 2-BERTH. 'W' reg., 2000, 11,500 miles. Air conditioned, rear forward seat, Sherbourne fabric. Alarm, extractor fan, Fiamma awning, bike rack. Excellent condition. Cost

fabric. Alarm, extractor fan, Fiamma awning, bike rack. Excellent condition. Cost £42,000, will accept **£34,950**. Phone Barry Cooke 015395 38841 (Cumbria).*

LEGEND 2.5 TDI, 'P' reg., 1996, 13,500 miles. 2-bike rack. No smokers or pets. Immaculate condition: **£23,500**. Would consider Duetto part exchange. Phone Mike Cole 01304 372810 (Dover).*

TOPAZ 2.5 TDI (102 bhp) AUTOMATIC. 'W' reg., April 2000, approx. 6,000 miles. Immaculate condition: **£26,000**. Phone Clive Benton 01271 379803 (N. Devon) or mobile 07712 045358.*

FREE-STANDING CABANON APACHE MOTOR CHALET for coachbuilt. Ground area 12' x 9' (too high at rear for our Duetto). 5/6 years old. **£150** ono. Phone Gill Hopkins 01244 675180 (Cheshire).

AMETHYST 2.5 TDI AUTOMATIC. 'R' reg., May 1998, 11,000 miles. Heavy duty chassis, PAS, engine immobiliser, new MoT. Extras incl.: Fiamma awning, top box, 2-bike rack, solar panel, 2 leisure batteries, 'Battery mate', 3-speed roof fan, TV aerial, Status booster, alarm, Silver Screen. Garaged; no pets, non-smokers. Immaculate condition. Genuine reason for sale. **£28,950** ono. Phone Geoff Pluves 01202 721803 (Dorset).*

LEGEND 2.5 TURBO DIESEL, 'R' reg., 1998, 18,500 miles. MoT to May 2002. FSH. Extras incl.: Omnistor 500 awning, Sigma remote control alarm, Fiamma 2-bike rack, Omnivent fan, top box. One owner. No pets, smokers nor children. Excellent condition throughout. **£28,950** ovno. Phone Keith Ashby 01256 816067 (Hants.) or e-mail kashby@atlas.co.uk

TALISMAN GX 2.5 DIESEL, 'W' reg., 2000, under 8,000 miles. Extras incl.: 4-berth option, Fiamma awning and bike rack, Status aerial and booster, Van Bitz Strikeback alarm system with remote. Non smokers; no pets. **£25,750**. Phone Mike Huish 01823 430307 (Somerset).*

LEGEND 2.5 TURBO-DIESEL, OVERCAB BED. 'P' reg., 1996, 18,000 miles. 3-speed reversible roof fan, Fiamma awning, Fiamma 2-bike rack, Status TV aerial. Service record. Excellent condition: **£24,000**. Phone Brian Godley 0208 643 5016 (Surrey).*

TALBOT EXPRESS 1986, 56,000 miles for disposal because needs replacement windscreen panel (existing severely rusted) unavailable locally. Recent new clutch and 4 tyres. Year's MoT, taxed end Nov. Also Tengate Raleigh Motorchalet awning, 2-bike rack. For sale as whole or parts. Phone Doug Johns 01348 873577 (Fishguard).*

*Note: Advertisements followed by a * mean that the advertiser has made a donation to Club funds. To each we say 'Thanks for the donation'. An acknowledgement, too, to the Hopkins for their donation - Ed.*

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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** 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.

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