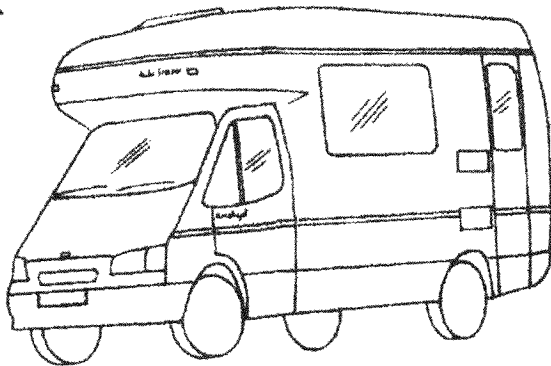




**AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS' CLUB**

Newsletter



No. 161

February 2002

From the temporary Editor

FOR ONE MONTH ONLY, editing the Newsletter is in my hands whilst Ian and Jean Day enjoy their holiday in New Zealand.

I have tried to keep to the same format as usual; any differences are due to the use of a different computer, operating system, program and typeface.

Material for future newsletters should be sent to Ian, at the address on the back page, and not to me.

Ray Whiley

The Big Decision

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS included with last month's newsletter explained the implications of your Committee's recommendation that the Club should become a Company Limited by Guarantee.

Since last year's AGM, members have been kept informed of this suggestion through the newsletter. Fewer than a dozen members have contributed to the debate in any way. John Normandale, the Club's first elected Chairman and a former Company Secretary, has been consistent in his opposition. He believes that a better alternative would be to increase the Club's public liability insurance, and that the risk of having to pay out a large sum for damages is minimal. He feels that the Club risks becoming a scaled-down version of the Caravan Club, and that it could be more difficult in future to find members willing to stand for election to the Committee.

In matters of insurance, the Committee draws on Ian Day's professional experience. It is neither possible nor economic to insure against all possibilities. Our vehicles constitute high fire and explosion risks, and any public liability insurance must have an upper limit beyond which members would be responsible for any deficit. The cost of such insurance for a Club of our size is high and premiums are rapidly increasing. Insurers might refuse to deal with a claim if there were any breach of policy conditions, even if inadvertent. Incidents could therefore arise which lead to claims, but for which no cover exists.

Committee members consider that they are acting as "good and prudent managers" (to quote Lord Denning) in making this recommendation. It is now for you, the members, to decide at the AGM.

Ray Whiley

Chairman's Chat

It's up to You!



A MEMBER WROTE TO ME a few months ago suggesting that the ASOC Committee was "out of touch with the wishes of the members". Another wrote recently saying that many members "had voiced their disappointment in the Committee and its remoteness" and that "our Committee seem to be getting into the habit of brushing aside any remarks, emanating from the ordinary members, which are not to their liking". Do you agree with these views? If so, what can you as a member of ASOC do about it?

You can, of course, write to your newsletter saying why you feel this way, and offering constructive criticism. You can put forward a motion to be debated and resolved at the AGM, or ask questions at that meeting or during the Open Forum. You can offer yourself for election to the Committee, and make any changes that you feel to be necessary "from within".

You need few qualifications to be a Committee member - in fact, you need only one: to be a member of ASOC. You must, of course, be prepared to take on one of the roles which are necessary to the successful running of the Club; you must be prepared to attend half a dozen or so Committee meetings each year; and above all, you must be prepared to remain confident and cheerful whatever may happen.

Someone once described a committee as "a group of the unfit appointed by the unwilling to do the unnecessary". This is certainly not true of the ASOC Committee. What is certain is that every club gets the Committee it deserves.

Ray Whiley

Club and Company Rally Sub-committee

ONE OF THE PRIVILEGES of being Chairman is hearing in advance of the entertainment planned for this rally by the team led by Baz Wellard - and it promises yet again to be the superb weekend we all now expect. However, in writing to me with the latest details Baz said that, after four years as Chairman of the Club and Company Rally Sub-committee, he wished to "call it a day" after next July and felt that another member should take over the reins.

If you would like to offer yourself for this rôle, please let the Chairman or Secretary know. Baz is, of course, prepared to continue until the completion of this year's rally, and until the Committee meeting in September when he will present the final report on it, but would like someone to work with him in tandem for the last few months and to take over the planning of the 2003 rally from September. Clearly, it would be an advantage if the prospective Sub-committee Chairman were to stand for election to the Club Committee at the Annual General Meeting, but this is not essential.

We shall have the opportunity at a later date to thank both Baz and Dorothy for all they have done to make the C&C such a success. Fortunately Baz is willing to continue as a member of the Club Committee and to continue developing the Club's web site (www.asoc.fsnet.co.uk), as well as perhaps taking on another role.

CLG Q & A

SOME OF THE ANSWERS included with the January *ASOC Newsletter* need clarification.

As a Company Limited by Guarantee, one tenth of the **total membership** would be needed for members to require an emergency general meeting. Three quarters of **members voting at an Annual General Meeting** would be needed to approve any change in the Articles of Association.

The fee to Companies House for registering a company is at present **£20**. This is a "one-off" payment. The annual fee for filing accounts is **£15**.

The Questions and Answers on Companies Limited by Guarantee were based on contributions by both Brian Smith and Ian Day; their help is gratefully acknowledged.

Virus Alert!

ANOTHER COMPUTER VIRUS has recently been detected by Baz Wellard in an e-mail sent to him by a Club member. As well as causing great inconvenience, several hours of work, and some expense if undetected, a virus on one computer could affect all members - especially if it happened to be the Membership Secretary's as it might result in losing the Club's address list, so no newsletters!

Members are reminded of the importance of up-dating their virus protection software on a regular basis - weekly for preference.

The National Boat, Caravan & Leisure Show 2002

THIS SHOW, better known to many of us as the NEC, will be held from 16th - 24th February 2002 at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

Last year, ASOC was allocated a small section of the Auto-Sleepers' stand and a number of your Committee manned (or is it personned?) the Club section. The idea of this new venture was to provide a place for members to meet and have a chat as well as to help promote the Club.

This year we again hope to be allocated a small part of the Auto-Sleepers' stand. At the moment this has not been finalised as the Company are still planning the stand and the positions of the various new vans to be displayed. If all goes well, then we hope to have the Club represented for the whole period of the show. Please call in for a chat, arrange to meet friends, or whatever. We look forward to meeting you there.

Neil Rogers

Burnham Carnival Video

MEMBERS WHO WENT TO THE BURNHAM-ON-SEA RALLY in November have asked rally marshals, Linda and Brian Ellis, where they can get copies of the official Highbridge and Burnham-on-Sea Carnival video. The address is: Magic Moments V.C., PO Box 3, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset, TA8 2BR (telephone 01278 795611, fax 01278 783758) and the cost is £15.49 each, including postage and packing.

(This item should have appeared in January but fell victim to technical problems. - RW)

More Tax to Pay?

KEITH ANDREWS has called attention to the Chancellor's pre-Budget report which sets out a number of new steps being considered "to protect the environment".

These include:

- encouraging cleaner road transport by reforming taxation of vans to ensure that lorries contribute fairly towards the costs of using UK roads irrespective of their nationality, while ensuring that taxes on the UK haulage industry do not rise; and

- launching shortly a new strategy for promoting future road vehicles which run off less polluting, low-carbon fuels.

Summary Leaflet, HM Treasury, November 2001.

Keith is concerned that these proposals might lead to extra taxation on our motorhomes, and is trying to contact his Member of Parliament for details.

A year or two ago, when other reforms of VED were proposed which might have affected motorhomes, your Committee made representations to both the Government and the Opposition - the latter seeming to be rather more sympathetic. Clearly, these new proposals will be considered by the Committee, and an appropriate response made if necessary. However, members may wish to write to their own MP's pointing out the low annual mileage of most motorhomes, the care with which they are maintained and the unfairness of increasing taxation on a particular leisure pursuit.

2002 Photographic Competition

JUST A REMINDER that entries for this year's competition are now open. There are two classes - general and humorous - prints only please. The only rules are that an A-S motorhome must appear in each picture, and that digitally altered photos will *not* be accepted. Any size print, but not too large please. Size does *not* matter in this case. Please write a caption, your name, address, telephone number, and membership number on the reverse.

Judging will take place at the Club and Company Rally and there are magnificent cash prizes for the best three entries in each class. Pictures cannot be returned by post, but may be collected after the rally. With the owner's consent some may be used for publicity purposes. ***Please note you do not have to attend the rally to enter.***

Please send entries to me: **Brian Smith**, 9 St Mary's Road, Bluntisham, Huntingdon, PE28 3XA to arrive no later than 15th June 2002.

Farewells

AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR, members leave the Club for a variety of reasons. One recent resignation commented that more and more rallies refuse to take dogs. There is certainly no policy in the Club to discriminate against dog owners; where dogs can not be accepted is because of a rule made by the site owners over which we have no influence - other perhaps than refusing to have a rally there, which would deprive a number of other members of the opportunity of a few days together.

Another reason given for leaving is the necessity of having to book ahead for rallies, unlike some other clubs. Advance booking is to help marshals with planning, administration and catering and to ensure that the capacity of the site is not exceeded. (How do clubs manage if they do not insist on prior booking? Every site has a limit to the number of units it can accommodate, even, for example, the Three Counties Showground at Malvern.) In addition, some marshals need to limit the number attending to what they consider to be a manageable number. Of course, marshals are always pleased to accept late bookings if there is space available: a telephone call at the last minute will find out whether this is possible.

Others comment on the design of current Auto-Sleeper models not being to their liking or to the need for too many keys. One member has exchanged his 'van for a 30 foot sailing cruiser (can we perhaps look forward to the first A-S amphibian for the best of both worlds?)

Ravenna Survey

THE RESULTS OF MMM's SURVEY of the experiences of owners of Ford Transit-based Auto-Sleeper Ravens will be published in the March issue of MMM. I would like to thank all the members who responded by requesting and completing an in-depth questionnaire, and also for their instructive comments and photographs of their motorcaravans.

Mike Jago, Editor MMM

Congratulations

CONGRATULATIONS TO FRED FRENCH who was awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours List. Fred, who has been a member of ASOC since July 1991, was awarded this honour for services to angling, conservation and disabled people (anglers).

In Committee

THE MOST RECENT COMMITTEE MEETING, towards the end of November, dealt with a variety of matters. It was reported that the Club's web site had been "hit" (looked at) 181 times in the first five weeks. Club representation at the Earls Court and NEC shows was considered. At the former, a Club stand would be impractical for reasons of space, although Committee volunteers had offered to man one. At NEC, two couples will be on duty at the Club table on the Auto-Sleepers' stand each day: last year's experience proved that this level of cover was necessary to enable each couple to see at least something of the show.

The draft Articles of Association (for members to consider if they agree that the Club should become a CLG) were distributed for further discussion at the next meeting and it was agreed to include with the January *Newsletter* a sheet of typical questions to which members might need to know the answers. After months of fact-finding and discussion (dating back to January 2001) it was proposed and unanimously agreed that this change of status should be recommended to the AGM.

The Membership Secretary reported receiving 97 enquiries, resulting in 56 new members, in the previous two months; five former members had rejoined. In the three weeks or so since members received the annual renewal form, 496 had renewed membership by cheque, 96 by standing order, and 82 had resigned. Dealers had been circulated asking whether they would place Club enquiry leaflets in pre-owned Auto-Sleepers, but to date no replies had been received.

Space permits only a brief summary of all the matters dealt with at this one meeting - the Minutes run to four pages. Being on the Committee is interesting, and hard work at times - many members have rôles which demand the use of their time on a weekly and often daily basis. We are always looking for "new blood" on the Committee: this is essential if the Club is to have a healthy future. The Notice of AGM with this issue gives the date by which your nomination must be received by the Secretary.

RW

Dazzle

HAS ANY MEMBER THE ANSWER to my problem of "sun side dazzle" - especially when driving at this time of the year (Autumn to early Spring), the sun being on a low trajectory?

In our Ford Transit-based Duetto, we find the fixed position visors are too high for comfort, and both of us being small in stature, this is unhelpful.

I recall in previous car-driving days that some vehicles were fitted with side-hinged visors that could be swung out across the gap twixt front 'screen and side-light. Auto-spares shops only seem to stock plastic additions to fix below existing visors.

If anyone has solved this problem, we would appreciate their advice. Please 'phone 01980 610220.

Reg & Ena Whinney

Rambling Reminiscences

HAVING PURCHASED OUR 1994 RAMBLER (Peugeot Boxer Express) in October, my husband and I were "off" to the Suffolk coast to try out our motorhome camping skills for a week soon after. Memories came rushing back when I read the letter in *ASOC Newsletter* (December) about a couple forgetting to take their fresh water hose with them. Michael and I naively assumed this hose was provided "on site" - surprise number one! We drove to the nearest village but none of the likely looking shops could help us - "they're seasonal" was the reply to our request! Now why hadn't we thought of that? We were saved eventually by a smashing chap at the local builders' merchants - "follow my black Saab and I'll lead you to an large out-of-town DIY store". I'm sure he never dreamt he would be sandwiched between a funeral cortege with our high top 'van bringing up the rear.

Mission accomplished, we returned to our site and mentioned the hose to the warden during conversation the next day. "Oh, you should have come and asked me. I've got lots in the shed. Campers are always leaving them behind". I guess we didn't ask being new to the game; the word embarrassed springs to mind.

I'm sorry to ramble on but another letter mentioned difficulty driving Boxer 'vans because of the slope backwards from the pedals. I am the driver of our Rambler and can confirm that this is indeed a problem, but like your correspondent I had a small "extension" piece fitted that fills in the sloping space between the pedals and the seat. It cannot move about because it slots snugly into the box hole beneath the seat; however, by angling it slightly its removal is simplicity itself, and just takes a couple of seconds.

The only thing I'm still getting used to is the feel of my left foot hitting the steering column as it pushes down the clutch. I am a lady with size 7 shoes. How on earth, I wonder, do men with bigger feet manage?

To conclude, may I ask if anyone out there has solved the problem of climbing up into the cab? It is very high off the ground and there is no intermediate step of any kind or any sort of pull up handle. At the moment my beloved husband of 36 years gives me a "bunk up". Beggars cannot be choosers at our age, he says!

Sandy Busbridge

REMEMBER THE ASOC WEB SITE: www.asoc.fsnet.co.uk

Guide Officiel

SEVERAL MEMBERS have shown interest in the *Guide Officiel des Etapes Touristiques Camping-Cars* mentioned by Audrey Goldsmith in the January ASOC Newsletter and in response to enquiries, Audrey tells us: "This publication can be obtained from the Camping and Caravan Club, which has a supply delivered around April or May each year. The *Guide* is published by *Camping-Car Magazine* each year in March or April, but they can be a bit slow in delivering to the CCC. The Caravan Club may also be able to supply the book. I have seen copies on the shelves in some French supermarkets, but they soon sell out.

"The address of *Camping-Car Magazine* is: 12 rue Rouget-de-Lisle, 92442 Issy-les-Moulineux, Cedex, France. I have never had any contact with them, but it may be worth a try if anyone is in a hurry.

"Another suggestion which we have also tried is *France Passion*. This is a coming together of farmers and wine growers to offer motor caravan owners free overnight parking on their properties. They stress that no one is expected to purchase any products, but naturally one does feel obliged to buy something from someone who has given you a safe place to stay overnight. On joining the organisation one receives a book with a map and a plastic card. We lost our card and when Clive telephoned them to ask why we had not been sent a new one last year, he was told by a very nice French lady that "the card she is for life" - but she sent us a new one anyway. The address is: *France Passion*, BP.57-84202, Carpentras, Cedex, France."

Gas in Spain

I LAST WROTE TO ASOC NEWSLETTER requesting information on the availability of Camping Gaz in Spain. We have just returned early (for health reasons) from Benidorm and now have some information to pass on.

On the site where we stayed, you could hire a 13kg bottle complete with regulator and hose extension "very cheaply". I took an empty 3.7kg Camping Gaz bottle and exchanged it on the site for a full one for 860 pesetas which is cheaper than home-bought butane at £10.20 for 7.5kg and Camping Gaz at £10.10 for 3.7kg.

The reason I had difficulty in tracking down Camping Gaz is because it is sold mainly in supermarkets where I spend as little time as possible!

Tom Williamson



February 2002 **Rally Supplement**



*******HELP REQUIRED. Marshals are required to run the following rallies in 2002:**

- 1. Motorcaravan Jamboree, the Kent County Showground, Detling. 17th. - 19th. May .**
- 2. Warners' Midsummer Event, Lincoln Racecourse 19th.-21st. July**
- 3. The Shepton Mallet Show, 12th.-15th. September .**

To date I have had offers to assist at some of the above rallies but NO offers to marshal. No marshals - No rallies!

May I remind you that, unless otherwise stated in the Rally Supplement, all rallies are applied for by posting a rally slip, with a cheque for the appropriate amount, to the rally marshal.

Unless otherwise stated ALL rallies start at 12 noon. Please do not arrive early.

If you are unable to attend a rally inform the marshal as they may be able to allow another member to take your place.

STOP PRESS. 30th. April-May 3rd. (3 nights). Stourton Hill Farm, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire. Due to a change of land useage by the farmer this rally will NOT take place.

N.B. Change of dates. The Lower Greenhill Farm Rally at Salterforth will now last 4 nights from 31st. May - 4th. June.

******New Rally. December 2002/January 2003. 10th. Hidden Valley New Year Rally. Watch this space for dates.**

3rd. June - 16th. June 2002. The Black Forest & Bavaria. A two Centre German Rally at Kirchzarten & Oberammergau.

THIS RALLY IS NOW FULLY BOOKED.

*****Members attending this rally are reminded that they must arrange their own ferry bookings and any insurance that is required.**

14th - 17th. (3 nights).February 2002."Valentine Rally" Grouse & Claret, Rowsley, Nr. Matlock, Derbyshire.

Site Tel.No. 01629 733 233 (Emergencies only,landlord).

Rally Marshals: Jan & Vic Hicklin & Evelyn & Ben Mansfield.

Booking slips to: Mrs.J.Hicklin ,381 Manor Road, Brimington,Chesterfield, Derbyshire.S43 1PP. Tel.No. 01246 236 157

Directions: On A6 between Matlock & Bakewell. **THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL**

25th.-28th.April.National Motorhome Show,Peterborough.

Emergency Tel.No.07714 091 349(Marshals' mobile on 8.00-10.00 am/ pm).

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

Please use the booking form enclosed in this Newsletter if possible.

If you use forms from the magazines please mark the form ASOC and note the special Club site fees:Arrive Thursday:£25,arrive Friday £23, arrive Saturday £21.

Please note that ALL booking forms **MUST** be returned to **Warners** the organisers by **2nd.April** if you wish to rally with the Club.

The rally finishes at 12 noon Sunday but you may remain on site until 12 noon Monday.

*****Then you must also complete a Club rally slip** and return it,with the Rally Fee of £1.75 couples,£1.20 singles (both inclusive of VAT) to:N.C. & P. Rogers, 3 Appleby Close, Aldbrough St.John, Richmond, North Yorks.DL11 7TT.

Tel.No. 01325 374 540.Cheques payable to N.C.& P. Rogers.

Please collect the **Club** rally information pack from the marshals **before** parking.

If you book using the special Club fees then you must rally with the Club.

No arrivals before 2.00p.m. Thursday.

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,there will be no Public Liability Insurance and 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!

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 Evening meal: 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 Evening meal: 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 Evening meal if arranged: 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!

Throbbing Trident Taps

WHEN WE TOOK OUR TRIDENT to Brownhills at Cannock to have a few faults rectified under warranty, one of the faults was a throbbing tap. Because of freezing conditions, we did not put any water into the system, and on arriving at Cannock, Brownhills had no water either so we were only given advice on this particular aspect.

At the back of the cupboard which houses the loo, there is a panel held by two screws. If this panel is removed a pressure screw is apparent. We have been advised to turn it slightly and, hopefully, this will cure the problem. We have yet to try this, but will communicate the result as soon as possible. (Rita telephoned later to say that they had tried this remedy, in artificial light, but without success.)

Something else we learned which might be of use to many folk: because we use the 'van daily, during the cold weather we have been closing the blinds each evening to retain some heat, but the top two little blinds have remained closed for several weeks. Apparently, it is not advisable to keep any of the blinds closed for any length of time as it destroys the "memory" and they will not open again.

Many thanks to Charles Trevelyan for putting the "wheels in motion". We have had the fire extinguisher re-sited, the cooker is now working properly and a new blind, to replace the mal-aligned one, has been ordered.

Keith Taylor & Rita Jones

Pescara Puzzle

MIKE HALL'S COMMENTS in the January ASOC *Newsletter* concerning "a sound suggesting electrical arcing coming from the left area of the dashboard" was referred to Charles Trevelyan, who has replied to Mike:

"I referred this matter to our Technical Interface of the Peugeot Motor Company, Derek Brooker, and he tells me that it is actually not arcing but buzzing from the post heat relay. I am informed that Peugeot know about this and that therefore if you would be good enough to contact your local Peugeot Commercial Dealer they would, I am confident, change the relay and thus this problem would be overcome.

"I do stress on behalf of Peugeot that there is no danger of any electrical arcing - it is simply the relay making a clicking noise which is similar to the arcing sound."

Waste Tanks

I WAS INTERESTED in Brian Green's letter with regard to his waste tank. Like many other Club members, I must have experienced the same problem. No matter how you try, small bits of waste food always go down the drain, to sit in the bottom of the waste tank.

The Auto-Sleeper Manual for the vehicle states that the outlet tap can be blocked by foreign matter and that the tank should be removed from the vehicle for a major clean - rather a drastic solution, I feel.

The cause of the problem is two-fold. Firstly the drain tap is not at the lowest point of the tank and as such waste food always gets left in the tank as the suction of the grey water leaving the tank will not pick up all the waste food particles. Secondly, all the waste food in the tank will, after a while, start to decompose and smell; this smell will then come back up the waste pipes into the habitation area and the toilet cubicle. All the waste pipes from the facilities feed into the tank and as there is no air vent in the top of the tank, any increase in ambient temperature will in turn expand the air in the tank and force warm expanded smelly air up the various pipes into the vehicle. While plugs can be kept in to prevent this smell, there is no plug for the tip-up wash basin in the toilet cubicle, and this area is the worst place for the dreaded smell if the door is kept closed.

The way I have overcome this problem with my 1999 Legend is as follows (see diagrams).

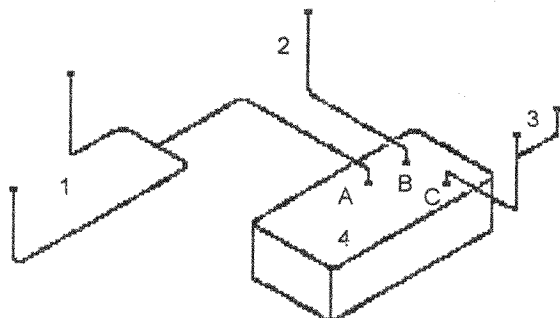
1. In my waste tank there are three waste entry points. I have re-routed the outlet pipes from the shower (two pipes) and the wash basin into one "X" connector, then into a "U" bend (with a drain point), then into a separate tank entry point. The third entry point is not now used and becomes the vent for the tank; as it is higher than the rest of the tank, water will not overflow unless the tank is left to over fill. The "U" bends should be drained regularly, and in winter, when the vehicle is not being used, drained so that they do not freeze. The only problem if you use this system is in deep mid winter, the "U" bends can freeze.

2. The drain systems of both the fresh water and waste tanks do not allow the tanks to be completely drained, as the drain taps are above the bottom of the tank. On the underside and at the centre front end of both tanks, I have bored a large hole of 25mm diameter and fitted a drain tap of my own design. The upper side of the fitting is just below flush to the tank floor, so when either tank is drained, nothing can be lodged round the fitment and all water and food waste is flushed out. I make sure the rest of the vehicle is higher than the front when draining, and flush the tanks out with running

water, via the sink, then re-fit the drain plugs and close the drain taps. Afterwards, it helps to drain the "U" bends, put a nice smelly chemical liquid in the waste tank, a pint via the sink and a pint via the wash basin, which will also fill the "U" bends.

I now have no more smells from my waste tank.

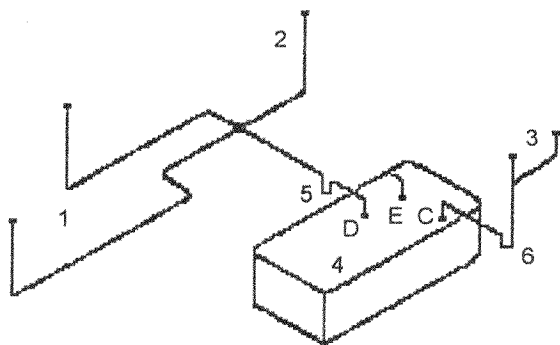
Robin C Gardner



Legend - waste system - as Auto-Sleeper

Key to drawings:

- 1 Toilet Cubicle - shower tray.
- 2 Toilet cubicle - wash basin.
- 3 Sink unit.
- 4 Waste tank.
- 4a Waste from shower tray.
- 4b Waste from wash basin.
- 4c Waste from sink unit.
- 4d Waste from toilet cubicle.
- 4e Tank vent.
- 5 "U" bend for toilet cubicle.
- 6 "U" bend for sink unit.



Legend - waste system - modified

I HAVE A 2000 MODEL LEGEND and suffered the same problem. On inspection it was found that the drain point is almost an inch up from the bottom of the tank resulting in a large amount of stagnant water remaining in the tank. I dismantled the tank from the vehicle and fitted a new drain point, using a right angle drain, on the bottom of the tank at the lowest point. Using a slightly longer pipe this attaches to the original securing clip on the side of the vehicle although I did attach a bungy cord just to keep the pipe from sagging. Fortunately on the Legend there is plenty of ground clearance for this method. I blocked the original drain hole with a rubber bung (sailing dinghy drain bung). I now know that the tank is completely empty when drained. Whilst having the tank dismantled I also fitted an air vent in the top of the tank to help dispel odours.

As a side issue I also fitted a waste level detector using a boat bilge water level switch which fitted nicely to the lid in the top of the tank. As a comment, a boat chandler's is a good source of bits and pieces for motor caravans as they sell good quality parts suited to a tough environment at reasonable prices.

Malcolm Prestwood

I WISH TO THANK fellow member Norman Rendle in taking the trouble to reply to my letter (December issue) concerning gunge in my waste tap. Either he did not understand my question or I did not make myself clear. I am fully aware of the differences in the diameters of the drain pipe and the outlet tap, my query is what is the gunge that looks like coffee grains that continually blocks the tap? As I said before I am most careful as to what goes down the sink and wonder if it is something coming off the inside of the waste tank.

I think fellow member Cedric Cawthorne has come up with a more constructive answer to the problem by replacing the tap with a wine bottle cork. I shall adopt his suggestion in future as after the festive season I shall have a plentiful supply!

Brian Green

CHARLES TREVELYAN writes from the Auto-Sleeper Service Centre to say that they are currently trialling the CAK superdrain tap and have found it to be most successful.

"This is a one piece tap with an internal bore size of three quarters of an inch. The benefit through fitting this tap is that when it is in the open position there is no constriction whatsoever in the routeing of the drain itself, and furthermore through bayonet fixings, attachments can be fitted

to it, for example the need to extend the waste hose accordingly. This tap is both very robust and has a further advantage insofar that it has a very generous length of thread that allows the fixing on the inner face of the water tank to be secured most firmly. We strongly recommend this, and if any owner would like to have one retro-fitted we would be pleased to do so here in the Motorhome Service Centre. This tap was recommended by another Club member.

"We have already fitted a good number of CAK inspection caps to the underside of waste tanks; these allow instant and easy cleaning maintenance and the removal of any foreign matter. Again, we have these in stock in the Service Centre and if any customer would like these to be fitted, we would be only too pleased to do so by appointment."

The Service Centre at Willersey can be contacted on 01386 853511.

(Charles has also sent a most helpful guide to winterisation, but as in February many members are thinking of getting their 'vans ready for the new season, this will be passed to Ian Day for possible publication before the start of next winter. - RW)

Off to Oz

AFTER BEING MEMBERS OF ASOC for the last six years or more, we must now cease our membership. In April 2002 we are going to Australia for a long trip and have decided that we will buy a motorhome there for our travels. We intend at least a year and possibly a lot longer. We have a visa for 5 years. I'm sure the Auto-Sleeper would have aroused a lot of interest amongst motorhomes in Oz!

Initially we intended taking our Talisman GL for the trip but have reluctantly decided against it - apart from the £3000 to transport it to Brisbane (one way) (£2000 from Belgium?), having to have air conditioning fitted in cab and van, 'roo bars, stone guards, extended water and fuel tanks and changing of gas system etc. etc. our wonderful "mobile self catering apartment" had to be sold and the money put into the Oz Fund. We thought about leaving it on the drive at home for a year or more but when son and his girlfriend began asking about borrowing it whilst we were away, then friends were enquiring about borrowing/hiring it next year and the insurance problems involved in all that, she had to go. Fortunately some friends across the road heard it was for sale and came across and bought it straight away - so we know she is in good hands and they intend joining ASOC in the new year.

We will not have an address in Australia but if anyone wishes to keep in touch or any member has questions about motorhoming in Oz we will be

contactable on tomclaxton@hotmail.com (for those with e-mail addresses don't forget that not all of them can be accessed from abroad).

Glad to see that the ASOC web site is now up and running, well done Baz Wellard. The main motorhome club in Australia is 'The Wanderer' with a wonderful web site: Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (www.cmca.net.au); even non members can access this site. Probably the best way to advertise if you are thinking of an Oz Exchange. From it you can even see members' motorhomes that are for sale with a full description and photo (worth considering for the future for the ASOC web site?)

Both of us wish the Company and Club all the best for the future and hope you can get the "Company Limited by Guarantee" problems sorted out quickly. For those members who know us and our preference for wild camping in Europe and boondocking when we were in the United States, we can assure you we will be "going bush" regularly. If we should decide to return to the UK, we will most definitely be buying another Auto-Sleeper and re-joining the club.

Best regards to all,

Tom and Sylvia Claxton

In Praise of Elastic ... or more storage space!

MY HUSBAND AND I have only just joined the ranks of motorhome owners after many years tent camping. A visit to New Zealand four years ago, when we hired a campervan for three weeks to tour the South Island, after visiting relatives in the North Island, sowed the seeds of enthusiasm for ownership.

We were interested to learn last month of arrangements for extra storage in a Duetto by John Parker. The need to store smaller items such as keys, maps, torches and glasses (the list is endless) prompted us to find the following solutions for our Symphony, but they can be adapted to any type of motorhome.

Using a plain material that toned with the upholstery, we made use of the backs of the front seats. A complete head restraint cover was made, two shaped side pieces and one long strip the width of the restraint to join these together. Elastic was threaded through the base hem of the sides and front of the cover to ensure a snug fit. The flat rear surface had a selection of small pockets attached to it to suit specific items.

A second piece of material was made to fit the back of the seat, a large loop of elastic was then attached to each corner of the top of the fabric to hook over the head restraint and two ties attached to anchor the base.

Again individually tailored pockets provide storage for maps, etc. The result is a much tidier 'van.

When we purchased a silver screen we had another storage problem to solve. We searched and found a soft, lightweight fabric to match the roof lining and using the existing fixings in the roof panel we made a small hammock. The colour match is so good we hardly notice it and by using the existing fixings we have not added unsightly additional holes.

The kitchen paper towel roll is also held in place with elastic threaded through the roll and secured by metal rings to existing fixings under the crockery cupboard.

Strips of metal bent top and bottom in opposite directions gave us hooks which can be placed over the narrow storage shelf when on site, very useful for tea towels etc.

A homemade, flat pack step made of three interlocking pieces of plywood fits in the narrow gap behind the base of the passenger seat and when erected makes access to the van easier when on site.

Mary Sutton

Topaz DIY

FIRST THINGS FIRST: we always carry a fire bucket, and a washing up bowl and basket for outdoor use. No hoses; on leaving home we put one egg cup of Milton into our 10 litre water carrier, and on arrival on site we fill it with fresh water to fill the main tank, using a funnel. After filling the tank the container is used for water for making tea and coffee. For waste water, we carry a collapsible bucket. Cleaning the tank is done on a regular basis with soda and hot water poured down sinks.

We always fill our freezer compartment with freezer packs and switch off the gas at night. We carry two light weight chairs that fit nicely in the wardrobe, held in place with plastic curtain wire. Two fold up bikes stow in front when both seats are turned. We always carry and use a silver screen.

This completes our home on wheels after 25 years of getting it right! The Topaz is our only vehicle and it is used daily. We have previously owned a VW Westphalia, a Trident, a Rhapsody and three other Topazes. 2001 has been our best year to date: a total of 107 nights.

Norman and Sylvia Brice

Obituary

WE REGRET to report the death in mid-November of Pamela Millar of Benlech, Anglesey, who had been a member of the Club since May 1999.

TIG

TEN YEARS AGO, in February 1992, a letter from a member said that, in his opinion, "DIY modifications" were an important part of the ASOC *Newsletter*.

Since then, many suggestions made by members have been published, although care in following them is always necessary - see the warning on the back page of each *Newsletter*.

The Technical Information Group (TIG) publishes a number of Fact Sheets containing members' hints and tips - some simple, some more elaborate. Before each fact sheet is published, it is sent to Auto-Sleepers Limited to ensure that the suggestions comply with current British and European legislation. This is especially important as the rules can change very quickly, and the best persons to know what is required are the experts at the factory.

Andrew Entwistle, Chairman of the Technical Information Group Sub-committee, is always keen to receive new material from members; his telephone number can be found on the back page with those of other Committee members.

Wanted

EXTERIOR SILVER SCREENS for Talbot Express facelift model. Duncan Thompson 01260 281905 or 07779 680963 (Cheshire). (See below for possible exchange). *

FORD FLAIR DIESEL, preferably late model, distance no object. Please tel. Peter Russell 0208 953 5206 or write to Shenley Lodge, High Cannons, Boreham Wood, Hertfordshire, WD6 5PL. (Mr. Russell is looking for a Flair with a view to joining the Club.)

For Sale



DUETTO, M REGISTERED, good condition. Kay Fisher, 121 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 6JX, tel. 01865 554 743 or fax 01865 514014.

TALISMAN GL 2.5 DIESEL, J reg. 1992, 40,000 miles. Airide suspension, top box, awning, Fiamma bike rack, interior screens. Taxed, tested. Excellent condition throughout, and inspection welcomed: **£15,995** ovno. Tel. Jeff Wood, 020 8648 9857 (Surrey).

EXTERIOR SILVER SCREENS for Renault Trafic. **£30** or exchange for Talbot screens (see above). Also scooter rack, bargain **£150**. For details tel. Duncan Thompson, 01260 281905 or 07779 680963 (Cheshire). *

CLUBMAN VW 2.4 DIESEL. 1995 (M). 26,000 miles. Four berth. Excellent condition, non-smokers. £4,000+ extras including TB-Turbo, Van Bitz alarm, immobiliser, BatteryMate, TV aerial, booster, Tyron bands, Rustbusters underseal, awning, Silver Screens. Taxed & MOT, full service history. **£22,250**. Serious offers, telephone or e-mail John Francis, 01392 875428 (Devon), jgf@oaks-ebford.co.uk for full details. *

PEUGEOT RAVENNA 2.0 petrol. 1998 (S). 12,200 miles. MOT until October 2002, taxed to September 2002. One owner only, full service history, new exhaust, two Beeny boxes. Excellent condition. Only **£21,000**. Call Graham or Sue Martin, 01306 631229 (Surrey). *

GAS BOTTLES, 1 x 4.5lb Camping Gaz, 1 x 3.5lb Calor Propane, both fully charged. **£20** for the two. Tel. Frank Clare 0208 205 2543 (NW London). *

DUETTO 2.5 DIESEL 1997R 29,000 miles. Taxed/MOT to Aug. 2002, Habitation check to Oct. 2002, full service history. Two berth, shower, extra worktop, Van Bitz alarm. No smokers/pets, excellent condition throughout. **£18,750**. Tel. Ian Wordsworth 01435 873149 or e-mail: iswordsworth@onetel.net.uk (East Sussex). *

FREE-STANDING AWNING, colour Grey & Maroon. Very good condition, hardly used. No smokers, pets or children. Suitable for high top van or similar. **£150 ono**. Tel. Rex Woodruffe, 01242 862963 (Gloucestershire). *

SNOW CHAINS, one pair size F (160.13 to 145.15), new condition (never used) fits several tyre sizes in between, **£30**. Also **MAD AUXILIARY SPRINGS** suit Express body **£20**. Tel. Peter Lloyd Smith, 01223 513030 (Cambridge).

SYMBOL, PEUGEOT BOXER 1900TD, W Reg., 17,000 miles from new. Fiamma sunshade, bike rack, undersealed, extended warranty. excellent condition, no smokers/pets. **£23,000**. Tel. Steve Scott, 01303 262296 (Kent). *

CLUBMANGL VW 2.5tdi, 1997R, 24,500 miles. Excellent condition. Alarm, electric windows, double cycle rack, awning plus annexe, top box. Recent service. MOT and Tax until September. **£21,000**. Tel. Dave Parry, 0118 973 7032 (Berkshire) or e-mail: daveparry@waterend79.freeserve.co.uk.

SILVER SCREENS to fit Boxer cab. Full set, comprising quilted interior insulation together with 'Solar-Frost' exterior. **£55**. Contact John Scott, 01244 381035 (Chester).

Contents

Editorial	2	Farewells	6	Pescara Puzzle	11
The Big Decision	2	Ravenna Survey	7	Waste Tanks	12
It's up to You!	3	Congratulations	7	Off to Oz	15
C&C Sub-committee	3	In Committee	7	In Praise of Elastic	16
CLG Q&A	4	Dazzle	8	Topaz DIY	17
Virus Alert!	4	Reminiscences	9	Obituary	18
NEC 2002	5	Guide Officiel	10	TIG	18
Burnham Carnival	5	Gas in Spain	10	Wanted	18
More Tax to Pay?	5	Trident Taps	11	For Sale	18
Photo Competition	6				

Committee Members

President	Charles Trevelyan	013 8685 3511
Chairman	Ray Whiley	016 0345 2593
Vice-Chairman and Rally Co-ordinator	Neil Rogers	013 2537 4590
Secretary	Pam Davies	023 9428 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	Brian Smith	014 8784 1786
Regalia Officer & Chairman, Technical Information Group		
Sub-committee	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 can not 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.