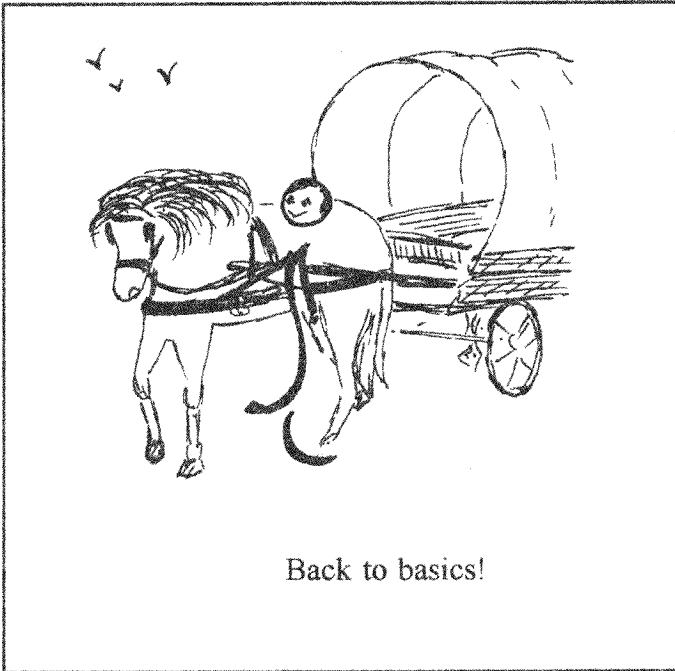




**AUTO-SLEEPER
OWNERS' CLUB**

Newsletter



Back to basics!

No. 163

April 2002

A welcome review

THE SURVEY made public by the Caravan Club last month showed just how many people enjoy our hobby, and at the same time helped shatter outdated ideas others have about it.

Although the figures produced were largely based on information about that Club's own membership, they demonstrated very clearly just how popular caravans, whether motorised or towed, are and the extent to which their owners and users contribute to the economy.

They provide useful ammunition against the activity's knockers. Apart from those with little knowledge of what modern caravanning is and who look down on those of us who don't take 'proper' holidays, there is that other group of motorists - those who seem to believe that they have an absolute right to travel at whatever speed they see fit and that anyone preventing them doing so should be banned from the roads. Caravans, slower-moving cars and lorries, farm tractors, cyclists and pedestrians are, at best, criticised. At worst they are honked at, carved up on the road, subjected to road rage attacks or, far too often, become the traffic accident victims of the impatient.

Very often this irresponsible group (who are not all youngsters) see speed limits as challenges, equip their vehicles with anti-social radar speed-camera detectors, brag about how fast they can get from A to B and resent any suggestion that they are other than the selfish, immature idiots their behaviour on the road clearly shows them to be.

All the more reason, therefore, to read with satisfaction firm evidence that our often-despised caravanning community contributes so substantially to the nation's economy. It's not only a matter of buying and equipping our vans and spending nights on club, commercial and farm sites or attending rallies. There's also the fuel and food we use, the cafés, restaurants and pubs we patronise, and all the bits and pieces we buy away from home. Often it is the spending of visitors like us that helps to keep the economies of rural areas viable.

We hope the Caravan Club's survey will alter some people's view of our hobby and encourage them to try it for themselves.

Ian Day

Chairman's Chat



The fine detail

In your envelope this month you will find the papers for the Annual General Meeting at Newark on Saturday, 4 May. As usual these include the Agenda, the annual reports by the Club's officers and the statement of accounts for the year 2001.

In addition to proposing that the Club becomes a **Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital**, the Committee suggests a number of amendments to the current Constitution. We believe these are needed whether or not the proposal to change the Club's legal status is accepted.

The amendment to Clause 3 is proposed to make it clear that the Club is open only to owners of Auto-Sleeper motorhomes, now that another marque is being built at Willersey.

The amendment to Clause 10 is proposed in the belief that the Club should be seen to be autonomous. I must emphasise that this amendment is in no way directed against Charles Trevelyan - who has served us well as President since the Club's earliest days - but rather to ensure that we can retain his wise and friendly advice for as long as he wishes or feels able.

The amendment to Clause 12 follows the reference back to the Committee for rewording, of a similar proposal last year. The 'empowering resolution', if agreed, would enable the Committee to implement the three-year term of office for Committee members by agreeing which of its current members (following the AGM) would serve for one, two or three years.

The amendment to Clause 14 is proposed to clarify the meaning, as the word 'nominate' (or 'nomination') is used elsewhere in the Constitution with the meaning 'propose for election'.

In addition to seeking the members' approval for the proposed change in status of the Club to a CLG, which requires a two-thirds majority, a number of empowering resolutions (needing only a simple majority) are proposed, authorising the Committee to proceed with the change of

status. Clearly, these will be put to the vote only if the change of status is agreed. Subject to the agreement of members at the meeting, the empowering resolutions will be presented as a 'package'.

The Memorandum of Association is a legal document which must be submitted to Companies House in order to form a company. It follows a prescribed format.

The Articles of Association would, if the change of status is approved, comprise the rules of the Club, like the current Constitution. Considerable effort has been made to ensure that the Articles combine our Constitution with certain legal requirements. The Articles have not yet been checked by a solicitor, as the Committee were unwilling to pay legal fees until a change of status had been approved by members. By doing this preparatory work, we hope to avoid unnecessary expense.

I look forward to seeing you at Newark.

Ray Whiley

From the ex-Chairman

A Company or not?

FIRSTLY, let me thank Arthur and Jackie Claxton for their contribution to the debate. Theirs is one of the very few comments we have received on the Committee's recommendation that ASOC should turn itself into a Company Limited by Guarantee.

Since the Club was founded, a total change in the legal climate has occurred, in that lawyers now advertise openly for customers with half a chance of succeeding in a claim for compensation for all sorts of injuries. They claim against all and sundry.

Some time ago, Ray Young and I undertook a great deal of research into the Club's status and its legal entity, the results of which allow me to write with some knowledge on the subject.

In law, ASOC is an 'unincorporated association', which means that we are a group that without its members would not exist. We have no property. All we have is our subscriptions. We cannot be sued as a

Club, so what is wrong with that status? Well, while the Club as such cannot be sued, individuals within the whole Club can. In reality, an action would probably be aimed at one of the Committee members who, according to the legal authority on this subject, the late Lord Justice Denning, carry individual legal responsibility for the Club's affairs. This also makes the Committee members personally liable for any damages as trustees of the Club's affairs.

Phew! Pretty heavy stuff! With that responsibility, who would want to risk becoming a Committee member? But it doesn't stop there. Any litigant can 'cherry pick' the membership list to seize the assets of any member in order to recover an award for damages.

The Club is insured against Public Liability risks up to £1 million. That sum also includes legal costs, which can eat up a large part of it. Why not increase the amount? Up until 11 September 2001, an increase would probably have cost us around £1,000 a year for each additional million of cover. Now it is likely that the cost of an increase would look more like telephone numbers.

I believe the Club should proceed to become a CLG, which means that the most any member could be called upon to pay would be one pound, whether or not he or she is a member of the Committee.

We should support and protect all our members, now and in the future. After all, the Committee are all volunteers who carry out their tasks for the benefit of the whole Club, and there isn't one of us, on the Committee or off it, who would want to be the unfortunate person selected to pay any damages. There is no suggestion that the Club should renege on its liabilities. The intention is simply to limit our liability to any reasonable level of insurance we can negotiate, plus one pound.

Now, about VAT. Why did we agree to register for that tax? Because we were legally bound to do so. The Committee of the time took the advice of VAT specialist accountants who carried out widespread research, speaking to the accountants for the major clubs and other leisure organisations, as well as to Customs and Excise.

We asked if there was any way we could legally avoid paying VAT. The result of all the work was plain and simple: we had to register and pay VAT. Bearing in mind that Committee members are personally liable for any decision to evade payment, what would you have recommended?

I think that, as a Club, we owe our Treasurer, John Tidbury, a huge vote of thanks for the greatly increased workload he has as a result.

There are always pluses and minuses when a fundamental change such as becoming a CLG is proposed. We of the Committee have looked at and discussed this proposal long and hard before making our recommendation. As Lord Denning tells us, we have to be 'good and prudent managers of the Club's affairs'. Question our reasons and recommendations by all means, but be satisfied when you are asked to vote that the Committee have all of our interests at heart.

After taking all the above into account, can you honestly come to the conclusion that we, your Committee, are out of touch?

Andrew Entwistle

More views on the CLG

THE CLAXTONS (March issue) seem to appreciate the need for insurance, but fail to accept that a real calamity could occur at a rally, with dire consequences.

At present any legal 'shark' can hold responsible and sue any one or more Club members, whether officials or the most recent newcomers, in respect of an incident at which they were not present. The possible outcome for them would be bankruptcy. That would be entirely unjust and completely unforgivable.

Insurance companies always have extra risks in mind - as they must do to survive - which they manage comfortably. Do members imagine that pre-delivery inspections and occasional follow-up checks ensure that their vans are completely safe? Human frailty dictates otherwise, and a fault can develop even on the way to a rally. Do they unflinchingly remember to turn off the gas after every use? Do they always use their 12 volt master switch or unhook their mains cable whilst asleep? I think not, and cannot claim to do it myself. Does the Club's public liability policy simply cover non-members, or are we included in it? *[While acting responsibly as Club members on site, liabilities are covered - Ed.]*

Our Club is not perfect, but it is well-run, better and happier than many

others. We desperately need more rallies, particularly in the Midlands and the North, and that can be cured. Potential organisers need not fear VAT - it's dead easy to get VAT invoices for gas and other basics, whilst food stores like Tesco will provide them if you take purchases to the reception desk rather than the usual checkout. I've asked. The future of our Club lies with the younger and more active members who should be clamouring like nobody's business for rally dates. So get cracking, please. Help will be made available and you will earn and receive the genuine thanks of all.

Michael Mawer



WITH SUCH A LARGE and successful Club as ours different views are inevitable and Arthur and Jackie Claxton's views should be welcomed as another point of view. Arthur and Jackie were the first members with whom we came into contact when we joined ... the last Kettering AGM and we therefore know that they have administrative experience. We are sure we needed to register for VAT. That is a fact, not an option, as has been pointed out. We hope we are registered under the Data Protection Act, too. [Yes - Ed.]

We support the Chairman and Committee and think they do a pretty good job at *all* times. Members who think otherwise could opt to be nominated for the Committee if they don't like the way it is run - but that might mean they have to be prepared to show they could do better.

Bryan and Jenoffer Oliver



ANOTHER CLUB we belong to went down the same road of CLG status a few years ago. We felt, sadly, it was the right thing to do. In these more litigious times it would be all too easy to be sued. When something goes wrong nowadays, people seem always to look for someone to blame, and then sue them. Damages can be enormous. Some well-off members might be prepared to take the risk, but others know they can't afford it.

Our other club has changed very little since it became a company. Of course the committee is now called 'the Board' and the secretary has

had to get used to some different technicalities, but the rest of us find it hard to remember there has been any change. And - for the record - an ex-member is actually suing us at present, over his own stupidity!

In their item, the Claxtons say, '... rallies ... which is what the Club is all about'. I do hope not. We have been members for several years now, but have not managed to get to a rally yet. This is not because we are unfriendly but because we are very busy and usually have to be at home at week-ends, when most rallies happen. We use 'Winkle', our Topaz, to get about the country and still 'sleep in our own beds'. Being theoretically retired, we take advantage of quieter sites on weekdays when businesses are open.

We enjoy the Newsletter and had hoped that our membership paid for itself, and swelled the numbers, making the Club's voice stronger. We would be sad to feel that we are not wanted. The Claxton's letter, coupled with the poem the Brice's sent in [March issue], makes us wonder ...

Judy Andrews

Thanks for your contribution, Judy. The majority of our members do not rally but like the togetherness of belonging to ASOC and keeping in touch through the Newsletter. There are no distinctions between members. All are equally valued, whether or not they choose to rally - Ed.

Club presence at NEC

THE CLUB was again represented at the National Boat, Caravan and Outdoor Leisure Show held at the NEC, Birmingham, from 16-24 February.

The Club's section formed part of Auto-Sleepers' attractive stand which was well-positioned amongst the dealers' stands in the motorhomes area. Manned by volunteer Committee and other members, our section provided a useful service to members of the public who wanted to discuss the advantages of motor-caravanning and the merits of particular models or ask advice about aspects of the hobby from people with experience of it.

The questioners varied from the man wanting to know the difference

between butane and propane, to the couple who did not yet own a van and had never used one, but were intending to give up work, sell up and roam around Europe, starting later this year, and who wanted to know all the Club members could tell them about every aspect - a very tall order.

Membership enquiry forms were available for prospective members, including a number who'd bought their vans at the show and were first-time owners.

Existing Club members visiting the stand sought out the team, commenting on how good it was to see the Club represented at what is now the major indoor leisure show in the Midlands during the winter. Many were pleased to have a chance to talk about the Club with Committee members and say how they would like to see it develop. Others were happy just to have the opportunity to sit down and rest their feet for a time amongst friends after looking at the current Auto-Sleeper models.

From the Factory

Ian Capes' charity crusade

WHEN YOU START, you start modestly. But before you know where you are, you're running up mountains in Spain or training with Gerry Francis over a gruelling 60 miles a week. That's what Ian Capes, MD of the Auto-Sleeper Group, found when he began fund-raising for two charities close to heart and home. This month he plans to run his second marathon - in Paris.

He started lightly, with gentle sponsorship for The Children with Special Needs Foundation, a charity helping children with severe disability problems. Having experienced at first hand the joy of both children and parents who benefitted from the charity's assistance, Ian set himself to raise £30,000 to supply and equip a holiday home for those who may not get a holiday.

When a close family member developed respiratory problems, Ian extended his fund-raising efforts to benefit the British Lung Foundation, particularly for research into Sarcoidosis, a rare disease of unknown

cause commonly affecting the lungs, skin and eyes, with a lengthy recovery period.

With such a high target, Ian felt he had to do something really challenging to get people interested and committed to sponsoring him. In February 2001 he started training for the New York Marathon, initially running a gentle 20 miles a week, rising gradually to 60. With encouragement and assistance from former England football captain, Gerry Francis, he also trained with three others who were entered in the same marathon.

The final push was a training camp in Spain with a local athletic club where Ian and his family spent a week - the family enjoying a holiday while he improved his stamina by running in the notorious Mijas mountains.

After the attack on New York in September it was decided that, despite the city's continuing trauma, the marathon would go ahead that November. Although many entrants withdrew - including Ian's three companions and a support party - and his own concerns about making the trip, he was determined not to waste the hard work and training, which meant he made the trip alone.

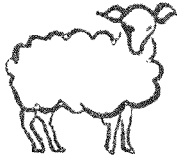
He successfully completed the run in 4 hours 20 minutes and, thanks to friends, family, customers and the motorhome industry, raised £15,000 to be split amongst the two charities. In February he was able to present a cheque for £12,000 to Tom O'Connor, patron of The Children with Special Needs Trust, at the National Boat, Caravan and Leisure Show.

But his determination to raise in excess of £30,000 means he has still more to do, which has led to his entry for this month's Paris Marathon. This time, he not only wants to raise money, but has set himself the personal challenge of completing the 26+ miles in under four hours.

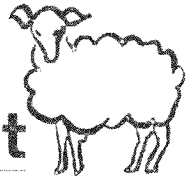
Ian is being supported strongly in his quest but, naturally, would welcome further contributions or sponsorship. - dBpr

'From the earliest times the old have rubbed it into the young that they are wiser than they, and before the young had discovered what nonsense this was they were old too, and it profited them to carry on the imposture.'

- W. Somerset Maugham



April 2002 Rally Supplement



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

1. Warners' Midsummer Event, Lincoln Racecourse 19th.-21st. July
To date I have had an offer to assist at the above rally but NO offers to marshal. No marshals - No rallies!

2nd.-5th. July Hatton World, Nr. Warwick. The rally is arranged but the marshals cannot run it. **Any offers??**

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.

30th. April-May 3rd. (3 nights). Stourton Hill Farm, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire. *This rally will NOT now take place.*

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

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 the February 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.

3rd - 6th May (3 nights) A.G.M. Newark Showground, Notts.

The booking forms should have been returned by the closing date of 9th March

6th - 9th May (3 nights). Sherwood Forest C.P., Nr. Edwinstowe, Notts.

Site Tel. No. 01623 823 132 Emergency Tel. No. 0777 557 0182. Marshal's mobile, 8.00 - 10.00 a.m. & 6.00 - 8.00 p.m.

Rally Marshals: Jan & Vic Hicklin.

Site Fee: £7.50 per night includes Electricity & VAT. Rally Fee: £1.75 per van +50p per person, including VAT.

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

Attractions: This rally will enable members to "rest" after the AGM. Those taking part will be able to stay at Newark until Monday a.m. (Please DO NOT arrive before 12.30 p.m.)

The site is close to Edwinstowe (Major Oak), Mansfield & Nottingham. It is in a wooded valley with a river running through it. Ideal for walking and cycling. There are fishing lakes in the site.

Directions: From the *Ollerton* roundabout take A6075 signposted Mansfield/Chesterfield, through Edwinstowe. Take first **left** (after X roads) signpost Old Clipstone B6035. Site on **right** ¼ mile passed the Rare Breeds Farm.

**9th - 14th May (5 nights). Burn Gliding Club, Burn Village,
Nr. Selby, N. Yorks.**

Club Tel.No.01757 270 296 (Emergencies only).

Rally Marshal: Alan Guest.

Site Fee: £4.70 per night (incl. VAT) **No Electricity**. Rally Fee: £2.35 (incl. VAT)
Booking slips to Alan Guest, 27 Chiltern Drive, Ackworth, Pontefract, West Yorks.
WF7 7DW. Tel.No. 01977 612 773. (after 6.30pm.) Cheques payable to A. Guest.

Attractions: Gliding trial flights/ lessons over weekend (subject to weather). There
is a market in Selby on the Monday.

Directions: From M62 junct.34 take A19 towards Selby, Gliding Club signposted
in Burn Village.

**9th - 13th May (4 nights). Little Cotton Caravan Park, Dartmouth,
Devon**

Additional nights can be arranged with the Site owner Paul White Tel.No.01803
833 675.

Rally Marshals: Pam & Terry Holtom.

Site Fee: £6.00 per night (incl. VAT). Electricity: £2.00 per night (incl. VAT)

Rally Fee: £2.35, Singles £1.20. (both incl. VAT)

Booking slips & cheques made payable to Terry Holtom; 8 Courtland Road,
Torquay, Devon. TQ2 6JR. Tel. No. 01803 612 669.

Attractions: Dartmouth's 5th Annual Music Festival with musical events
throughout the town, including the Royal Marine Band. Dartmouth is a naval
port/harbour and popular holiday resort. Scenic boat trips either out to sea or up
the River Dart. Picturesque steam train journeys available from nearby Kinswear to
the seaside resort of Furgton.

PARK & RIDE facilities into Dartmouth adjacent to site. Proposed Sat. evening
meal.

DOGS welcome but **MUST BE KEPT ON LEAD AT ALL TIMES**. (Doggy
walk part of site facilities). S.A.E. for confirmation & travel instructions.

NUMBERS LIMITED.

**NEW. 14th - 16th May (2 nights). "Hamble Ramble", Riverside
Park, Satchell Lane, Hamble, Hants.**

Site tel.No.023 8045 3220. Emergency only & to stay before or after the rally.

Rally Marshals: Lyn & Clive Denton.

Site Fee:£8.00 per night includes electricity & VAT.

Rally Fee:£1.35 Couples,£1.00 Singles(Incl.VAT).

Booking slips to: Clive Denton,34 Charles Knott Gardens,Southampton.SO15 2TF.Tel.No. 023 8022 4621. Cheques payable to: Clive Denton.

Attractions: A walker's rally starting with dinner(main meal or snack) at The Gaff Rigger,adjacent to the campsite and nearby marina, on Tuesday evening(14th.)

On Wednesday15th..there would be a riverside walk of approximately 4-5 miles,stopping for lunch,at the Fox & Hounds pub.

I need to book both of these venues so I need to know if one or both meals are required.Coffee on the 16th. a.m. will be at a café.

Directions: Leave the M27 at junction 8 and follow signs to Hamble taking the B3397 passing Tesco on the **left**.Continue on this road through traffic lights after the Hound roundabout.Take 1st. **left** Satchell Lane and site is about 1 mile on the **left**.

THERE IS A LIMIT of 20 vans.

14th - 17th.May (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.(incl.VAT). 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

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" is 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.

Motorcaravan Jamboree, Detling Show Ground. No Marshal has volunteered to run this rally so there will be no Club presence.

31st.May - 4th.June(4 nights).Lower Greenhill Farm,Salterforth, Barnoldswick,Lancs.

Emergency Telephone.No. 07881798045 (Marshals' mobile).

Rally marshals:Ivy & Ken Farley.

Site fee: £3.53 per night. includes VAT. *No Electricity.* Rally Fee:£2.35 Couple,£1.75 Singles.Both include VAT.

Cheques made payable to Mrs. I.M. Farley.Send booking slips to Mr.& Mrs.

K.D.Farley,45 Kelsall Avenue, Blackburn,Lancs.BB1 5RU.Tel.No. 01254 721459

Attractions: Skipton & Clitheroe Castles,bus service into Skipton.Various Mill shops in the area.Two hostleries not far away.

Directions: From Colne, take the A56 S.P. Skipton & Barnoldswick.At Kelbrook roundabout **turn left** into Kelbrook,site on **left** in ½ mile.

3rd.June - 16th. June 2002. 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.

6th.-10th.June(4 nights).Vintage Steam Event,Belper,Derbyshire.

Emergency Tel.No.07939 288586 (Marshal's mobile).

Rally Marshals: Jeanne & Mike Hall.

Site Fee:£20 per van for whole period which includes unlimited access to Steam & Vintage Event and evening entertainment. Rally Fee:£1.20 per person Incl.VAT).

GREEN FIELD SITE,NO ELECTRICITY, water & Elsan disposal.

You may arrive after 2.00 p.m. on Thursday.

Booking slips & cheques to Mike & Jeanne Hall, 45 Nottingham Road,Belper, Derbyshire.DE56 1JG. Cheques payable to M.T.Hall.

Attractions: Unlimited access on Saturday & Sunday to Steam & Vintage Event during the day and,in the evening,to the beer tent with live 50s/60s music.

Other attractions:Within the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site;Belper town centre 500 yds;Farmers' Market;Derwent Valley Visitor Centre half mile;Peak National Park 10 miles;National Tramway Museum 6 miles;Arkwright's Cromford Mill 8 miles;Denby Pottery 5 miles;De Bradelli Mill Outlet 300 yds.

Directions: Belper is on the A6 between Derby & Matlock (signed from A38) The site is off the A6, 200yds on the Derby side of Belper's only roundabout through a gate signed "Belper RUFC". Adjacent to Babington Hospital, and opposite Gibfield Lane.

18th - 21st June (3nights). Hoddom Castle C.P., Hoddom, Lockerbie, S. W. Scotland.

Site Tel.No.01576 300251 for emergencies only.

Rally Marshals: Moira & Allan Blackstock & Noel Bonner & Pat Holland.

Site Fees: £8.50 per night incl. Electricity & VAT. Rally Fee: £2.50 incl. VAT

On Site - Large toilet/shower block, Bar, Restaurant, Golf, Tennis, BBQ area, Dog exercise area etc. all set in a wooded estate. Possibility of a guided walk and evening meal/takeaway, room booked for evenings.

Booking forms and cheques to A. & M. Blackstock, 39 Sumpter Croft, Penwortham, Preston. PR1 9UJ. Tel. No. 01772 749 178.

Attractions: Places of historical interest, good shopping and Solway Coast all within easy driving distance,

Directions: From A74(M) Take junction 19 at Ecclefechan. At roundabout, turn **left** into village and turn **right** at the Church on the B725 (Dalton) road. Two miles along this road at Hoddom Bridge the entrance is on the **right**.

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

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!

Record your modifications

MY GUESS is that you will be inundated by your request for information from members who adopt Robin Gardner's practice of writing up their modifications. It seems to me that to inform a new owner is certainly desirable.

We have just parted with our sixth van (in 30 years!) and have made a practice of providing details of mods on each occasion. When trading-in a vehicle, the dealer should also be aware of any modifications - they could, after all, affect servicing. To illustrate, our latest vehicle had a solar panel, an extra mains socket and a surge damper fitted. So the 12 volt, 240 volt and plumbing systems were all affected.

Let's hope that those who haven't recorded their modifications will consider doing so.

John Scott

No sign of an inundation yet, John. Maybe no-one else does it, or won't let on that they do - Ed.

Are you ... ?

At present I'm a 'just belong' member on the ASOC list,
Newsletters are great; the Malvern rally must not be missed.
So after May 2003, when my retirement is no longer a dream away,
I hope to meet the enthusiasts and be in a position to say,
I'd like to be put through the test,
And offer my best.

(But don't ask me to write anything in rhyme!)

Rita Jones

[Not quite sure what 'the test' is - unless it's enthusiasm. In addition to this effort, Rita gives us the good news that the trouble she was having with her Trident, mentioned in the February Newsletter, has been overcome by by-passing the second immobiliser - Ed.

Cruise control's champion

WHY CRUISE CONTROL? It's a great thing. Due to a defect in the setting of a broken leg when younger, I've found this device a great help to prevent a 'tired leg'. Over the past 20 years I've fitted several makes and always had not only relief, but success in fuel saving.

Fitted by me on my company cars, I was once called to my head office for lunch - a mere 400 miles and a lost day's work - to tell the Directors how I could achieve a saving of four miles a gallon over my nearest colleague. We'd quite recently gone over to buying our fuel on a well-known credit card. That company submitted a score with the bill to my company. As a result I was asked to charge the fitting on future vehicles as I changed from one to another. It was a very good lunch, too.

Imagine my horror when I was advised that a cruise control couldn't be fitted to my Legend because it had a 'fly by wire' system. With the help of a local retired garage owner (who constructed a lever system to actuate my throttle) we have fitted one so that we did not have to interfere with the warranty in any way - i.e. it simulates my foot. I'm a little disappointed that I get only 28.5 mpg from my Legend as the supplier boasts a saving of 10 per cent, but it is still worth it, especially because I am actually saving a lot of fuel tax with every gallon saved and speed limits can be controlled - which is, perhaps, every bit a bonus.

Bryan Oliver



HAVING HAD SEVERAL PREVIOUS MOTORHOMES and too many exhausting drives without the wonderful gadget, cruise control, we splashed out and had it retro-fitted to our beloved Topaz when we bought it from Todds in December 1989.

What a boon it has proved. I can't inform about installation, but I adore driving and find this the most marvellous aid imaginable. One simply drives up to a desired speed, clicks on the cruise control, lifts the foot off the pedal, and the vehicle sits there on its own. Should it encounter a hill requiring a gear-change, it sensibly baulks and cuts out, leaving you to hoof it old-style until things level out more reasonably. With an automatic gearbox the device will happily manage one gear-change, but probably not two, without taking fright.

Should one wish to accelerate beyond the then-set speed, e.g. to overtake, it can be done without touching the cruise control. Lifting your foot afterwards returns the vehicle to the selected speed. If you need to slow up, a light touch on the brake cuts the cruise control out instantly, so that there's little danger of it driving you into a too-tight bend or a slower vehicle at high speed - although you might think it's going to until you get used to it.

The big advantages are that on long runs you can wiggle your accelerator foot about, thus eliminating foot, shin or buttock cramps; you can set the vehicle at the speed limit and know that you won't (even accidentally) be caught being naughty, and, best of all, the part of your brain that normally constantly monitors speed doesn't have to. That allows you to watch traffic ahead and in the mirrors all the time, instead of having repeatedly to co-ordinate eye, speedometer and foot. As a wonderful, joyful, result, even after a journey of eight or more hours, one arrives infinitely less tired than ever one could without cruise control.

Yup. I like cruise control - it makes 'vaning' a *real* pleasure.

Jim Andrews

Reaching the spare

IF, LIKE ME, you seldom if ever check the pressure in your spare tyre because of the difficulty in reaching it, you will marvel at a simple device I recently became aware of and which is fitted to many of its motorhomes by a major manufacturer.

Called the Anderton Spairline, it is simplicity itself to fit and enables the pressure in the spare tyre to be checked without need of crawling underneath the vehicle. It consists of a length of flexible high-pressure airline tubing, about ¼ inch in diameter supplied at one end with a female coupling which screws on to the spare wheel's tyre valve and has a corresponding male fitting at the other end for the tyre pump and pressure gauge. In my opinion every motorhome should have one.

The Spairline is available by mail order from Anderton Spairline, 44 Penny Lane, Haydock, WA11 0QS (Phone 01942 720738). I have no connection whatever with Andertons; I'm just a very satisfied customer.

Brian Thomas

Our TIG Chairman, Andrew Entwistle, thinks these - and others also on the market - are a good idea. He made his own. He also suggests that whether we have one of these gadgets or not, we should all check our spare tyre pressures ready for 'the season' if we haven't used the van over the winter, when we do our other checks - Ed.

Filter follow-up

Following on from his item published in the March ASOC Newsletter, Dr. Nial Reynolds has let us have this authoritative further piece dealing with bacteria, filters, water purity and general hygiene - Ed.

I AM ALWAYS VERY SCEPTICAL of advertisements that say a filter will remove all harmful bacteria. The bacteria with which we are concerned are mostly the 'coliforms', that is the E. coli group and the salmonellæ. The size of these is about one micrometre by three micrometres. A micrometre is one thousandth part of a millimetre - which is very small indeed.

I spent about nine years studying little plants in the North Sea and the Arctic Ocean. Those plants were about 5-8 micrometres in diameter. Part of the work involved passing perfectly clear sea water through a filter to remove them. The filters used were the standard bacteriological filters with a pore diameter of 0.8 of a micrometre. Even with the purest Arctic water (as clear as gin) it required a powerful suction pump to get the water through, and that took several minutes to get a litre through. Such a filter would be quite useless in a van.

It may well be that the commercial filters have bactericidal components which kill bacteria as opposed to filtering them out. The main purpose of most filters is to improve the taste by removing the chlorine. That is why we use one. The reason why chlorine is put in is to kill bacteria all the way along the pipeline to your tap. I think the usual practice is to have about three parts per million of active chlorine in the water as it is delivered. This is necessary in case there is any leak anywhere in the line which could let harmful bacteria in.

As mentioned in my March item, the filter we use is made by Jabsco, a firm which has a very high reputation in the field of moving sterile liquids. For example, their pumps are widely used in hospitals for

dialysis etc. Their excellent website at www.jabsco.com gives details of dealers etc.

Much of the concern about water supplies is misplaced. In general all mains water supplied in this country, and probably in most European countries, is perfectly safe to drink. The bacteria with which we are concerned are killed by a couple of minutes boiling, so any drinks which use boiled water are okay. In fact heating to about 70°C will kill all the coliform bacteria in a couple of minutes.

The most important thing in all this is personal hygiene. Always wash your hands after going to the toilet, and always before starting to cook. Never leave cooked food hanging about for hours before it is eaten. For example, left-over portions of soup, pies, stews, etc. should be covered, allowed to cool and then placed in the fridge. When needed they should be taken out, heated to boiling point and then eaten as soon as possible. Remember that a bacterium multiplies about every 20 minutes. This means that one becomes eight in an hour and 64 in a couple of hours. It doesn't take long for the numbers to be in the thousands or even millions!

Finally, Dorothy is very particular about washing all work surfaces with a dilute Milton solution every day. Work cleanly and tidily and you have the best chance of keeping free from trouble. We've been camping and vanning for about 25 years and the only problem I can remember was from a meal in a good hotel which was over-booked and using poorly-trained temporary staff.

Nial Reynolds

Further round the bend

I REFER to Brian Smith's and Stephen Small's comments in the March issue following my item about waste tanks.

Brian's note about U-bends: They are in all our houses and prevent wind and smells blowing up the outlet pipe from outside and into our homes. They are 100 per cent efficient. In our vehicle the waste tank is vented to the outside, and no pressure can build up in the tank. Therefore it is not possible for any tank smells to get past the U-bend

and into the vehicle via any of the waste pipes.

Stephen cautiously comments on the possibility of waste water from the waste basin backing up the shower tray outlet. Firstly, the bore of the U-bend is the same as the fitted pipes and the only way water could back up the pipe is if the U-bend became blocked. As all waste water from the wash basin does not contain any solid matter (unlike the sink), there seems to be no problem. It isn't possible for the waste water from the wash basin when emptied to go back up into the shower tray pipe, as the water from the sink creates a suction behind it as it passes down into the tank. Thus the rush of water from the wash basin, passing across the empty waste pipe from the shower tray where the two pipes meet, creates a suction in the shower tray because of the ventral effect. Therefore water cannot back up to the shower tray.

Robin Gardner

Duetto lock problem

WE HAVE JUST purchased a four year old Ford Duetto and find we have a problem locking the rear door from inside.

We were given instructions by Auto-Sleepers to put a finger through the hole in the rear door panel and push the linkage, which could be felt, up and away to lock it. We can achieve this only with difficulty.

We therefore ask other Duetto owners: Do you have a problem? Or has someone found an ingenious solution to make locking the door easier?

Gordon and Betty Pugh

Gordon and Betty are newcomers to the Club. Supplying an answer to this problem will help them feel welcome. They can be e-mailed at: gapugh@skynow.net - Ed.

A nasty virus

I WOULD LIKE to confirm Ian Day's worry about opening attachments. You will understand when you read that it was our computer that sent

Baz Wellard a virus. I emphasis, our *computer*, not us. We didn't realise we had a virus until Baz phoned to tell us. His up-to-date virus protection programme told him it was a virus and even its name.

We hadn't updated our virus protection for several weeks, so our computer didn't alert me. Naturally, we updated it immediately but we still couldn't find the virus, let alone cure it. We took it to the local computer shop, who charged us £10 to cure it. Then we realised that we had only been downloading the virus protection files, but had not instructed it to *Run* and then to *Search*.

We learned a lot from that experience, and other things as well. The virus had come from a publisher friend's computer (Who would have thought that?). We stopped using our computer as soon as we discovered it was infected. The shop said the virus had only had time to infect four of our files, whereas another customer had continued to use his and it had infected hundreds.

Jeanne Hall

Minder for older vans?

THEFT OF MOTORHOMES is an unfortunate fact of life affecting some of our members from time to time.

Since the start of 2001 manufacturers have installed electronic tags in all new vehicles. Called the MINDER scheme, a chip holding its unique VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) is hidden in the structure of each vehicle and the VIN is also etched on the windows, with a warning sticker affixed to a window. The knowledge that a chip is in the motorhome not only discourages thieves, but attempts to fraudulently sell on a stolen vehicle can be detected easily on enquiry.

Because the keepers of motorhomes are automatically recorded by the DVLC when the Road Fund Licence is paid, it is thought that there is no need for a separate registration and log book scheme like that the National Caravan Council's CRiS has provided for trailer vans since 1992 and which is now also available to owners of older caravans.

While the security MINDER chips give is not yet available to owners of motorhomes made before 2001, we understand there is a possibility the scheme could extend to include them if there were sufficient demand.

'Great days'

'Since the early days of motoring there have been many changes in the apparatus designed to keep drivers posted as to any sensational developments under the bonnet. In the first cars there was little or none of this form of affectation... Steam coming out of the radiator or elsewhere, indicated that the water was boiling, and a radiator that slowly became incandescent showed that it had finished doing so. This was all there was to go on... In those days motorists were motorists'

- from the writings of W.D.H. McCulloch.

Wanted

SILVER SCREENS. Interior Silver Screens for 'M' reg. Ford Transit Duetto wanted. Phone Leonard Fleming 015395 34566 (Grange over Sands).*

For Sale



WEATHER COVER. Protec weather cover to fit Boxer Symphony. Purchased last summer. Colour grey. Used only a few months. As new. Cost £280; bargain at **£180** ono. Selling because changing vehicle. Phone Dennis Cadman 01782 289109 daytime, or 01782 503010 evening (Stoke on Trent).

BOXER SYMPHONY. 'R' reg., 1997. 16,000 miles. Autoclutch by TB Turbo, electric driver's step, extractor fan, Status TV aerial, TV, built-in drinks cabinet, awning, Silver Screens, 2 new batteries, battery management system, alarm. MoT to September. Full service record, very good condition: **£18,500** ono. Phone Ray Jeffries 0161 485 6776 (Cheshire).*

DUETTO 2.5 TURBO DIESEL 2+2 BERTH. Reg. June 1996, 31,000 miles. Thatcham One category alarm, towbar, MoT to July 2002, full service history. Overhead bed ideal for storage. Upholstery covered from new. No smokers or pets. Excellent condition: **£18,900.** Phone David Williams 01772 615437 after 14 April (Lancs.).

FIAMMA BIKE CARRIER for VW type 2 camper van. Fits on door without permanent fixings. Holds 2 bikes (Fiamma optional extra to extend to3): **£40.** Phone Robin Watkinson 0117 9683968 (Bristol).

TALISMAN II PEUGEOT 2.5 DIESEL 2- or 4-BERTH. 'E' reg., 1988. MoT to August 2002, taxed to May 2002. Central heating and cassette loo. Full service and maintenance details available. Sale to include Oministor awning plus safari room, and double cycle rack: **£11,500**. Phone John and Vivien Price 01299 829953 (Worcs.).

CYCLE RACK, TABLE TOP, MAINS CABLE, CROCKERY. Fiamma twin cycle rack (silver) ex-Duetto; rectangular light oak table top 32½ x 23½ ins, unused, no fittings; 25 yds mains cable and fittings; various Biltons, Coloroll and Staffs crockery. Phone Michael Mawer 01377 270353 (Driffield) evenings.*

DUETTO 2.5 TURBO DIESEL. 1999, 'T' reg. Under 9,000 miles. Alloys, electric windows, PAS, immobiliser, Hope Safe T bar with ball hitch, Status aerial and booster. Vehicle professionally Waxoyled. Many extras. Immaculate condition. No pets or smokers. Reluctant sale. Full A-S specification: **£22,250**. Phone or e-mail Peter Garnell 01903 787243 (W. Sussex), ancala@eurobell.co.uk *

SILVER SCREEN. Genuine Silver Screen for latest Peugeot Boxer. Used only twice: **£40**. Phone or e-mail Arthur Claxton 01424 714915 claxton@telinco.co.uk

AMETHYST 2.5 DIESEL 2-BERTH. November 1996, 22,000 miles. 12 months MoT and Road Tax. Full service history. Always kept in garage except when on site. £4,000 worth of extras. As new inside and out. Reason for sale: retiring to the west country: **£24,950** ono. Phone Chris and Ivan Simpson 01270 873191 after 7 pm or weekends.*

TALBOT EXPRESS EXECUTIVE 2.5 DIESEL. 'L' reg., November 1993. 55,600 miles. Very good condition. Taxed and tested until end of August 2002. PAS, blown-air heating, gas and/or electric water heater, Fiamma wind-out awning and 3-bike rack. Roof rack and rear ladder. Hope Safe T Bar towbar (1500 kg capacity). Non-smokers. **£17,495**. Phone David and Bridget Evans 01248 810519 (Anglesey)*

CLUBMAN COACHBUILT BEDFORD CF250 2/4 BERTH. 1985, 39,000 miles. Fine original condition, owned 10 years. Covered seating, 3-way fridge, alarm, topbox, cycle rack, aerial, silver screen, 12 months MoT. No smokers, children or pets. **£6,000** ono. Phone Nigel Barnes 0774 774 6902.

*Note: Where * follows an advertisement it means that the advertiser has made a donation to Club funds. To each we say, 'Thanks for the donation' - Ed.*

Contents

A welcome review	2	Record your modifications	11	A nasty virus	16
The fine detail	3	Are you ... ?	11	Duetto lock problem	16
A Company or not?	4	Cruise control's champion	11	Minder for older vans?	17
More views on the CLG	6	Reaching the spare	13	'Great days'	18
Club's presence at NEC	8	Filter follow up	14	Wanted	18
Ian Capes' crusade	9	Further round the bend	15	For sale	18
Rally supplement	Centre	Duetto lock problem	16		

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 Sub-Committee	Baz Wellard	013 2923 1259
Chairman, Technical Information Group Sub-Committee & Regalia Officer	Andrew Entwistle	014 2284 3057
Press Officer	Brian Smith	014 8784 1786
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 suitable 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.