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AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB

A Company Limited by Guarantee.
Registered Office: Orchard Works, Willersey, Nr. Broadway,
Worcs., WR12 7QF. Registered No: 4616969



NEWSLETTER 183 DECEMBER 2003

Hello.

Just a reminder. It has been mentioned before but the Committee decided a long time ago that any e-mail received which had an attachment would NOT be opened. The reason for this is that attachments are often vehicles for viruses to get into computers and cause havoc. I mention this because in the past couple of months I have been warned by my virus checking program that viruses have been detected and "disinfected" when they arrive within e-mail correspondence. So if you want to send an e-mail to me or to any other committee member, please do NOT use the attachment facility, rather include whatever it is in the body of the text.

I hope that you haven't been too bothered by the postal problems of recent times. I am pleased to say that the Newsletter was sent off in reasonably good time to our printer who responded in his normal fashion. The copy heading for our front door appeared without any delay. In fact we have received post every single day, except for the day when it was reported that the return to work was on. That day we had nothing! The way of the world, isn't it?

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Correction

Winterisation article in November 2003 Newsletter page 7, Para 2. Lines 9 & 10 should read "Inserting this tool, **thick end first**, will lock the non-return valve preventing the filling of the water cylinder, the thinner section thus allowing the claws of the drain plug to fit around the tool and to allow it to be refitted."

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European Tours 2004

As the visit to Paris was so well received, GB Privilege have offered to run two trips for ASOC members next year.

The first will be a five day visit to the Champagne region starting on 17th May and the second will visit the Christmas markets of Valkenburg and Aachen for five days starting on 5th December.

Further details will be published in the Newsletter near the time. GB Privilege have advised that it will be possible for members to extend their stay on the continent by upgrading to a 60 day ticket at a cost of about £45.00. This will be particularly useful for any members on the Champagne trip who are planning to attend the Club's rallies in Holland or France.

Andy Cavell

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Turbo Charging

Thanks to everyone who made contact regarding a turbo charging conversion. Every person to whom we spoke was very helpful. One pattern became very clear from the conversations. It seemed that all conversions that took place had only applied to petrol engined vehicles, all weighing less than three tons. Diesel cars with turbo seldom weigh more than half the weight of the Duetto type campers.

The pattern was that the acceleration of a non-turbo diesel of three tons was rather irritating and drove each person to despair. We should realise that we are driving a commercial vehicle and not a petrol sports car.

Being now retired after 35 years of pounding the motorways as a sales rep, I can now afford the time to look at the view that was previously just a blur. £2,000.00 or so seems an awful lot of money for just a little more gallop. Thanks once again every one for your very useful observations.

Incidentally, could *Rick* from Malvern please give us his telephone number which was omitted from the answering machine,

Geoff Williamson

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Towing with a Symbol

We are recent converts to motorhomes after some 38 years of towing. My wife's disability forced us in the direction of a 2001 Symbol (Peugeot 2.0L) with telescopic ramps for the wheelchair via the side entrance. We are mobile once again after a two year nursing period. The Symbol suits us fine but I am considering the towing of a Gowering Mobility "Chairman" via an A frame, for use on long stay holidays.

As a new member of ASOC has any member had experience of fitting a towbar to this variant, considering its wide rear step? I have asked the same question of A-S but would value the experience of members. The address is 26 Station Road, Steeple Morden, Herts, SG8 0NW, e-mail roynewbury@iclway.co.uk or telephone 017 6385 2241. Thank you.

Roy Newbury

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Parisian Autumn Tonic

Having never tried to take our van across the channel, we took the opportunity to go. We really enjoyed it and have now got the taste and the

confidence to go again. The crossing both ways was quick and smooth and helped us to relax.

At one stage we did get separated from our group and it took us quite a while to meet up with them again. During this time we went up and down roads several times, got to understand the traffic system - not to mention the drivers! We even saw Monsieur, the toll booth collector and Madame on the other side a number of times so that they began to recognize us. We finally managed to make our way to the campsite after a few more gaffes.

Neither of us speak French but we managed with a lot of laughter and we did have our residence with us. It was an experience we didn't expect but we did it and survived. We really did enjoy ourselves and wouldn't have missed it for anything.

Back home, when emptying the van, we came across our three French phrase books which we had completely forgotten about. The thing we learned was that if two idiots like us can do it ANYONE CAN! If anyone is still unsure, go with a group and enjoy. Remember, a smile and an attempt at the language costs nothing even in an "allo allo" style and you do get help of sorts.

Barbara & John Wilson

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We would like to say thank you to the organisers of the 6 day tour to Paris in September. Quite a few of the over 100 people participating were first timers to driving abroad and to have three tour directors leading their groups was obviously valuable experience and reassuring, particularly on the outskirts of Paris.

Having driven abroad previously, we travelled to the sites independently. We do not see ourselves as particularly rally minded. Yes, we have been to the Club and Company Rally twice. However, on the Paris trip we met and spent time with other members and made new friends. Therefore next year we hope to fit in a rally to our busy "Third Age" schedule! Once again, many thanks to all concerned.

Audrey & Edmund Law

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My wife, myself and our Legend were members of the tour, also with *Delia and Tim Clarke* (Ex Legend owners). We agree with both the letters in the November Newsletter on the good and bad points. One point I would like to raise with anyone else who is planning to go across the water that was not mentioned to me until we got to the Paris site.

As we were all on electric, our instructions told us to obtain a converter lead to fit on the end of our electric hook-up lead to fit the

European sockets. That part was OK, but what we were not told was that a lot of the outputs on the power stands have the Live and Neutral reversed! And, would you believe, we got a reversed supply. This I proved as I carry a plug tester with me. Someone in our party told us they always bring a home-made plug and socket on a short lead that reverses the L & N. It happens a lot in Spain!

While I had to run the 2 nights in Paris the wrong way round, I don't think I did any damage. Perhaps A-S would like to comment on this. The next day I purchased a local plug and socket, as we intend to now go abroad next year (seen your rally, *Baz*) and on my return home I soon made up a reversed pole lead.

Robin Gardner

As has been said before, most people seemed to enjoy the trip. Don't worry, I think I can say that most of our membership is not particularly "Rally minded". But if anyone cares to pop along to any of the smaller rallies, as well as the big ones, they will invariably find plenty of friendship.

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Jersey

I've received information from *Harry Aubin* and another member both of whom have enclosed an extract from the Jersey Evening Post of 6th October 2003. This says that "from next year owners of visiting motorised homes will be able to drive their vehicles on local roads during their stay, but they must remain on approved sites overnight. This will only apply to makes already permitted under Motor Traffic Legislation. Larger models will have to comply with existing regulations".

Before 2003 visitors were not allowed to take their motorhomes with them but in 2003 both trailer caravans and motorhomes were permitted but could only drive from the port to the approved site. It is unclear from the report what the definition either of "already permitted" or "larger models" is so if you are thinking of going across with your van you would be well advised to check with the appropriate authority on the island (The Department of Environment and Public Services) before finalising any ferry arrangements.

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Chairman's Chat



I have heard of a rumour which is or has been apparently circulating at various gatherings of Club members. It seems that someone has suggested that the Club is going to be taken over by the Auto-Sleeper Company. I understand that when this was mentioned at one place someone was heard to remark that if that happened he or she would immediately leave the Club.

What I can say is that you would not be alone in leaving. The Club is, and always has been, completely independent of the Company although we have worked in good harmony with them. This idea of the take-over has been around for a long time and it seem to be particularly noticed whenever the committee has a meeting at the factory, for whatever reason. We were very pleased to accept the offer of the use of the company board room for our last committee meeting and were able to see something of what has been developing at the factory since last we were there. But that is the full extent of our association with the company. We get on well together, we talk to each other but neither one is trying to take over the other. So if anyone tells you otherwise you can tell them they are quite wrong!

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Ford Pollensa

Reference the letter from *Dawn and Jack Plumbley* in the October Newsletter. I also encountered this problem following a puncture in the rear nearside tyre of our Pollensa. As luck would have it, I was parked on a friend's driveway at the time and was able to lift the van with the aid of a trolley jack. The amount of lift required to allow sufficient clearance for removal of the wheel resulted in the absolute maximum lift on the jack!

Had we been on the road changing the wheel would have been impossible with the vehicle tools. When are manufacturers going to address these problems? The vehicle jack would be usable if sufficient attention was given to allow adequate clearance around the wheel arches. As a final note, has anyone in the Club managed to source the required jack extension?

Tricia and John Ward

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Beginners, please

In the October Newsletter *Jane Hill* suggested articles for beginners. We agree. We switched from a caravan to our first motorhome (a Symbol) 12 months ago and had a lot to learn. Thanks to everyone who has given us tips and advice.

Here is our contribution, some useful things for your van and a few suggestions. To help, we've included where many items came from but have not links with any supplier except as satisfied customers.

Useful Things

Levelling blocks for sloping pitches; grip mats for getting off grassy or muddy pitches; tripod table foot to use van tables outside - all from your dealer.

Mini tool kit comprising multi-tool (screwdriver, pliers etc), Stanley knife, waterproof sticky tape, gas spanner, string - from good hardware shop.

Exterior Silver Screens to keep warm and condensation free in winter - direct from manufacturer.

'Motor Van on this Pitch' sign from Caravan Club site.

Storage boxes for cereal, tea, bread etc. 'Lock & Lock' boxes from Lakeland Ltd and kitchen shops come in a good range of sizes (so you can make use of all the awkward spaces) and seal well.

Two non-stick camping pans from Primus. They have a removable lifter (yes, it works) instead of handles that make storage difficult. Matching Primus camping kettle that just fills two mugs. Pans and kettle stack inside each other saving space. Expensive but worth it. From Outdoor exhibition.

MSR camping kitchen set, basically a round plastic leak proof container with lid designed to fit inside a pan. Inside are small containers for cooking oil, gravy powder, herbs, spices etc. In outdoor shop sale but cheaper to make your own.

To stop fixed carpets getting dirty and stained cover with carpet square bought at market. We've just replaced these carpet offcuts cut to size and edged while we waited by F J Bentley in Kidderminster (015 6275 5795), a better solution and only £15.00.

Head torch - lights up the way when your hands are full of washing up etc.

Suggestions

Staying on sites with toilets, showers and washing up facilities means you don't use much water - less to fill and empty.

By using very little water you can fill your fresh water tank using a small container and empty the waste tank into your washing up bowl. Saves visits to the service point.

To avoid water freezing in the pipes and tanks, keep the system drained all winter. Then choose a pitch near a tap and fill your kettle direct from it. Being near the loo block helps too.

A small trailer is easy to tow (beware reversing though) and is great for carrying chairs, rucksacks, boots, spare clothes etc on longer trips. It helps to mark your pitch too. Our trailer and towbar came from Chester Towbar and Trailer Centre.

Keep meals simple - less washing up.

Stay on sites with public transport - saves taking your van everywhere and much more relaxing. Public transport information is available nationally on 087 0260 8608.

Try different ways of packing your van. It has taken us 12 months to find the best way of getting everything in.

Angela & Colin Kennington

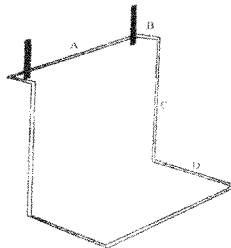
A neat article, although I don't agree with everything said and probably nor do many others. Obviously different things appeal to different people. Just a couple of observations. Our Club can provide "Pitch Reserved" signs too. I prefer the interior Silver Screens - they don't get wet in the rain and are thus easier to store. And in some vans putting an additional layer of carpet on the floor would obstruct the built in drawers.

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TV Shelf

Below are details of a modification to enable clip on TV shelf utilising the headrest on the Driver's Seat to locate. The AS version unusable for our needs. Have also extended mains wiring through settee box to provide switched mains socket behind driver seat.

The shelf can be left in situ and is ideal for LCD Flatron TV's.



Materials: Approx 1.3 metres 15mm copper pipe. 8 x 15mm copper 90 degree elbows (Yorkshire fittings). Wooden shelf approx 18 cm x 38 cm (7" x 15 ")

Width at A to clear headrest posts. At B use two elbows. Depth at C typically 26 cm or 10". Horizontal at D typically 14 cm or 5½".

The shelf is attached on top of the copper base section and the backrest is adjusted to ensure the shelf is horizontal.

Roy Newbury

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farewell

It is with regret that we have had to change our van due to Dennis's health. We needed a fixed bed with large storage underneath, also to be under 6 metres in length.

We are sad to leave ASOC and the many good friends we made and the happy rallies both here and abroad. So thanks to everyone at ASOC and we wish you all every success and happiness for the future.

Eleanor and Dennis Oxley

As always, we are sorry to lose members but can quite understand that when needs must etc. Don't forget that you can still keep in touch if you wish by becoming "Newsletter Only" members. But all the best to you both for the future.

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A Brittany Surprise

We decided this year to have a four week tour of the Brittany coast. Maps, Guide Books and Tourist literature were all digested. We knew what we wanted to see, where we wanted to go and then we took a wrong turning - no surprise really. We found ourselves in Rotheneuf, just over 4 miles north-east of St. Malo on the D.201 coast road. Before we could regain our sense of direction, not to say purpose, we spied a sign pointing to the "Sculptured Rocks". Now, my wife and I rather like open-air sculpture. It always seems so much more interesting when it, and the viewer, are exposed to the elements. The Sculpture Park at Goodwood is a perfect example, but I digress. On that day we digressed too and visited the site - amazing!

Over a period of 25 years the Rev. Abbé Fouré, known as "The Hermit", carved the seashore, cliffside, rocks to tell the story of the Rothéneuf family. They settled in the area in the mid 16th century. They enjoyed a life of hunting, fishing and smuggling and vigorously defended their territory against all comers. The Revolution in 1789 created havoc and

discord amongst the tribe, neighbours took advantage and the tribe was decimated. The marvellous characters, men, women, children and sea creatures are all there, by the dozen, still withstanding the elements and the clambering feet of visitors.

If you are heading around that coast, perhaps for Mont St Michel, then do digress too. You won't regret it.

Ian Watt

Ian tells me that he has many photos but as I cannot reasonably reproduce them for our printing methods you won't see them. He also says that he is new to the Club but will be only too pleased to contribute, when he can. I hope he does!

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ACCEO AGM

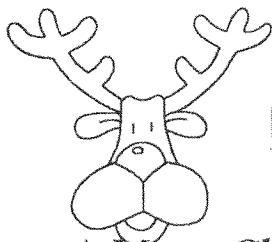
Unfortunately, our representative who was scheduled to attend this function, *Ray Whiley*, was unable to do so due to health problems. However, he did organise that we should get a copy of a report from one of our members who happens to be the Secretary of the Volkswagen Owners' Club. Brief details are given below.

The Secretary advised that some Member Clubs had not paid their Insurance Premium and might therefore be running rallies which were not insured. The Finance Officer said that the costs at the NEC had been raised this year but the help of members living nearer to the venue would help to reduce them. A sharp increase in printing costs had forced them to look for a different printer for ACCEO News.

A resolution was proposed by the committee concerning marshals at rallies. The gist of this is understood to be that if a Member Club use their Extension Certificate to run extended rallies, the marshals would have to be personal members of ACCEO. The committee stated that legal opinion and advice from DEFRA had been sought and their opinion was that this was the best way forward and it was not just a ploy to get more Personal Members, as some questions had seemed to suggest.

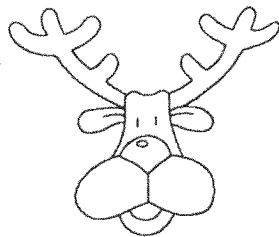
The 21st AGM will be held at Allders Caravan Park, ALNE, North Yorkshire on Saturday 16th October 2004 and will be organised by the Freedom Caravan Club, North East. A provisional date has been set for the 22nd AGM which would be on Saturday, 8th October 2005.

Our thanks go to *John Hallet* for this report. And to *Ray Whiley* for organising it.



December 2003

Rally Supplement



A Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year to all.

**30th. December 2003 – 3rd. January 2004(4 nights).New Years Rally,
Hidden Valley C.P.,North Devon.**

4 nights on hardstanding with electric hook-up,centrally heated toilet block.All EVENING meals and 3 nights musical entertainment.

Cost per van & two adults £280.00 incl.VAT. Cost per van & one adult £185.00 incl.VAT.

A £75.00 deposit will secure your place.

If you are interested in attending this rally please contact:Mo & Mike Valentine,11 Hamilton Close,Langstone, Havant,Hants. PO9 1RP.Tel.No. 02392 482 818.

**6th. (Sunday) – 13th.(Sunday) June 2004. Delfse Hout Caravan
Site,Delft,Holland.**

Rally starts at 12 noon Sunday June 6th. & closes Sunday June 13th. 12 noon.

Rally marshals: Tricia & Ted Pratt & Jan & Vic Hicklin.

Members **MUST** book for the full 7 nights.Rally Fee:£15 non refundable.

Approximate site fees 17.50 euros per night, all pitches have electricity and hard standing. You will be contacted when a deposit is due.

Insurance cover is required for van and personal illness etc. It is important to fill in and take a valid E111.

There will probably be a couple of trips booked and a meal one evening,all subject to sufficient numbers being interested.

Buses run from the site entrance to town (10 minute walk away) and tram stops & Railway station.Getting around is very easy using tickets bought at reception or shops. Biking around the lovely flat countryside is very easy.

Please send rally slips & SAE to:P.M. Pratt, 3 Grafton Road,Stapenhill,Burton-on-Trent,Staffs.DE15 9DN.

The closest ferry is Hoek van Holland-20miles,Europort about 30 miles.

THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL.

**17th. June – 1st.July (14 nights) Le Bohat, Sarzeau, South
Brittany, France.**

Rally Marshals: Dorothy & Baz Wellard, Jill & James Bertlin & Brian Thomas.
Site fees (based on 2 people) 15.20 euros, Electricity 2.80 euros (approx. £11 + £2
standard rate per night respectively, subject to exchange rate) payable direct to site
management. Bookings only accepted for the **full 14 nights.**

Rally Fee: £15 non-refundable unless unsuccessful. Please do NOT arrange to arrive
before 10.00 on the 17th, to give us, and site management, time to prepare. If you wish
to stay on after the rally please advise us.

Camping Le Bohat is a 3 star site where a rally was successfully held for 33 units in
2003 (details available on Club website). It has full facilities plus a swimming pool
and is only 1.5 miles from Sarzeau village and 14 miles from Vannes.

The journey distances are 225 miles from Cherbourg, 400 miles from Calais & 120
miles from St.Malo.

If this is your first drive on the Continent and you require advice please let us know.
Fuller details to those applying in due course.

Application on rally slip only – NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE - with a SAE & a
cheque for £15 payable to :- Mrs.D. Wellard, 18 Greenwood Close, Fareham,
Hants. PO16 7UF

LIMIT 33 VANS.

*If you wish to run a rally in 2004 please contact me to check dates **before** booking
with a site. A "Guide to New/Possible Marsh" is available. If you would like one
please contact me, details below.*

*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.***

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:

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..... 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:
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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

Ray also mentioned that the proposed resolution does not appear to affect our Club. It applies only to clubs holding a paragraph 4 exemption certificate which permits rallies of more than 5 days duration. Our certificate is for paragraph 6 which limits us to no more than five days (120 hours from first arrival to last departure, excluding marshals) and we have never wanted to run anything longer in this country. On the odd occasion when a rally has gone over the five days, it has been run on a site with its own licence and not using our certificate.

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Views when wandering

My wife, *Carol*, and I are currently touring the UK. We left home in Chelmsford on September 3rd in our Parlermo and travelled to the Isle of Wight where we stayed for two weeks before making our way along the south coast and into the west country. As I write we are on Bodmin Moor having visited the famous Jamaica Inn, well worth a visit.

On our tour we have stayed at a variety of camp sites, some really excellent and some reminiscent of a run down 60's holiday camp. Now we appreciate that not everybody is as bonkers as we are and would not want to tour the UK in the winter. But on behalf of those that do I think the site owners, particularly those that are brown-boarded from main routes, should attached a "closed" sign to the board when their season ends. One site in Cornwall had done this and it saved us the trouble of turning off down a narrow track to no avail. I can hear members saying "phone ahead" or use one of the many site guides. This we do but it's also nice to try something on spec. We have also been caught out when a guide states 'Open April - Nov'. We turn up on 2nd November to find it closed.

One thing about winter touring is that the majority of rigs on the road seem to be A-S. Are we a tougher bunch than all the rest???

One last point on the subject of signs. When we drive into a town we head for long stay car parks or, preferably, coach parking. Then we know that we will not fall foul of the dreaded height barrier. Directions to car parks very rarely indicate a height restriction. One one occasion *Carol* had to jump out and stop High Street traffic whilst I reversed out of a narrow car park entrance, there being no indication of any height restriction prior to the entrance.

No doubt other members will have some valuable input on this subject. In the meantime, we continue to have the time of our lives in our superb motorhome.

Carol and George Perkins

I've been caught out too, even heading for a long stay park only to find a height barrier in position. On one occasion, many years ago, I drove into a surface car park in Doncaster and discovered that there was a height barrier on the exit!

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From the Factory

This month saw the long awaited Caravan & Outdoor Leisure Show at Earls Court, an important event for everyone connected to A-S. Not only did we construct an impressive new stand and introduce a superb new graphics package for the entire range but there was also the launch of three brand new vehicles, the VW Trident, Peugeot Midas and Peugeot Inca. The Trident, the first A-S to be built on the all new VW chassis, was the star of the show and was unveiled beneath numerous spotlights and plasma television screens! Celebrity guest Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, looking very glamorous, then visited the stand to view the vehicle and pose for a series of photographs with Ian Capes, Chief Executive of the A-S Group, and David Greenwood, VW's Motorhome Brand Manager. The impact of the Trident on the industry was considerable as it was the highest selling A-S during the show with the first model selling minutes after being unveiled!

Following months of development work from our design department based upon a series of reports from the marketing department, industry professionals, journalists and customers, we were finally able to offer the opportunity to see the Peugeot Midas. Judging from customer and press reaction it looks as though the unusual approach to researching and fine tuning a vehicle was well worth it. The Midas, the first A-S to be built on an Al-Ko chassis includes a beautiful, curvaceous lounge design, a well equipped and attractive kitchen area, a huge 'his and her' wardrobe unit and a spacious washroom with a separate shower cubicle and seat. The vehicle on display was also kitted out with a wide array of optional equipment from the scooter stand in the rear garage and the electric motor to raise and lower the bed to the two flat screen televisions.

Finally, despite being the first A-S wide bodied vehicle, the Inca has kept the manoeuvrability of a compact motorhome and its new layout has been designed to create a warm and social environment. The Inca includes a full-sized double overcab bed and two forward facing rear seats as well as a number of entirely new features including a recessed linear lighting system and track mounted spotlights, a modern curved furniture design and a washroom with a separate circular shower.

The show was once again a huge success for A-S. It is nice to see you all coming back year after year to have a look at what we can offer you. See you again next year!

Anna King

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Butane v Propane

The article on winterisation started me thinking again about fitting a Propane and a Butane cylinder into my Nuevo for the winter months. On enquiring at my local gas/camper dealer if this was possible the answer was no although they could not tell me why. Their only advice was to fit 2 bottles of Propane. My dilemma is that I have 2 Butane 7kg and only 1 Propane 6kg bottle and I don't want to buy another Propane. Can anyone help me with answers to the following, please?

1. Can I fit 1 bottle of propane and 1 bottle of butane with each bottle having its own regulator? If the weather was very frosty I could turn on the propane, otherwise I would run on butane.
2. Would a stop valve have to be fitted as well as the regulator to stop gas pressuring going back into the regulator not being used?
3. If you use propane in the summer, is it more economical than butane? E.g is a 6kg bottle of propane able to boil more water than a 7kg bottle of butane? There is a slight difference in price between the bottles and this would have to be considered as well.

Ron Forsyth

I can't answer on the technical side of these questions. But several years ago now *Sheila and I* were caught out one morning because our butane would not 'gas off' due to the low temperature. Soon after that the Calor people had a special offer to change butane to propane bottles with the correct regulator. We took advantage of that and have used propane ever since, summer and winter. It does save missing that early morning cup of tea. But the one thing that I wish they could guarantee is that the gas would not run out at two or three o'clock on a cold morning!

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More Radio Thoughts

I suspect that there IS a real interest in satellite TV/radio among the fraternity - see the increasing number of adverts in the magazines. I too have tried both dedicated digital radio and via TV. Unless out of doors, and sometimes even then, I found it difficult to pick up World Service with digital radio and that was the only BBC available, but I

suppose it could have been the receiver I chose. I have persevered for a year with digibox and dish with increasing frustration. Being in Scotland and the north of England for much of the time (though with 4 weeks in Brittany) there always seems to have been a forest or mountain between me and the satellite. I suspect that for motorhomes the only real solution is an automatic system costing upwards of four figures, too much for me. With trailer caravans on site for a few days you can take time to position the van and locate the satellite. With a touring motorhome I begin to think it is too much hassle for too little reward.

On possible correction to *John Agate*. You don't have to 'subscribe to Sky' to get the freeview channels, though you do need a digibox. These are available both new and refurbished, independently of Sky, see magazine advertising or Ebay. The experience (location and kit) of successful users would be interesting to read.

Ian Watt

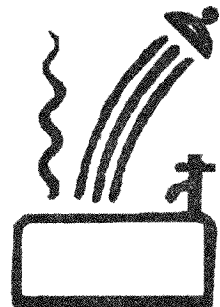
A perfect surname for someone interested in this - but shouldn't he be driving a motor-ohm?

---===000OOO000===---

Duetto Pump Mystery

I was very interested to read *Bill Cameron's* experience with his pump as I had exactly the same problem on my 1997 Duetto. On the day before we departed for a 4 week holiday in France I filled my water tank, only then to find that the water pump would not prime. Time did not allow taking the Duetto to any dealers so I removed the pump (this is not easy owing to the pump location) and carried out the same tests as *Bill* with a DIY test rig. Once I had pumped water through the pump it worked satisfactorily so I reinstalled it and everything seemed fine. It continued to work fine until half way through the final week of our stay in France. Again after refilling the water tank the pump would not deliver any water. This time with limited facilities and time I could not get the pump to prime.

On my return I talked to A-S to ascertain that there is not a non-return valve between the water tank and the pump and that it was probably the pump that was at fault. I then contacted Shurflo, the pump makers, who were very helpful and advised me to strip the pump and clean thoroughly with warm soapy water. With the aid of drawing provided by Shurflo I carried out this



exercise but unfortunately the pump would still not prime. Like *Bill* I could not see anything wrong.

I talked to Shurflo again and they suggested that I return the pump to them and they would inspect and repair provided that the unit was repairable. I posted the pump at my village Post Office at lunchtime on a Thursday. Before 9.00am next day Shurflo rang me to say they had received my pump, repaired it and were sending it back! The pump arrived back with me before 9.00 am Saturday. Well done to Parcel Force and Shurflo for a great response and for proving that it is still possible to get good service.

Shurflo indicated the pump valve or valves were at fault and they had replaced the pump valve section. I reinstalled the pump and so far, touch wood, it has worked well. On the evidence so far with myself and *Bill Cameron* it would seem almost certain that the pump valves caused the pump not to prime. I also couldn't see anything wrong unless the valves had become inflexible over time and were allowing air into the suction side of the pump. However, I can't understand why my pump failed twice immediately after I had refilled the water tank. I had thoughts of water under pressure from the filler hose stirring up any loose debris in the tank and thus blocking the inlet to the pump or, as suggested by *Bill*, was there an air lock in the system. I should be interested to hear whether anyone else had had a similar problem.

Robin Coles

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In reply to *Bill Cameron's* letter about his Duetto's pump, the simple answer is that it is worn, or one of the three non-return valves is faulty. The reason that it will work if primed is that water is much easier to pump than air. When the pump is started with the system empty it must first pump the air out of the hose between the pump and the tank, i.e. lift the water about a foot (2.25 feet = 1lb pressure).

If anyone is caught out with the problem, an easy "get you going" tip is to remove the black plastic plug from the end of the kitchen faucet, make sure all taps are closed except the cold at the kitchen, then with the pump running insert a piece of plastic tube (wine making size) into the hole the plug came out of and suck the water as far as the pump. When you hear things happening, remove mouth and tube quickly, re-inserting plug.

Thanks to folks who offered advice to my questions a couple of months ago. I will keep them informed.

Joy & Nigel Wilkins

I was interested in *Bill Cameron's* "Pump Mystery" in the November Newsletter. We have a '93 Talbot Harmony fitted with a Shurflo 144-10 pump that also refused to self-prime and only worked after hand priming about two years ago. It continued to function OK, including self-priming, until four weeks ago.

I suspected a split valve but on stripping the pump down nothing seemed obviously wrong. After trying a few tests, to no good purpose, I very carefully cleaned ALL traces of sediment around the valve assemblies, particularly under the three "pistons" on the motor half of the pump. The pump now self-primed and the pressure is maintained with the power off. Time will tell if this is a permanent cure. Just in case I might need spares, I phoned the UK agents (016 0341 4551) and was informed that spares were no longer available for this model because of its age (I know the feeling!).

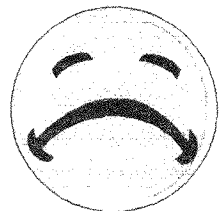
If any member has difficulty in getting the right balance of hot and cold water at the shower mixer taps (our cold tap only had a tiny movement before the hot water almost disappeared) it might be worth inserting into the cold supply pipe a 15mm service valve to reduce the pressure at the mixer. I used the service valve that has the screw-driver slot for adjustment with 15mm compression ends. You will also need two short lengths of 15mm copper pipe and two hose clips. In our Harmony, I cut into the cold supply hose located in the cavity behind the back of the small cupboard above the wardrobe. Don't forget to drain the water FIRST and don't try it unless you are reasonably happy with plumbing!

Albert Brown

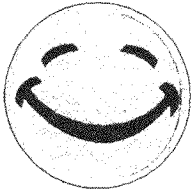
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I am prompted to record the solutions to a similar priming problem in my 1991 Talbot Express Harmony. I first experienced the fault in 1998 soon after I had purchased the vehicle. I contacted the dealer, explained that the pump motor was running but was not pumping any water to the taps. Their solution was simple, and worked. It was to switch the pump motor on, open the nearest cold water tap to the pump and simply suck the air out until the pump primed and the water flowed. The important factor in this operation is to spit out any water and to develop the skill of knowing when the pump is actually pumping again.

I have used this system of priming the pump for nearly six years now and had assumed that it was a common occurrence. However I have found that a combination of a low level of water in the tank and an



overnight non-use of the pump resulted in the need for a 'manual' prime of the system next day. You can imagine my delight a few weeks ago when the pump failed to prime, but switching it on and off several times at the van's pump switch resulted in an automatic prime and flowing water. I will certainly try this solution next time (just hope I don't blow the electrics!).



Mike Warby

We had a problem with our pump several years ago now and put it down to old age as our van is now nearly 12 years old. At the time I took the "lazy" way out and bought a new pump. I shall have to check to see whether I can get the old one working again and keep it in reserve!

---====oooOOOooo====---

WINTERISATION

I found the article by *Charles Trevelyan* in the November Newsletter very interesting. I will certainly make sure I follow these guidelines. Two points arise from the article, one a question and one a suggestion.

1. At the end of each season I drain off the carver heater and bottom drain both the water and waste tanks. What I don't do is drain all the water pipes out. When I use the van for the first time at the beginning of a new season, on turning on the taps, the water comes out smelly and blackish through standing in the pipes for 5 to 6 months. Should this be drained off and what is the best way to do this? Also, does water stay in the pipe between the tank pickup and the pump, or does it drain back into the tank when it is emptied? To overcome this problem, I was thinking of fitting a 'T' piece after the pump and running a pipe through the floor of the vehicle with a tap on the outside end so that when I winterise the vehicle I would open this tap and all the taps in the vehicle to drain off.

2. This is a suggestion, at which A-S may hold up their hands in horror. Not long after I had purchased my current motorhome, I had to go back to the supplier with a minor problem. When I arrived another motorhome (not A-S) was there with a water heater problem (a Carver heater, the same as mine). The unit had failed and as the vehicle was still under warranty it was replaced FOC. Being a nosy person I saw the old unit removed and was very surprised to see that it was VERY rusty and the vehicle was only 18 months old. Because of this, I now remove my heater unit at the end of each season, storing it indoors in a dry and warm

place, replacing it at the start of the next season. I have also made a winter cover that replaces the Carver cover. This is a flat metal panel with a seal round the edge to reduce moisture and wind blowing in. I have no problem in removing or replacing the unit and it starts first time. The checklist for removal and replacement of the unit is given below:

Tools Required

1. Screwdriver, Small, Phillips
2. Screwdriver, Medium, Phillips

Dismantling

1. Take out of storage winter protection cover (WPC)
2. Unscrew 4 x screws (x head) holding outside heater cover (OHC), remove and store during closed season.
3. Unscrew 2 x screws (x head - long) holding air vent (AV) and remove.
4. Unscrew 2 x screws (x head - short) holding aluminium cover plate (CP) and remove.
5. Unscrew 2 x screws (x head with screw retaining rings) holding gas heater unit (GHU) and part remove.
6. Unplug supply cable to GHU. (N.B. Plug top marked T) Remove and store during closed season *
7. Seal gas outlet hole with strong single sided sticky tape.
8. Replace CP and screw down.
9. Replace AV and screw down.
10. Fit and screw down WPC in place of OHC.

* I wrap the unit in bubble pack, place in a strong box with the OHC and store in a warm dry atmosphere.

Refitting

1. Take OHC and GHU out of storage.
2. Remove WPC and store for next closed season.
3. Remove AV.
4. Remove CP.
5. Remove seal tape from gas outlet.
6. Plug in GHU.
7. Fit GHU, screw down.
8. Replace CP and screw down.
9. Replace AV and screw down.

10. Fit OHC and screw down.

Robin Gardner

====oooOOOooo====

For Sale

Ford 1995 - 2001 (smiley front) spares. External cab insulation 'Taylor made' pull down front. £35.00. Headlight protectors. £25.00. Haynes workshop manual. £5.00. 2 sets of spare vehicle bulbs, fan belt and windscreen wiper. £10.00. Job lot £65.00. Contact Tim Clarke on 015 0251 5581 (Lowestoft).

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Siemens SR50 - 50 watt solar panel, complete with 5 amp regulator, cables and padded storage bar. Cost new £425.00. Sell at £325.00 complete ovno. Fiamma Ultra-box sport Top, 400L capacity. £100.00 for quick sale. Contact John Ward on 014 9452 0734 (High Wycombe).

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Winter cover for Ford Duetto 'P' reg. Tailor made by Specialised Accessories of Burley-in-Wharfedale. Breathable green material. Good condition. Cost £250.00 - will accept £95.00. Tel: Dennis Fox on 013 0034 8358 (Piddletrenthide, Dorset).

Thanks for the donation.

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Duetto Limited Edition, 2.5 litre diesel. 2000 'W' reg. 7,500 miles only. One of the last, usual A-S spec. Immaculate condition. Undersealed new by 'Rustbusters' (£400.00). F.S.H. Non smokers, no pets. Heki rooflight. One owner. Taxed & MOT July 2004. Improvements professionally done. Alpine radio. CD auto-changer. Gas bottle & regulator. A-S crockery. £21,995.00. Tel Michael Carrington on 013 7227 3684 (Epsom, Surrey).

Thanks for the donation.

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Nikkai 5" colour TV, 240v/12v. Works off mains or vehicle supply (cigar lighter). Has its own aerial but a separate aerial with booster is available if required. £35.00. Tel: Sheila or Harry Henthorne on 020 8808 9112.

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