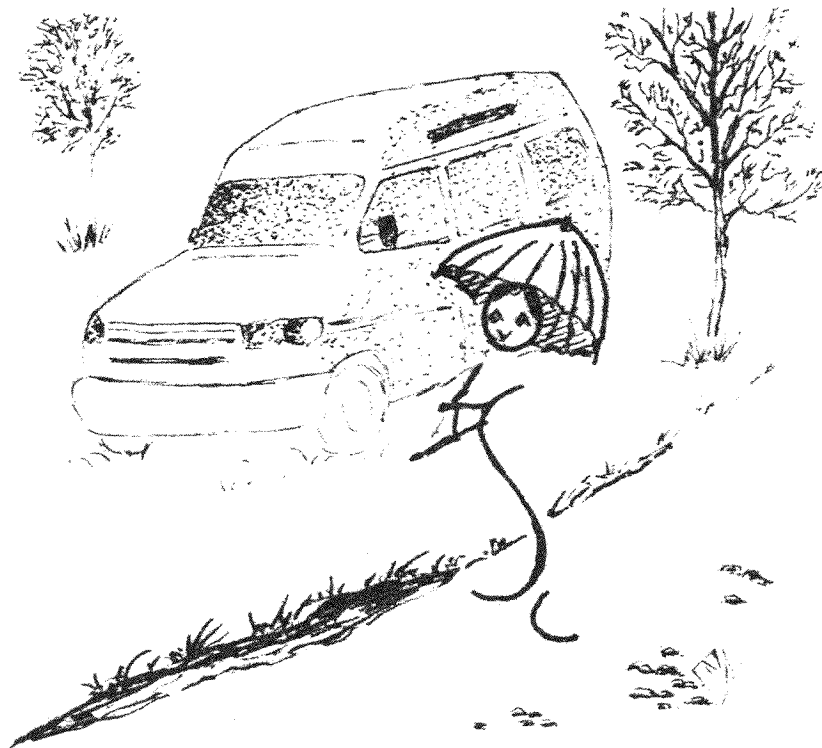


[www.asoc.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.asoc.fsnet.co.uk)

# **AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB**

A Company Limited by Guarantee.  
Registered Office: Orchard Works, Willersey, Nr. Broadway,  
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**NEWSLETTER 185  
FEBRUARY 2004**

Hello.

Already we are into a New Year (This issue is being collated at the end of December and the beginning of January) and I am thinking ahead. The Club has a very good friend in one of our Founder Members, *Rita Daley*, to whom I am indebted for the constant supply of sketches for the covers of your Newsletters. I have already received the first seven month's covers and the remainder will follow in due course. Just as well that we have artists around the Club because if it was left to me you would probably never recognise what the cover "picture" was meant to be! By a similar token, I am so glad that we have people out there who can, and do, write about all sorts of things. Almost everything is "grist to the mill" when it comes to entertaining other members. Where did you go last year? Did you see anything amusing? Write it down, send it in and then we have another copy of YOUR Newsletter!

One point which I shall be pleased if you will observe. When writing to me, perhaps to send an item for the Newsletter or and advert, will you please remember to include your full name and address as well as your membership number. I often get items signed "N.E.Body" or similar and I have no idea whether the N is for Norman, Nigel, Naomi or Nymphette! In fact I recently had an advert for an item for sale which only gave the telephone number. I know the old adage of no names, no pack drill, but I could not include such an advert. The same will also apply when you write to any member of the Committee, perhaps to send photos in or to ask for Ideas sheets; it will always help. Even when telephoning, if you seek a reply of some sort by post or by e-mail, please give your details.

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## **Older Auto-Sleeper Motorhomes**

Once again the annual Club and Company Rally will be held at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern, from 9th - 11th July 2004. At this event, that promises to be more popular than ever and to which day visitors will be most warmly welcomed on the Saturday, we intend to have a selection of our older models as a tribute to the company's 40 year history.

Those we seek are: Austin Morris J2; Bedford CB22; Bedford CF; Freight Rover Elevating Roof; Freight Rover Leisure Executive; Chevrolet GMC; VW LT 28 and earlier models of both the Renault Trafic and the Volkswagen T2/3 Trident and Trooper. We would also like to have on display a Mercedes Benz Montanta, either elevating roof or high top, and earlier models of the Talbot Express Executive and Talisman.

If any member can help us in our quest we will be most grateful. A call to me at the Motorhome Service Centre, Willersey, (013 8685 3511) would be much appreciated. We might then, hopefully, be able to have a very splendid display of the Company's extensive year history since it was incorporated in 1961. My thanks to anyone able to help.

*Charles Trevelyan*

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## **The Western Isles**

I would like to tour the Isles of Skye, North and South Uist, Harris and Lewis during May. Can anyone supply me with any information on ferries, campsites and lengths of time to spend on each of the islands, please? I can be contacted by e-mail keithiles@hotmail.com by phone on 012 7554 5881 or by writing to 16 Coulsons Road, Bristol, BS14 0NL. I would be most grateful for any help.

*Keith Iles*

Seems like the perfect surname for someone planning such a trip. The Isle of Skye is, of course, now available "over the bridge" but at a cost. Well worth a visit (don't forget the Glenfiddich Distillery!) and there are many sites on the island. You could easily spend four or five days there. But for the rest of it, I'll leave it open to the members.

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## **Thank You**

Many thanks to all members who responded to my request for information on the Symbol tow bar fitment. I received encouragement and guidance via phone calls, surface mail and e-mails. This alone was worth the membership fee.

*Pamela and I* wish all officers and members a prosperous, healthy and happy 2004 with many safe miles. May you all continue for many years to come!

*Roy Newbury*

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## **Wendy Fisher**

Just to let you all know that a grand total of £1,500.00 was sent to PNH Research in memory of *Wendy*. By the time gift aid has been applied this will amount to over £1,900.00. Many thanks to all who donated.

*Pete Fisher*

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## Committee Notes

At the Annual General Meeting next May your Committee will present for your consideration two additions to our Articles of Association.

1. At their discretion, members of the Club may, at a general meeting, appoint Honorary Members.

Note: If the Club wishes to bestow an honour on a *Member of the Club*, it may, of course, make that member a vice-president. However, at the moment we have no means of bestowing an honour on a person who is *not* a member. Honorary Membership will be a privilege given to mark the esteem in which a person is held by members. This Membership will continue until the individual concerned resigns the privilege.

2. That the number of members to serve on the Committee be increased to fifteen.

Note: We have a number of positions which are not only very time consuming for the person concerned, but are becoming increasingly more technical. The Secretary, Membership Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Treasurer and Webmaster all fall into that category whilst the Chairmen of the Club and Company Rally and the A.G.M. Rally sub-committees and the Rally Co-ordinator all need continuity to perform their tasks efficiently. Now that we are a Company we cannot afford to be lax in the way the Club is managed. I am sure that the ladies on the Committee will not mind me saying that none of us are getting any younger. This past year we have had one or two scares with illnesses which, very thankfully, have been resolved satisfactorily. If this had not been the case we could have been in a pickle. The addition of three members to the Committee will enable us to provide understudies or backup in times of stress.

The final wording of these formal resolutions will be sent with the April Newsletter.

If you have any comments on the foregoing, then please feel free to let the Committee know. Write to the Secretary, Miss Janet Sutterby, "Normanton", 3 Bilsby Road, Alford, Lincolnshire, LN13 9EW before the end of February, please.

*Brian Smith*

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## Water Pumps

I have been following the discourse on water pump priming with some interest over the last few months but *Charles Trevelyan's* letter finally decided me to add my two pennyworth. Last April, during our first trip out for the year, I discovered that the pump would not self prime. Eventually I discovered that the problem was due to air being drawn into

the inlet filter, much as *Charles* described. In our case however the problem was not due to any breakage but merely that the filter was incorrectly assembled.

The unit consists of two moulded plastic halves, which fit together with a 'bayonet' type lock. In our case the bayonet lugs were not fully engaged and the two parts had worked apart sufficiently to allow air to enter the cavity and cause a loss of suction. To correct the fault it was only necessary to compress the internal spring and twist the two halves to lock the bayonet fastening and all would be well again. At least, that's the theory of the solution.

In practice the chief problem was getting access to the pump which is cleverly sited behind the rear lining of the floor level cupboard under the cooking stove. Lying on my side and reaching through the small cupboard door I had the greatest difficulty even to hold the unit, at arms length, let alone press the two parts together to compress the spring enough. In the end I had to loosen the hose clip, pull off the hose, unscrew the filter from the pump, assemble the two parts, refit the filter to the pump, refit the hose and refasten the hose clip. The whole job took about half an hour of extreme fiddling for something which, had it been easier to get at, need have been but a matter of seconds to sort out.

Why-oh-why do van converters insist on siting essential equipment, especially that which needs to be regularly service, in such awkward places? It would be so much easier if they just fitted a standard access door to the outside of the van and grouped items like the pump, mains trip and charger unit inside where they could be easily worked on from outside. An access door like that for the Theftford Cassette would be ideal for this function and could also contain the mains hook-up socket and water tank filler cap, thus eliminating multiple cutouts in the bodywork.

Over the years I have become convinced that the designers at A-S and other conversion firms are never asked to carry out even the simplest of maintenance jobs on their creations. As a design engineer myself, I found it very useful, and wise, to *use* my designs at the prototype stage just to make sure that I was not making enemies of my service engineers and customers. Considering the amount of 'dosh' that we have to shell out for our motor caravans, I don't think it unreasonable to expect the designers to put a little bit of mental effort into the design process, do you? After all, they are paid for it!!!

*Susan and Peter Swannell*

There's a lot in this suggestion, but it applies in many other areas as well as our vans. I have often wondered why such as the electricity supply companies seem to insist on putting their meters in a position which requires a double jointed contortionist to read them!

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I hesitate to enter the discussion on water pumps as my latest information on them was in Physics Lessons at school in 1938, but anyway here goes.

They were then described as Lift and Force Pumps, i.e. first lifting water and then sending it on it's way; I do not recall the possible height of the lift, but hazily have in mind 15 feet as possible. So fixing at high level was not problem.

But in our vans pumps are fiendishly tucked away at floor level, causing much grief upon Winterisation etc., even for youngish people. Lift from the bottom of the tank will be around one foot.

Pumps are not lovely, but with so many vans having toilet compartments, why cannot pumps be mounted just above the shower, perhaps 7 feet above the bottom of the tank? The extra cost would be minimal and loosening of the nuts would force water to run downwards in both supply and delivery pipes, leaving them full of air. Mission accomplished.

Pumps are fairly heavy, but so too is A-S crockery, so a balancing act would help and a decision of considerable gravity would be essential! Extra cost could be avoided by the omission of electric flush on the cassette loo - we really are an idle lot!!

I wonder too why spare wheels are so often carried in metal framework beneath the chassis, leading many people to need outside assistance and occasionally (I'm told) then discovering that the spare wheel is flat or even missing? With van conversions at least, it is possible for the spare to be fixed on the first opening rear door, padlocked to it and covered against sunlight. I had this done on my very first van (a Trafic) in 1986 - no patent was applied for, and four years later everything was in good order. The cost of the framework was saved and though things would be more awkward with a tailgate, it might still be worth it.

So come along, someone, with the "cons" and at least bring my ignorance up to date.

*Michael Mawer*

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After a winter lay up my pump failed to prime, although it was obviously working and my immediate reaction was to cure the air lock.

Sticking the tank filler pipe in reverse to the kitchen tap was OK, but sucking was a bit difficult and eventually worked by putting the mains on to increase voltage to pump and a bit of sucking and pump switching. The only time this seems to be a problem is when I fill up after completely draining the system. (I also open all the taps when draining the system to let all the water out of the pipes and then give the van a bit of a drive to expunge all those last drops!)

I decided that part of the problem is that all the taps were closed when filling, leaving nowhere for the air to go. Now I open all taps (electrics off) and then fill the system. This seems to avoid the problem. Once I filled up at home without having fully drained the system and found that I had an airlock but decided to sort it out when on site. Of course, by the time I got there, the road bumps managed to shake all the air to the top (i.e. the taps). Or you can go and park it on a steep hill (or camber) whilst priming! This saves a lot of money replacing these expensive pumps, or using expensive labour, when the pump is working satisfactorily at all other times.

*David Mayne*

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## **Rust Problems**

I own a VW Clubman GL, 'R' reg, October '97. I have been having trouble with rust at the bottom of the windscreen, behind the rubber seal holding the screen in place.

I wonder if any other member with this model has had the same problem and how they have dealt with it. The water lays in the gully and in time will cause rust.

*John Gilbert*

We have the earlier version, 1992, of this model and so far have not discovered any such problem. We have found that the water tends to stay in the gully but because we are parked at home with a slight forward slope it only seems to have left a residue of muck rather than rust.

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## **Hidden Valley**

We have just returned from another wonderfully well organised rally with the Club and we had a great time. The evening functions were excellent as was the company. We enjoyed visits to the coast. The woodland walk was good, despite the mud, and as for the children's

play area activities, I hope that some of the photographs find their way to *Brian Smith* for the competition to be judged in Malvern!!

Well done, *Mo and Mike; Angie and Andy* - not forgetting Cedric of course.

*Rita Jones and Keith Taylor*

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All New Year ralliers who had been bidden,  
Made their way to the Valley that's Hidden.

For those who had not been before,  
'Twas a unique way to greet 2004.

The rally marshals *Mo and Mike*,  
Put on a show that all would like.

Their efforts have to be applauded,  
And congratulations are accorded.

There was a quiz and fancy dress,  
The costumes were the very best.

At nursery rhymes we were at a loss,  
Who was it rode to Banbury Cross?

At midnight on the appointed day,  
We sang and danced the night away.

The year ahead we hope will be,  
Peaceful, Happy and Healthy.

*Margaret and Brian Green*

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## Continental Hook-ups

Once again, for the umpteenth time since *Maureen and I* joined ASOC 10 years ago, the 'continental hookup monster' has raised its head and, I suppose, will continue to do so because there are always new members to caravanning, thank goodness, for the more the merrier. The answer to the first question in the article on pages 9 and 10 of the January 2004 newsletter I find somewhat misleading.

The 'live and neutral poles' in normally correct UK wiring and in these islands do not reverse despite whichever direction the current is flowing in for each hundredth of a second. The current direction does reverse but the live and neutral poles and hence polarity, do not.

The energy, provided in 'joules', always arrives at an appliance connected to the mains from the live pole (normally brown insulation or the old red) and never the neutral. It might be said that the neutral pole and connection are there to complete a circuit so that current can flow but they

provide no energy to an appliance whatever the current direction. It is a little like a one man saw for wood cutting! The user is at one end and provides alternating pulls and pushes and all the energy from one end. This is how the live pole works with electrical energy. The saw blade also alternates like current but the energy is applied at one end only.

Many years ago a lady friend stayed with us whilst her property was being altered. One Sunday lunchtime she returned looking ashen and stating that she and her maid had nearly been electrocuted in the 'new' kitchen. She had replaced the metal lid on the kettle whilst touching the gas oven top with the other hand and earthed herself to a live kettle. I returned with a length of flex and lamp and found the place to be a death trap! Telephoning the builder, I said that I would not let the lady return to the house unless the kitchen and wiring were seen to that afternoon and, failing that, the electricity company would be informed the next day, Monday.

That afternoon, I returned alone to find the builders and electricians all over the place! Eventually it was discovered that a plasterer had plastered over bare wires in the hall wall and caused the problem! The builders had only recently been given permission to link up a house to the mains!

Over the years we have found different wiring situations, particularly just south of here! Only on one site in the ten years, however, did we refuse to link up because, although electricity was available, we could find no site earth link. In such a situation, had there been a live to earth fault in the vehicle, a shock could have been received whilst standing on wet ground outside the vehicle and touching, say, a door handle.

Such situations are very rare but it always pays to respect your vehicle and site electrical wiring and the energy it carries. It is always wise to check live, neutral and earth connections which can be done reliably enough with the available three pin mains testers on the market for a couple of pounds or so. I have used one in house and vehicle for nearly forty years.

With French dual switching on sites, it still pays to ensure that the site live is connected to the live side of the vehicle never mind the fuse rating. Corrections are easily made with a short polarity corrector cable between vehicle and site supply. I would rather check than even rely on other trip mechanisms in the vehicle. At mains voltage, very little current can be fatal, not even enough to 'blow' a fuse however low the rating. I have yet to find faulty site wiring in the UK but I have it on good authority that it does sometimes happen!

A little thought and preparation makes for happy caravanning and good companionship. Many thanks to ASOC, an excellent organisation if ever there was one.

Yours sincerely,

*Harry Aubin*

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## **Radio Thoughts - a Post Script**

My article 'Radio Thoughts 2' was published in the November Newsletter. As far as I am aware the position with regard to receiving BBC satellite radio broadcasts across Europe remains unchanged, i.e. very limited. There has, however, been a development on the TV front in relation to free to view satellite programmes.

Until the BBC moved to its new satellite last summer it provided viewing cards free of charge to anyone wishing to receive 'free to view' channels without subscribing to Sky. Since the BBC channels are now broadcast 'unencrypted' no view card is required (though you still need a decoder box and reception across much of Europe is unlikely). Because ITV 1, Ch4 and Ch5 remain 'encrypted' on the Sky satellite the only option to receive them via satellite seemed to be via a Sky subscription. That situation has now changed, albeit the new arrangements appear to be 'interim'.

An arrangements referred to as 'Free2View' has been set up. (Is this the same as the set top box Free to View channels being pushed for use in the home? - Ed.) Viewing cards for ITV 1, Ch4 & Ch5 can be obtained for £20.00 plus VAT. It is uncertain how long these cards will remain valid. Old style BBC issued cards and old style Sky cards will soon become invalid. For more detailed information telephone Free2View on 0870 054 1800 or go to [www.free2view.tv](http://www.free2view.tv).

Our 12 months contract with Sky came to an end in December and we cancelled our subscription. Because we have a new style Sky viewing card we are told that this will continue to be valid for the 3 Free2View channels that remain encrypted on the Sky satellite. What happens when the new style cards are replaced remains uncertain but that is thought to be a few years away as yet. Although neither the Free 2 View cards nor the Sky cards should be used abroad, the general view seems to be 'Who will know?' They will provide reception of ITV 1, Ch4 & Ch5 across much of Europe plus of course any other Sky channels to which you may subscribe provided that you have the appropriate receiver dish etc!

*John Agate*



**February 2004**  
**Rally Supplement**



***Applications for all rallies, unless otherwise stated in this supplement, are to be made using a rally slip by post.***

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

**Rally starts at 12 noon Sunday June 6<sup>th</sup>. & closes Sunday June 13<sup>th</sup>. 12 noon.**

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

**THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL.**

**17<sup>th</sup>. June – 1<sup>st</sup>. 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 17<sup>th</sup>, 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.**

**25<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> March ( 3nights).Elm Cottage Caravan Park, Little Budworth, Cheshire.(Website [www.elmcottage7.freemove.co.uk/site](http://www.elmcottage7.freemove.co.uk/site))**

Emergency Tel.No. 01829 760344 Emergencies only.

Rally Marshals: Elizabeth & Bryn Morgan, 44 Mersey Rd. Heaton Mersey, Stockport.SK4 3DJ Tel.No. 0161 4324869, mobile 07890876859 & Nora & Ven Venables.

Site Fees: £7.35 (incl.electricity) Basic pitch £5.25(excl.electricity)((both per van per night)). Rally Fees: £3.00 each person.All inclusive of VAT.

We now have to pay for the hire of the barn.

Dogs allowed but MUST be on a lead on site..Please indicate on rally slip if you are bringing a dog. This will assist the marshals in placing vans.

Rally slip & cheques to: Mrs. N. Venables, 15 Langley Gardens, Merry Hill, Wolverhampton. WV3 7JN. Tel.No. 01902 332 105.

Please include a SAE for Confirmation of booking, site directions & further details.

**Attractions:** Nantwich, Chester, Little Budworth Country Park, & the Anderton Boat Lift. There is a cycleway on an old railway line nearby. The Shrewsbury Arms pub which serves food is 400 yards away. The site is well draining and there are two small toilet blocks each with a shower.

There is also a toilet & washroom for the disabled.

We have the use of "Noggins Barn" for our evenings.

On Friday evening we plan to have a slide show & talk about the Anderton Boat Lift for those who are interested. There will be a charge of about £1.00 per person for those attending so please indicate if interested so we can decide if it is worth organising.

There will be tea/coffee afterwards for all ralliers.

If there is sufficient interest we will organise a coach trip on Saturday to Port Sunlight & Chesire Oaks Designer Outlet.

The total cost will be approx. £7.00 per person. Please indicate on slip if you are interested.

**DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY**

There will be a pie, potato & pea supper on Saturday evening. Cost to be calculated.

After the rally. We have been informed that the Anderton Boat Lift will re-open on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March. ([www.andertonboatlift.co.uk](http://www.andertonboatlift.co.uk)). The rally marshals are staying on site for an extra night after the end of the rally so as to visit the boat lift. Why not join us? Those who decide to stay must book with the warden for the extra night. If you are intending to visit the boat lift then you will have to make your own way there & back (10 miles). If there is sufficient interest I will arrange a group booking for admission, the cost would be reduced from £5.25 to £4.40. I **MUST** know the numbers well in advance so please indicate if interested when booking. Send **NO** money.

**26<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> March. Motorhome & RV Show, Great Driffield, East Yorkshire.**

Emergency Tel.No. 0777 557 0182 Marshals' mobile.

Rally Marshals: Jan & Vic Hicklin.

Site Fee: Special Club prices. Arrive Thursday £28.00 Friday onwards £23.00. Rally Fee: £2.35 (Incl. VAT)

Send rally fees with rally slip & SAE for Show application form by 12<sup>th</sup> March to:- Mrs. J. Hicklin, 381 Manor Road, Brimington, Chesterfield, Derbyshire. S43 1PP. Tel.No. 01246 236 157.

Return application forms to the organisers, Stone Leisure, by closing date 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> . April ( 3 nights). Marstons Brewery Visit, Burton on Trent, Staffs. NOT BASS MUSEUM**

***Site Albion Hotel, Shobnall Road, Burton on Trent.***

Emergency Tel.No. 07713 186508 Marshal's mobile.

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

Site Fee: £2.50 per night, all hardstanding Rally Fee: £2.35. (All include VAT). NO ELECTRICITY.

Booking slips & cheques payable to P.M. Pratt, 3 Grafton Road, Stapenhill, Burton on Trent, Staffs. DE15 9DN. Tel.No. 01283 538 818

THIS RALLY IS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MANY WHO APPLIED LAST TIME AND WERE UNSUCCESSFUL. THE RALLY INCLUDES A TRIP AROUND THE BREWERY ON THE FRIDAY MORNING £6.00 each.

Meal Friday evening and a further meal Saturday evening.

**Members who attended the last rally may apply and, if there is room left, they will be accepted.**

**Directions:** The Albion Hotel is situated on the B5017 on the Burton to Uttoxeter road.

Please send an SAE for acceptance and further directions. Dogs are allowed.

**Rally starts at 12 noon. Thursday.**

**16<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> . April ( 4 nights) Peak Rail, Rowsley South Station, Nr. Matlock, Derbyshire.**

Emergency Tel.No. 07985 021779 or 07939 288586.

Rally Marshals: Jeanne & Mike Hall & Hilary & Lionel Walker.

Site Fee: £ 4.70 per van per night. Rally Fee: £ 1.20 per person (both include VAT). Two electric points for people with special needs.

Water & Elsan disposal points. Green field site but toilets open during station hours.

Booking slips & cheques to: Mike & Jeanne Hall, 45 Nottingham Road, Belper, Derbyshire. DE56 1JG Tel.No. 01773 824 565.

Cheques payable to M.T. Hall.

**Attractions:** In the picturesque picnic area of this enthusiasts steam railway, beside the River Derwent with miles of walks. 10% off all-day tickets for steam trains to Matlock of £6.00 adults, £4.50 seniors to ride all day or spend time in Matlock. Within the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site and the Peak National Park. Nearby are Chatsworth House, Haddon Hall, Carriage Museum and Bakewell's famous market. We hope to arrange a meal at the Shalimar Restaurant on the Monday evening. Please indicate on the booking form if you would be interested.

Buses to Sheffield, Matlock, Bakewell, Stockport & Manchester.

**Directions:** 3.9 miles north of Matlock (Bakewell direction) on the A6. Going north, turn left on to Harrison Way just after the Shalimar Restaurant and follow Peak Rail signs.

### **22<sup>nd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> April. National Motorhome Show, Peterborough.**

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

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

Please use the booking form enclosed in this Newsletter if possible. If you use a form from other magazines please mark the form ASOC and note the special Club site fees: Arrive Thursday: £28, arrive Friday £25, arrive Saturday £22.

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

**\*\*\*\*\*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 ASOC marshals **before** parking.

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

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

**No arrivals before 2.00p.m. Thursday.**

**30<sup>th</sup>.April – 3<sup>rd</sup>.May. A.G.M., Newark Showground,Notts.**

The application forms for this rally should be in this Newsletter.Please note the closing date.

*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 Marshals" 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](mailto:ncr@nasuwt.net)**

Local assistant: Jerry Haxton (01483 223 476) Woking,Surrey.

E & OE

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: .....

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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!**

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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:-

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Have you any special needs? Yes  No  If Yes please specify:-

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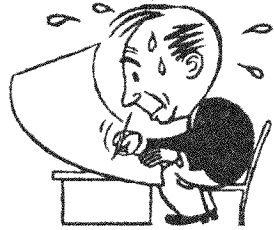
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Together with this letter, I received a lengthy screed from *Roy Newbury* giving all sorts of technical detail on equipment needed and the setting up arrangements for such equipment. *Roy* quite correctly suggested that it might be too much for the Newsletter but if anyone wants further detail, they should contact him. His e-mail address is: roynewbury@iclway.co.uk

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## Chairman's Chat

With this Newsletter is a booking form for the Annual Dinner and AGM Rally which will be held again at Newark. I hope that as many of you as possible will book in and come along. Yes, I know that the general feeling about Annual General Meetings is one of total boredom but ours don't usually seem to be like that. We tend to get things done fairly speedily and then have the Open Forum. .



But most of all we have the pleasure of meeting our friends during the rally and, of course, over dinner on the Saturday evening. The food is normally very good and the chatter is lively. So if you can spare the time, come along and have your say about the Club.

On the same tack, have you thought of what you might do to help the Club along? Your Committee is always on the lookout for volunteers to join them and perhaps take over various jobs. For instance, I've been doing this job, with a break of two years, since issue number 23. And that's a long time! Perhaps you could do a better job? If you would like to give it a try, or any other the other jobs which are needed to keep the Club running, please talk to any member of the Committee who will be only too pleased to answer your questions.

Our Membership Secretary, *Norma Caley*, has been very busy over the last couple of months with all the renewals. Not only was there a lot of cheques to be handled (together with the cards to be issued and all the behind the scenes work also involved) but there then arrived the Standing Order Mandate payments. From the point of view of the payer, this is a simple system. But from the Membership Secretary's viewpoint it creates a type of hassle all its own! The bank statement is supposed to detail all the receipts - and it does. But individual banks have their own way of putting information down on their systems which may differ slightly from others. So, while one line

might be quite clear in showing the name and the membership number of the payer, the next might just as easily omit one or the other, or even both! I know of these problems from the time when *Sheila* was dealing with them and also from my own experience in another field. And on top of all that, people still want to join the Club so she has that side of things to sort out as well.

She told me recently that an enquiry had been received from a couple who wish to join us. They apparently live in New Zealand although they appear to have a bank account in this country. We are becoming an international Club, aren't we? We did have a couple of members in France but I believe they have both left us. One couple I am aware of left because of what they termed "advancing years"! But they were only just into their eighties!!

Incidentally, if you need to contact *Norma* for any reason, her telephone number is on the back page of every Newsletter. Her address is 17 Rydal Avenue, Freckleton, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 1DJ and an e-mail to [norma.caley@lineone.net](mailto:norma.caley@lineone.net) should reach her too.

*Harry Henthorne*

-----oooOOOooo-----

## Technical Group

I am pleased to say that there has been a very encouraging number of requests for the 'Ideas Sheets' published with the January Newsletter. However I may have inadvertently misled some members. Ideas Sheets identified with an asterisk (\*) Numbers 51-60 can, of course, also be supplied by post.

*Baz Wellard*

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## Refillable Gas Cylinders

In my article in the September Newsletter, I wrote that I was intending buying two refillable gas cylinders from MTH Autogas and asked for positive or negative comments. Several people phoned to say that this was wonderful news if everything was successful and *Andrew Entwistle* contacted me to advise me to check to see if the cylinders had certification. The news is that I did buy the cylinders and am very pleased with them and I particularly enjoy filling an empty cylinder for only £3.80!

Initially there was a problem with using a Calor regulator and an adapter which was unsuccessful but they then supplied a bulkhead mounted regulator which works well. As it is a "Gaslow" make it also indicates when the gas is low in the cylinder.

In my previous article, I said one could fill up all over Europe with two connectors but I have since learned that there is no Autogas in Spain and one needs three adapters to suit all the other countries. As far as the using of the cylinders is concerned, I find it easier to change the hose between cylinders because the connector has a rubber washer which means that one does not have to exert the same force with the spanner which has saved my knuckles from injury. I find no trouble in driving into an Autogas station, unscrewing the regulator hose, removing the cylinder, screwing on the filler adapter, filling the cylinder, unscrewing the filler adapter and returning the cylinder to the gas locker. Its ease is helped by the cylinders being so much lighter. I have seen no difference in the efficiency of the cooker, fridge or space and water heaters. I see that the bottles have an embossed stamp indicating that they have been inspected, tested and certificated by "TUV" which I understand is the German testing authority and, I am also told, is regarded as the highest authority in Europe.

The cylinders have a capacity of 12 litres but must only be filled to 10 litres to allow for the gassing off of the liquefied gas and also to allow for expansion in hot conditions. The 10 litre point is marked with a sticker and one can see the gas get to that point at which time one releases the filler button on the Autogas pump.

It has taken some time to get all the information to write this article because it has been difficult to contact Richard Cecil but he has now promised he will be easier to contact as he has just got new premises and will employ an office manager. He can be contacted on 015 9456 3538 or by email [autogas.motorhome@virgin.net](mailto:autogas.motorhome@virgin.net) or by post to Castlemain Workshops, Yorkley Road, Park End, Forest of Dean, Gloucester. Customers will be able to camp at the new workshops which will hold several vans and will have showers. For £250.00, he will supply two cylinders, the UK filler adapter and a bulkhead regulator with one tail or, for £10.00 more, two tails. The French filler adapter is £10.00 and the Scandinavian one is £17.00. He states that he will fit the regulator without further charge at his workshops or he will post it all for approx £22.00. He will have a stand at The Boat Caravan & Leisure Show at the NEC between Don Amott's and Marquis' and will also have a stand at our Club & Company rally.

I feel I must add that the bulkhead regulator that he is selling is the 37 mbar one suitable for vans built before 2003, not to be confused with the 30 mbar bulkhead regulator which started to be fitted as standard to vans built from mid 2003.

*Mike Hall*

It is absolutely essential to use the correct regulator for the gas which you are using. Especially now that the revised fittings are coming into use with the newer vans. So please remember, if in any doubt, CHECK, then CHECK AGAIN. We don't want any nasty accidents such as one which was shown on the television recently where the gas bottles exploded after the van had caught fire on a motorway. Fortunately the occupants escaped.

#####

I was surprised to see the article about Gas in the Newsletter without an answer. I have been swapping Caravan Gas, Calor and propane, to suit the van and in different sizes too. These things are only rented from Calor anyway and there is a company policy on which ones are swappable, generally 3.8P, 4.5C, 7C and 6P can be exchanged for the cost of the gas refill. But not all dealers are able to because they may not be Main dealer. I have swapped at garages, caravan sites and have had sight of the document. You may find the details at [www.calorgas.co.uk](http://www.calorgas.co.uk) or phone them on 0800 626 626. When changing to a different gas I always allow a bit of gas to blow through the system to expunge the old gas before lighting. You can also use Camping Gaz, Shellgas and all those foreign ones so long as the correct regulator is used. Personally I have settled for propane for all year use as the cost per heating effect is similar.

*David Mayne*

-----oooOOOooo-----

## **Odds and Ends**

### Washing Up Bowl – continued

I solved the space problem by getting a folding canvas bowl which fits inside the access door to the cassette toilet. It helps to insulate in the winter. I saw a folding bucket in a Caravan shop yesterday.

### Toilet cassette transport for emptying.

Having observed the various trolleys used I bought a square folding plastic trolley which, to my delight, actually fits on the base inside one of our storage boxes. When opened out it holds the Aquakem bottle etc. beside the cassette.

### Gaslow

We too are going to have this fitted when the caravan shop has received the butane to butane version. They only stocked propane fitment as "mobile homes don't travel abroad"!

## Gadget

For changing the Camping Gaz cylinder we cut a circle of hardboard and put large (flower-pot) ball-bearing casters underneath. This makes rotating the cylinder easier.

## Propex Heater

Having had our Propex heater removed by our car service garage and sent back to Propex by me it was, on return, reconnected incorrectly and blew the fuse. I learned a lot about the wiring but needed to take it to a caravan centre for the problem to be sorted. This took three hours in spite of the information I had acquired from Willersley where they found someone who had done wiring on K reg. Harmonies. The circuit board from the small black box is being sent to Propex and could have been the source of the original problem of the gas not firing. If anyone else has a similar problem of not firing this could be the source of the problem.

*Celia Matthews*

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## **New models to launch at NEC**

With Christmas and New Year out of the way, it is now time to concentrate on the work ahead for 2004! Following the success of Volkswagen Trident and the Peugeot Inca launched at Earls Court, we're delighted to announce that the all-new Volkswagen Trooper and Peugeot Inca EL will be launching at next month's National Boat, Caravan and Outdoor Leisure show in Birmingham. You can find us in Hall 2, stand 113.

The long awaited Trooper with its unique solid construction elevating roof is based on the all new Volkswagen Transporter. We've taken the adventurous step of marketing both the Trident and the Trooper within a new 'MPSV' category (Multi-Purpose Sleeper Vehicle). The MPSV concept has revolutionised the image of the original campervan by offering all purpose vehicles that can not only be used to drop the children at school in the morning, double as a company car and carry the shopping home, but can also support an active outdoor lifestyle. The Trooper also fits nicely in the garage and drives as beautifully up and down the motorway as it does around town. And for those ASOC members who like to put their foot down on the German Autobahn there's a 174 PS (metric horsepower) version that's capable of speeds of around 115 mph.

Inside, the Trooper combines a feel of luxury with space, as provided by its unique solid-sided elevating roof. It features a simple to

operate double bed mechanism, flexible seating arrangement, a generously equipped kitchen and neatly concealed toilet. The mahogany effect trim and attractive fabric scheme complete the stylish and contemporary look. In addition, the Trooper boasts a new chassis and a choice of different engine sizes.

The second vehicle we are launching at the NEC show is the Peugeot Inca EL. Following the success of the recently launched Inca, the latest low profile EL model offers a great alternative for users who prefer the space provided by a more open rear lounge. This reflects A-S intention to create a warm and social environment with a user-friendly layout. The unique 'kidney shaped' dinner table completes the look and is perfect for cosy evening dinners. Just like the Inca, this wide-bodied vehicle is nearly 15cm longer and 20cm wider than a standard vehicle of similar layout, but yet maintains all the manoeuvrability of a compact motorhome. The low profile roof, improving fuel consumption, handling and driveability further complements the external design of the Inca EL.

We are hoping that as many ASOC members as possible are able to make it to the NEC Birmingham show and see these excellent new vehicles. For those of you who haven't yet had a chance to see the new graphics, fabrics and specifications of our 2004 range it really will prove to be a great day out.

Carole Domenech

-----ooo0000oo-----

## **Electric circuit problems**

Recent contributions concerning battery chargers has reminded me of electric circuit problems which I have encountered recently and leads to the thought that my experience would provide some information to the members.

The first is the malfunction of the power windows which have been fitted to my Clubman. We had noticed several times at first that the left hand door power window did not work when the right hand door, driver's side, was open. Intermittent malfunction of left window continued without any relationship to the right door opening or closing, and at last the permanent failure of the left window occurred. We were fortunate that the failure occurred when the window was closed.

I took the Clubman to the shop from where we had purchased it. As that shop is a small one, the owner himself responded as the chief engineer and checked the problem. I had supposed that he would open the side cover of the right door, but he examined the cable between the door and the body. When he moved the cable up and

down strongly, some strange sounds happened in the neighbourhood of the accelerator pedal and even the healthy right window did not work afterwards.

He opened the cover of the cable between the right door and the body by using a cutter and showed me the state of cable. There were three cables, red, green and black, and all were cut open with the copper lead showing. This cutting may have occurred by the force of the door opening and closing. The reason for the strange sound was the blowing of the fuse by the short circuit of the cable. Re-connection of the cable and the replacement of the fuse element has made the power window fully operational.

The second is the heating up of a relay which connects the generator output to the second battery. After the repairing of power window, I opened the engine cover and found some irregular colour change of the cable to the relay which is inserted between the dynamo and the second battery. The colour change from yellow to brown indicated the burning of the cable. The owner of the shop measured the current with the engine turning and found that no current flowing at all. He checked the relay and declared that relay contact was not normal.

After replacing the relay, measurement of the current indicated the value of 29 amps while the capacity of the relay contact is 30 amps. He added an explanation that such a big flow of current at the contact might have caused the heat increase and the contact damage, and he repaired the burnt cable. Perhaps I did not notice the malfunction of that relay, because the second battery charging was made during mains hook-up.

We are now in the stage of camping tour planning for the summer of 2004 with satisfactory condition of my Clubman.

*Masahisa & Mieko Matsubara*

It is nice to hear from our Japanese members, even though they appear to have had some problems with their van. We too have a Clubman but without electric windows so have avoided that pitfall. But we also have had trouble with the relay, mainly due to the position it was originally fitted in so that all spare water from the windscreen etc could leak down on to it and cause all sorts of nasty things. It has been replaced, and repositioned.

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

## **Franglais!**

Thought members might like to see the wording on the ticket for parking which was issued from the machine in Cordes sur Ciel, which is near Albi in SE France:

PUT THE TICKET BEHIND YOUR WINDSCREEN'S CAR.

There was an extra piece on the ticket which invited us to:

UNTIE THIS PART TO BENEFIT FROM AN ADVANTAGE

On investigation, we discovered the 'advantage' was a free cocktail at the Paradise Garden. We are thinking of going back there this year.

*Tonie & Derek Smith*

-----oooOOOooo-----

### *Farewell*

"Anno Domini" has decided that it is time we gave up motor caravanning, so we have now sold our "Dulcie Duetto".

We have enjoyed our six years membership of the Club and the many friends we have made. We would like to take this opportunity of thanking all the Rally Marshals for their hard work in making the short breaks so interesting. We shall think of you all often.

*Freda and Fred Smith*

Sorry to see you leave us but such things happen. Enjoy your "retirement!"

-----oooOOOooo-----

### **Wanted**

If any member has a 6kg Propane bottle they wish to sell, will they please contact Robert Wood on 013 5886 0658 (Littleport, Ely)

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### **For Sale**

Silver Screens to fit Peugeot Talbot Express. In very good condition. £50.00. Ice and snow screen to fit over the front and side windows of the Express van - never used. £15.00.

Both plus postage unless delivery can be arranged. E-mail Brian Greenhalgh [brian@ghalgh.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:brian@ghalgh.freeserve.co.uk) or phone on 015 1639 3415 (Wirral).  
Thanks for the donation.



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Elsan Visa 338 porta potty, fawn/burgundy. Unused. £20.00. Protec cover grey suitable for A-S Hi-top VW T3 or similar. Only used one winter. £100.00. Brake/clutch clamp. VW T3. £10.00. Phone Steph Budnik on 017 3333 1577 (Peterborough).  
Thanks for the donation.

#####

Pescara (Pollensa with 2 bench seats) based on Ford Transit 2.5 Td chassis, VGC, 37,000 miles. FSH, awning, cycle rack, removable carpets, 4 berth, all usual A-S facilities, Silver Screens. T&T July '04. Offers around £22,500.00 ono. Contact Pete Fisher by e-mail to [fisher@sunnyskies.screaming.net](mailto:fisher@sunnyskies.screaming.net) or by phone on 015 4337 7777 or 07 967 106 687.

#####

Fiamma Ultra-Box One, 280 litres capacity, the smallest they make. Complete with nylon fixing straps. £80.00. Silver Screens for VW. £20.00. Tel: Bob Burgess on 019 0542 9724 (Worcester).  
Thanks for the donation.

#####

Talisman GL, January '91, 2 ltr petrol. 48,000 miles. Full service history and receipts. Many, many extras fitted, two awnings and a box of van spares all to go with the van. New van on order, delivery April. £10,000.00. Tel: Mike Cook on 011 5956 5639 (Nottingham).

#####

Sky Digibox - Panasonic DSB31 - best Skybox for Europe. £90.00. Also 240/12 volt DVD player (Kingavon) - as sold by Leisurepower etc at shows (also plays CDs, MP3s etc). £75.00. Tel: John Riggs on 017 4786 1933 (Warminster, Wiltshire).

#####

OMNISTOR 'S' CLASS TOPBOX, 135 x 89 x 38 cms. Fits Clubman roofrack. For sale due to change of van. £110.00 o.v.n.o. Tel: Rex Woodruffe on 012 4286 2963 (Cheltenham).

#####

Executive 4 berth, W reg, 18,500 miles, usual A-S spec plus Beeny box, Airride, Noisekiller, Defen Door lock. Reluctant sale due to downsizing, excellent condition. Tax and MOT to end March 2004. £24,995.00. Tel: Terry Hammond on 011 8962 8030 evenings (Reading, Berks)  
Thanks for the donation.

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