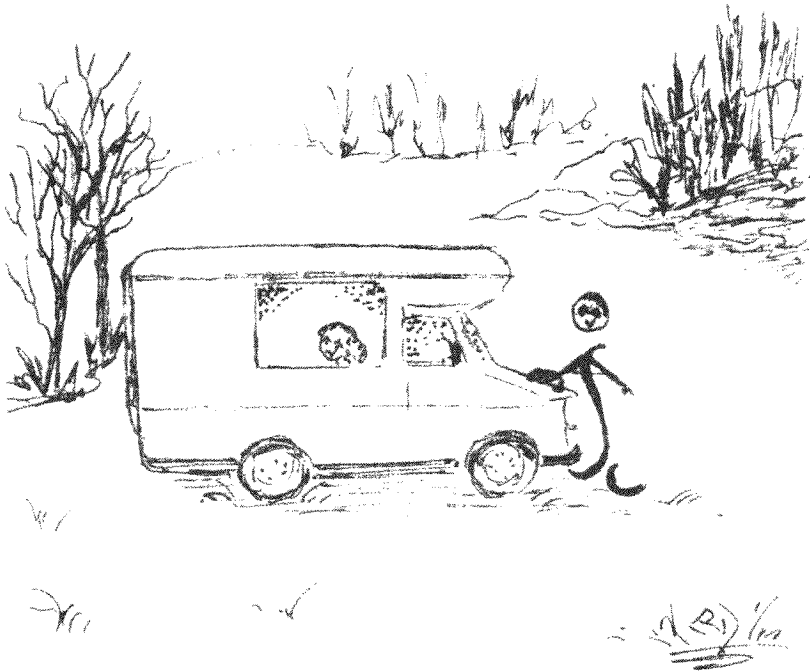




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AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB

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



Good! With this last rub the winterisation is finished!

NEWSLETTER 206 NOVEMBER 2005

Hello.

Winter is coming along although the sun is still shining. We've turned the heating on from time to time. But have you "winterised" your van yet, or are you preparing to? Don't get caught out by a sudden influx of bitter cold weather.

I am very pleased with you, the members, who are again sending in enough items for me to prepare the Newsletter. It is so very good when you remember that YOU are the people who write it, not me. So keep up the good work!

-----oooOOOooo-----

Taking Tess to France

Many members have met our lunatic border collie Tess, so I thought it might be of interest to some to read of our experiences taking her to France for the first time in June this year.

The appropriate rabies injection, blood test, etc. had all been done and we had also consulted the vet with regard to flea and tick treatments. He recommended we should use Advantix (a spot on preparation) as this would also protect Tess against mosquito bites, something we had not thought of as affecting dogs. On this trip we also used Stronghold which is an anti-worm preparation which also protects against heartworm, but we have since been told by the French vet that it really wasn't necessary for France.

We decided to travel on the shuttle through the tunnel as that way Tess could stay in the van with us. On the outward journey they merely acknowledge that you have a dog, and give you a leaflet on how to find the Pet Reception Area on the return journey.

We were away for 6 weeks and Tess coped really well with the heat. When it was too much for her she just went under the van where it was nice and cool. The only problem we did find was that there are not many places where you can let a dog run off the lead. This is because the French are very into hunting and shooting and consequently you have to be careful in open and wooded areas. Most of the time we managed very well and found plenty of places to walk Tess. Whilst at the super rally in the Dordogne (thanks again to *Sheila and Ivor, (Barnett, with Nora and Ven Venables)*) exercising the dog was not a problem as there was a very nice walk across the fields to Beynac which Tess enjoyed several times each day quite often with 'auntie' *Sylvia*.

So to the return trip. We had read in MMM of a site, just outside St. Omer, that was run by a couple, the wife also being part-time receptionist at a vet in the town. We booked two nights at the site and were very pleased with our choice. Whist the pitches left a little to be

desired, we received a very nice welcome with a glass of wine, and Guy and Bernadette, the owners, are a super couple. We also discovered that Bernadette is the most wonderful cook, so we ate in the restaurant both nights. *Andy* says I'm not to give the name of the site because it might get too busy and we won't be able to get in next time – but if you ask nicely I'll probably tell you!!!!

Our appointment at the vet was for 10.30 a.m. on the Monday morning, the shuttle having been booked for 1.00 p.m. on the Tuesday. The vet was very thorough. He checked Tess's general health and then gave her the necessary injection, and tick treatment – coincidentally Advantix. He completed the paperwork, stamped her passport, and we were then free to travel back to the UK after 24 hours had elapsed, but before 48 hours. Incidentally, the vet's charges were very reasonable.

On the Tuesday we arrived at the Pet Reception Area at the shuttle, where they checked her microchip, and all the paperwork. They included Tess on their list of travellers for the day and we proceeded to the shuttle check-in. They booked us in, and also contacted the Pet Reception office to make sure we had in fact been there with Tess. All that remained was for us to board our shuttle and return home.

I can honestly say the whole procedure was an absolute breeze and we will happily take Tess with us again, in fact next year is already planned. If anyone is considering taking their pet abroad, and would like any more information, we would be happy to help.

Angie Cavell

-----oooOOOooo-----

Renewal of Membership

Yes, it is that time of year again, a busy six months. The first of the 2005 renewals arrived in October and the last ones in March! A number of members told me they had not received a renewal form. I suspect that they opened their envelopes, took out the Newsletter but did not look for anything else and threw the envelope away!

This year, you should have found the renewal form stapled in the centre of the October Newsletter. Pull it out gently so that it is not too damaged, then complete all details and send it to me together with your cheque for £15.00 made payable to the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club. Of course, if you pay by Standing Order Mandate you will NOT need to send a cheque.

Norma Caley

-----oooOOOooo-----

Shoreham Airshow Rally

We wish to thank *Shirley & Chris Sturgeon and Theresa & Dave Smith* for organising such a successful and friendly rally. It was a great event, made all the more enjoyable for us by the help received from everyone, being my first rally after losing my right leg.

A generator was supplied to charge my disabled buggy enabling me to enjoy the airshow (and a pint!), everyone was most kind, and the nightly trip to the waste point via the runway (flying finished) and *Cedric* (in charge of music and direction) will be long remembered.

We hope this will be the first of many rallies. It is a friendly club. We are glad to belong.

Alan & Eileen Selwood

-----oooOOOooo-----

A Site to Remember

How about having a monthly item called "A site to Remember"? Members could be asked to send in their recollections of sites they have visited, why they remember them - be it good or bad - and hopefully one site location could be printed each time.

We will start the ball rolling with our contribution. "Old Oaks Touring Park", Wick Farm, Wick, Glastonbury, (page 553 in the Caravan Club site book). Why do we remember it? For its cleanliness, friendliness and spaciousness plus its well stocked shop, TV/tourist advice/games room, on-site coarse fishing lake and within walking distance of Glastonbury Tor. Well worth a return visit and they have a slight reduction for OAP's!!!

This is not a Caravan Club site but, in our experience, they are very often less expensive. Perhaps if other members agree with this idea they will send in their suggestions.

Pam & Terry Holtom

Always open to ideas so if you have any contributions, please send them in.

-----oooOOOooo-----

Eberspacher Airtronic Heater

Referring to *Lionel Walker's* enquiry in the September 2005 Newsletter - we too have had problems with fumes entering our Symbol and also excessive running noise inside and particularly outside the van. We had queried these problems with Eberspacher at last year's Club and Company Rally, we also spoke to our local Eberspacher agent and had mentioned it to Auto-Sleepers and to our Auto-Sleepers agent. I think

non-committal is probably the best description of comments we received. We didn't push for a resolution of the problems as after consulting Todd's at Preston they offered to change the heating system to gas which would eliminate the diesel fumes and the excessive noise – not only would this benefit us but it would lead to better relationships with our camp site neighbours!

On our way to the recent, very enjoyable, Ludlow rally, the gods conspired against us in that our gas system ceased to function. It turned out that there was a problem with the new fixed regulator and we couldn't get it replaced immediately! (It was also suspected that there was a problem with "dirty" gas as most of the trouble seemed to be occurring in the north of the country). Not only could we not use our new heating system we couldn't use our cooker, water heater or fridge!! We resorted to buying a single gas ring and I have to say I was quite proud of the meals I produced – an art I thought I'd lost after our camping exploits of the early 70s came to an end.

Our diesel heating wouldn't have been much use either as there was the threat of a fuel blockade so our precious fuel was saved for the journey home and a minor detour to Todd's who had managed to get a new regulator and fitted it for us. We're now firing on all cylinders. Our grateful thanks to Todds for their usual helpful service.

I had written to *Charles Trevelyan* on 16th June this year in connection with our dissatisfaction with the Eberspacher heater. It had been the one reason why we hesitated about buying the Symbol in the first place. Other people we have spoken to (not only Auto-Sleeper owners) have complained about the fumes and the noise and also referred to the annoyance it can cause to neighbours. These heaters may be ok for lorries but I'm not convinced they are the best answer to "domestic" situations.

Pauline and Robin Keeley

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I was surprised to read that *Charles Trevelyan* had not received any complaints re the Eberspacher heater as I had a letter published regarding the same problem and asking if anyone else had experienced fumes up through the gas cooker and was there a remedy. I also phoned the factory and was told that provided that the heater was installed correctly and the exhaust was directed away from the van - which it does - vents under the cooker were essential and there was no solution. I second the suggestion of moving the heater to the other side of the van and agree that one would hardly have the

sliding door open if it was cold enough to have the heater on. More likely to have the window open behind the cooker!

Apart from the unpleasant smell, as *Lionel Walker* points out, there is a health issue to be considered. Hopefully the design team will give this problem some thought.

Fay Baker

-----oooOOOooo-----

ASOC Tours 2006

We are planning three tours during 2006, all of which will offer something very special. They will be organised for the Club by GB Privilege, and will be exclusively for ASOC members

The first is described as the Ultimate Scottish Experience, and will be from 19th to 23rd June. Numbers will be strictly limited, and the tour will appeal to those members who enjoy the good things in life, as well as the Auto-Sleeper lifestyle. Many people have taken their motorhomes to Scotland, but unless you have experienced the sheer grandeur of these private castle visits and banquets, you have missed the opportunity to "live the dream". The tour combines two exclusive "once in a lifetime" events with a more traditional Scottish campsite. It must be stressed that the two castle visits are exclusive to ASOC tour participants – they are not open to the general public.

It will start at the Castle of Mey, where you stay overnight and enjoy a private guided tour of the castle. The tour then heads south with opportunities to visit Dunrobin Castle, Inverness and Culloden. A visit to the smokehouse near the campsite is recommended, to taste their smoked salmon. A bus tour of the Speyside area and a whisky distillery is also included. The highlight of the tour will be the last night, when you park overnight at Glamis Castle, and again enjoy a private viewing, with the public barriers removed. You will be able to use the furniture instead of just looking at it! After the castle tour, there will be a five-course banquet in the state dining room, followed by a private display of "beating the retreat" after which members will be piped back to their vans.

The second tour is to Venice and Verona, starting on Saturday 2nd September, and finishing in Venice on Sunday 17th September. This tour will include a visit to the unique city of Venice, as well as a guided boat tour of some of the Venetian islands, a guided tour of the beautiful city of Verona, and stays at wonderful campsites alongside Lake Luzern, Lake Garda and the Venetian lagoon. You will have three free days in

Venice to explore the city, and the tour includes a drinks reception, grill party and a dinner on the last night.

The last tour is to the ever popular Christmas markets, this time in Bruges and Brussels, from 3rd to 8th December. This is an opportunity to visit the Brussels Christmas Market, which is one of the most interesting in Europe. Obviously, most of the stalls will display Belgian products (including chocolates!), but because of Brussels' status as one of the centres of the European Community, there will also be a large number of stalls from other countries, giving you the chance to experience the Christmas traditions of many different cultures. Another highlight is the superb decorations around the Grande Place. By contrast, the Bruges Christmas market is much smaller and more traditional. An enjoyable short break before Christmas, and a chance to buy some unusual items, the tour will include a drinks reception, tastings and a farewell dinner.

Full information about these tours will appear in the Newsletter nearer the time, but if you can't wait to book, then details and a booking form can be obtained from G B Privilege Ltd., 3 The Fields, Tacolneston, Norfolk, NR16 1DG. Phone 019 5378 9661 or Fax 019 5378 9519. The e-mail address is gbprivilege@yahoo.com

Andy Cavell

-----ooOoo-----

A.S.O.C. Rhine River Lights Tour

with GB Privilege 13th - 18th September

Having travelled on two previous occasions with GB Privilege, *Raymond and I* were confident that we would have an enjoyable break and we were not disappointed. The tour was not without some changes and misunderstanding, but overall we both felt that the 'quality' was there and the warm, lively companionship of the eighteen A.S.O.C. members ensured us of a wonderful and magical time.

There was a slight hitch when we attempted to disembark at Calais, our Symbol had a very flat tyre. A P&O worker assisted us with the change, so we were soon on our way and caught up with the others at our first campsite at Bruges. Heavy rain had contributed to the problems at the site, which was crowded and some people wished we had gone, as previously expected to, the site at Tournai. The advantage of the Bruges site was that it was a half hour walk into Bruges itself and ten minutes from Carrefours.

On site we discovered that a couple in our group had had the same puncture problem on the ferry when they went to Valkenburg for

the Christmas Markets. As we both had valve extensions fitted on our tyres, a possible cause could be that these projections caught on the metal flaps of the ferry ramps, resulting in damage to the valve or to its seating. We managed to get a new valve but our extensions were removed fairly promptly.

Some of our group had expected to see the 'Rhine in Flames' having confused this event with that of the Rhine River Lights which we were booked to see. No doubt the 'Rhine in Flames' which was due to be held on the following night to our booking would have been very spectacular, but I think I would prefer to view this happening on a warmer evening!

We travelled by coach from the Hunsruck campsite to St Goar where we boarded the boat to Oberwesel. Here we took some part in the wine festival where we were given a complimentary souvenir glass filled with wine. I say we took 'some part' as we were all aware that we were travelling the next day back to Bruges otherwise we might have let our hair down! At 9.00 pm we stood on the top deck of the boat to watch eleven minutes of a most magnificent firework display, which according to www.mittelrhein.lister.de had 2,800 effects. (A full written description of this display can be read on the same website). For anyone aware of the autumnal chill this was long enough. From the coolness of the deck we returned to our reserved seats on the deck below and the braver souls amongst us joined in the dancing.

Raymond and I found the whole experience very refreshing. We took a few photographs but not many as we were too busy chatting and generally enjoying ourselves. If any of the group would like to see themselves, visit our website at www.valerieandraymond.co.uk And finally a 'thank you' to Roger, our Tour Director who guided, advised and befriended.

Valerie Massey

-----oooOOOooo-----

In Case of Emergency

Recent advice from County re I.C.E. (IN CASE of EMERGENCY). Place an I.C.E. Contact Number in your mobile's directory. Anglia Air and Ground Paramedics recommend its use for everyone.

My own case of a grand-daughter's road crash at 18.30 hrs and because she didn't turn up as planned. (She lives in a local town and had phoned early that day to say she would call in on her Nanna. otherwise I would have remained ignorant of the dilemma). I chased

the police incident centre and finally only got info on a R.T.A. (Road Traffic Accident) on a section of road between Bedford and Royston @ 21.00hrs. Finally confirmed the name with Bedford Hospital and got there an hour later.

Fortunately a good recovery but the agonizing delay for me and her parents in motoring down from Lincs could have been minimised by the technique adopted above.

I found in our local doctors surgery today the following free issue of a credit card sized A Next of Kin card for your wallet or purse. Is now available from www.nextofkin.org The card lists

- * My Name:-
- * In an emergency please contact:-
- * One telephone No (include country code):-
- * Medical / Allergy Information:-

Roy Newbury

This came in to the Newsletter as part of a round robin e-mail to a lot of people. There is some sense in putting such numbers into the telephone directory on a mobile phone and in fact one respondent to the message has put five different numbers in. The only observation that can be made is that if you try to keep your mobile phone safe by having to insert a Personal Identification Number code before it can be opened then it may defeat the object of the exercise.

-----oooOOOooo-----

Digital camera battery chargers

I have just had my second Pentax digital camera battery charger die on me. It will be about 30 days or so until the charger is repaired and returned. I could have bought a universal charger, which would, it seems, charge just about anything up to a leisure battery, at about £40.00. Naturally enough I declined this kind offer. This morning I have checked out the internet and found the following site: Eurobatteries.com. Not only have I found a specific charger for £15.65 but another battery @ £17.59 as opposed to £24.00 for the original. Also the charger is 12/240v which will enable charging in the van. This is the first time that I have used this site but have no reason to question it. Should I have any problem I will let you know.

Pete Fisher

-----oooOOOooo-----

COMMON SENSE

Suitable sad faces please!

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, life isn't always fair and maybe it was my fault. Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job they failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer an aspirin or similar, sun lotion or a sticky plaster to a student; but could not inform the parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

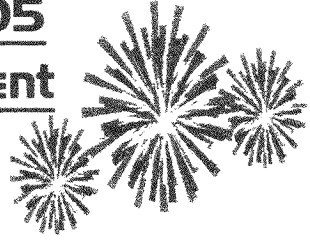
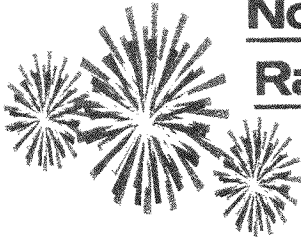
Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband; churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar can sue you for assault. Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by three stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, Someone Else is to Blame and I'm A Victim. Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he was gone.

If you still remember him pass this on, if not join the majority and do nothing.

Dai Davies

November 2005 Rally Supplement



Proposed Rally in the West of Ireland 24th. May – 8th. June 2006.

Rally Marshals: Liz & Bryn Morgan & Nora & Ven Venables.

A rally on 2 sites. **Limited to 24 motorhomes. SORRY NO DOGS ALLOWED.**

Eagle Point Camping, Nr. Bantry Bay, West Cork. Wed. 24th. May – Mon. 29th. May.

5 nights €95 incl. electricity. Nr Beara Peninsular & Garnish Island. The full site fees for the first site will have to be paid to the marshals in March 2006. We will give you a sterling rate when we send the site guide mentioned below.

Fossa Caravan & Camping Park, Nr. Killarney, Co. Kerry

. Mon. 29th. May – Thurs. 8th. June. 10 nights €165 incl. electricity. Nr. Ring of Kerry, Gap of Dunloe, Dingle Peninsula.

Bookings only taken for the 15 nights. We have secured site fee discounts on condition that you pay for all 15 nights.

Rally Fee is £15.50 & includes a Caravan & Camping Guide to Ireland 2006 to be sent to you when published. If you are offered a place and you accept then the rally fee is non-returnable. Please send a cheque for £15.50, a rally slip and a **9X6 SAE** to: **B. Morgan, 44 Mersey Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, SK4 3DJ.** Tel. 0161 432 4869. Mobile 07890876859. Nora & Ven Venables 01902 332 105. An information pack together with confirmation of booking will be sent to you.

4th – 8th. November (4 nights) Sedgemoor Carnival Rally 2005, Burnham

Holiday Village, Burnham on Sea, Somerset.

Emergency Tel. No. 07711 375 323 (Marshal's mobile)

Rally Marshals: Linda & Brian Ellis & Sharon

Site Fee: £36.65 (4 nights). Fl...

Total payable £39.00

Rally limited to

pitches have

Rally slips &

Sea. TA8 2PP.

RALLY FULLY BOOKED

€2.35. (All incl. VAT).

...men 18 grassed bays, as slips are received. All
...have toilet & shower facilities.
...any enquiries to Brian Ellis, 52 Golf Links Road, Burnham on
...NO. 01278 784 524.

Rally starts 10.00a.m. Friday 4th, Saturday coach trip to Clarks Village at Street. Sunday evening firework display on the beach. Monday evening Carnival procession through Burnham, approx 2 hours. Tuesday midday rally ends.

The Holiday Village is about 10 minutes from the town centre. The touring site will be officially closed but static caravans will be open to owners with limited entertainment facilities. A bar may be available to us and possibly the swimming pool. We hope to do a coach trip, £3.00 each, to Street on Saturday and Sunday lunch, price to be arranged.

Please indicate on rally slip if interested. **DO NOT** send payments with your slip.

Sorry **NO PETS** allowed – Site rules.

Directions: M5 junct. 22 Burnham on Sea exit; to large island (Edithmead A38) turn **left** & follow signs for Burnham Holiday Village (Taunton A38). Continue approx 1 mile straight over island (A38). Continue past caravan sales, over railway bridge then turn second **right** signed Burnham Holiday Village. Continue to mini island by petrol station, bear **left** towards Burnham town centre. Holiday Village about ¼ mile on **left**.

8th – 15th, November (7 nights). Van Bitz, Nr. Taunton, Somerset.
THIS RALLY HAS BEEN CANCELLED.

If you wish to run a rally in 2006 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. If you wish your rally to be included in the 2006 Provisional list then I must have dates etc. before the end of November

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 & 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 & OE

Rally : Date:

Your name and address(Please PRINT)

..... Post code:

Phone No: Van Reg: Length

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: Length

Membership No: Day/Time of arrival:

In the event of an emergency at the rally whom should we contact?

Name Phone No

Please complete both sides of the form

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes No
Number of people in your van: Adults..... Children.....

Names of Adults.....

Names of Children (including ages).....

Extras: Please indicate which you would like, if available:

Electricity: Yes No Evening meal: Yes No

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

Full payment MUST accompany this slip-cheques payable to the marshal.
POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 14 DAYS BEFORE EVENT,IF POSSIBLE PLEASE!

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes No
Number of people in your van: Adults..... Children.....

Names of Adults.....

Names of Children (including ages).....

Extras: Please indicate which you would like, if available

Electricity: Yes No Evening meal 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!

Thank you, *Dai*, for sending in this item. It certainly shows what is happening in the world today.

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Riverside Rally

Our decision to run a rally at the end of September on the outskirts of Stratford upon Avon proved that A.S.O.C members are a hardy lot as 41 vans came and braved the changeable weather over the weekend. As I waited for our last arrival the rally field was deserted because all the others had taken the opportunity to cycle, walk to various places of interest or take the river-taxi into Stratford to shop at the Farmers Market and enjoy the Food Festival taking place over that weekend.

Terry Legg and Ricky Smith helped *Sandra* marshal arrivals to their pitches while I went to a friend's retirement party over lunch. The weekend started in true ASOC fashion with the service of tea/coffee and biscuits. We were helped by *Ann Smith* while *Rosemary Legg and Ruby Peel* sold the raffle tickets. Individuals took the opportunity to meet and greet friends and make new ones.

The new team in the small kitchen in the Club House did very well to provide everyone with a 2 course meal before the Bingo and entertainment started. Some of our ralliers won prizes at the Bingo to make the evening that much more enjoyable.

Unfortunately *James Bertlin* was taken to hospital late on Saturday evening but thankfully was able to return to the van in the early hours of Sunday morning. We are pleased for him and *Jill* that though in some discomfort he is well on the way to recovery. We wish to take this opportunity to express our thanks to the Management and Staff of Riverside for the way they helped *James and Jill* during this time, to the extent of allowing them to stay on site for an extra night free of charge to allow *Jill* to recharge her batteries before the journey home. *Jill* has rung to say they arrived home safe and well and we all wish *James* a speedy return to good health.

The rally concluded on the Sunday morning with coffee and the raffle, some lingered on till mid afternoon before making their way to whence they came.

Sandra and Bernie Wisely

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What's In a Name?

My name is Polly Too and I'm an INCA by design,
My owners, *James and Jill*, I've found, are really quite benign.
I follow dear old Polly who was loved for seven years
And I noticed at their parting that they all shed several tears!
Polly was a Pollensa, made of 'Polly-Styrofoam'
So her name was most appropriate (which in ASOC is the norm).
"Why not a name for INCA?" you declare – and so did I,
Well, the reason is quite simple, so please, let me tell you why.
Behind their house, a while ago, they dug a 'Polly Park'
And the name has stuck so firmly, even neighbours share the lark.
My owners' age precludes them, now, from changing names of things,
So I'm Polly Too and proud of happy memories the name brings.

And 'Thank You'

The changeover from Polly to Polly Too took place on the morning the Stratford-upon-Avon Rally commenced at Riverside Caravan Park. By Saturday evening *James* was suffering from severe back pain and an ambulance was called to the site to whisk him off to Warwick Hospital. We would like to express our most grateful thanks to Rally Marshals, *Sandra & Bernie Wisely*, as well as all our ASOC friends who gave tremendous support over the weekend, particularly *Pam & Bill Todd*. Also we would like to say how wonderful the site managers were – producing an extremely long electric cable at 10.00pm to connect us to the mains as the leisure battery began to feel the strain, as well as providing us with a pitch on Sunday night (at no charge) so that we could recharge our batteries and *Jill* could prepare herself to drive the new van home.

James & Jill Bertlin

-----oooOOOooo-----

Eberspacher Airtropic Heater and Fridge, continued.

Further to my letter in the October 2005 Newsletter, it now transpires that our 'Heath Robinson' attempts to seal the back of the fridge from the leisure area have not worked. During our September holiday we experienced fumes again, including a nasty hot plastic/paint smell from the fridge's heat exchange unit. What we had done is to use blankets, Sellotape and plastic bags in the kitchen section of the leisure area to try

to stop the fumes. This caused great inconvenience if we wanted to use the cooker of course. We took this action because we were fed up with spending the 5 hours travelling to and from Willersey every time we tried to get the back of the fridge sealed. When we looked again, we could still see holes around the fridge back and front. So yet another lengthy trip to Willersey will have to take place. This saga continues.

Like *Lionel Walker* we too are concerned about the position of the exhaust pipe from the Eberspacher Airtronic Heater in relation to the drop outs and the fridge vents. But we are also concerned about the efficiency of the drop outs anyway, as a gas leak in the gas cylinder compartment put a gas smell into the leisure area through the seat belt recesses and possibly through the other drop outs.

Has anyone else had these problems? If so, how have you solved them?

Natalie and Jack Firman.

-----ooOoo-----

"A Sink Song"

(Newsletter 205 October 2005)

We have a 1997 Executive and we have become familiar with the Sink Song over the years as an indication that all is well. We too have experienced blocked drains! As *Stuart Lamb* indicates it is the toilet sink which is the most common to block. We have found the most effective way to deal with the problem is not dismantling the sink but to buy a small bottle brush (22p). Hairs and soap sludge are normally removed in seconds!

Over the years we have developed a 'drain regime'. Apart from the hair problem, we experience the smelly drain problem, especially when visiting hot countries. This led to the removal and cleaning of the waste tank. This was not an easy job but what we found made us reflect on what we put down the drain in future. Fitting an underside access to the tank has been considered but not pursued on cost grounds. Fitting U bends is still a possibility but is one of those jobs which never commands priority.

Our drain regime is as follows;

In the toilet sink; - Check the outlet pipe whenever the Sink Song doesn't sing. Use the bottlebrush if necessary. Check if the waste tank needs emptying. Choose a soap that minimises sludge. Make sure enough water goes down the drain for it to work efficiently.

In the kitchen sink; Avoid putting fat/grease and solids down the drain (We use a fair amount of kitchen towel on a preliminary clean of plates and saucepans and strain other wastewater). Use enough washing up liquid and water to emulsify any fat etc.

On arrival home;

Flush out pipes and tank using garden hose on full power. This requires a bit of working out. We do it from inside the van using a hose 'gun' attachment. Pour neat bleach down each drain hole and leave for a short time. Flush each drain hole again until the waste tank is about half full. Allow the bleach water to swish around the waste tank on local trips until ready to set off on a new adventure.

Well, that's how we do it!

Margaret & John Agate

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I have the same type of Tip-Up and removable sink fitted to my 5-year old Amethyst. Over a period of 2 to 3 weeks continuous use the waste pipe gradually clogs up with soap and other debris, until the pipe becomes completely blocked. My solution is very simple. Every time I return home from an outing with the van, I lift out the sink and pour a kettle full of boiling water directly into the vessel into which the sink drains. This clears away all traces of debris in the pipe. It is important to do this before the waste pipe is completely blocked, otherwise the boiling water cannot reach the blockage easily. If I am away in the van for longer periods then it is a once-a-week job.

Ian Ross

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Boys Stuff....

(or practicing what we preach!)

The Axton family is not very different from any other I suspect. There's five of us in total, myself, my wife Emma, eldest son Tom (9), middle daughter Amelia (5) and Gabriella (2). The girls now out number the boys, so sometimes, Tom and I like to escape, to do what he calls 'boys stuff'. 'Boys' stuff consists of such things as football, rugby, cricket, tennis, mountain biking, skate boarding etc. In fact, basically anything that does not really interest the girls in the household and hence we are able to participate in together. Best of all, Tom enjoys 'adventures', and to date the greatest adventures we have shared have been whilst camping and mountain biking.

This weekend I've got a surprise lined up for Tom. Having already been away on business quite a bit this month, I've had to seek

a special dispensation for leave from my wife. Emma is exceptionally understanding, not only of the demands of my job, but also of my ability to decide to do things on the spur of the moment, putting all her plans awry!

The forecast looks great and I've managed to borrow a brand new Marquis Sussex from work. The Sussex is part of the County range, built exclusively for Marquis by Auto-Sleepers. I'm finishing work at lunchtime today and will take the van home to load up the essentials. The plan is to surprise Tom by collecting him from school and taking him straight to the Caravan Club site at Longleat. We'll arrive in time for a good ride, wash and brush up and then off to the local Pub for a meal. On my way to collect Tom, I need to call into the supermarket to pick up a few essentials- eggs, bacon, bread and a bottle of wine or two (for medicinal purposes only!).

Waiting patiently with the other parents for the mob to appear, the van gets many admiring glances. "You can't call that camping", says one enthusiastic parent, "Camper vans have moved on a bit since my day" says another. Soon the children appear, Tom at the back, dragging his rucksack along the ground and looking like a member of the great unwashed. "Hi Dad, what are you doing here" he says. "Got a bit of a surprise Son" I reply, before moving aside and revealing the van in the car park. "Cool, where are we going?" I explain and as his eyes light up with anticipation, as we start the short drive to Longleat, accompanied by the new CD from McFly (something else that's cool apparently).

On arrival at the site we're greeted by the site wardens and shown our pitch. We were lucky to get in to this popular Caravan Club site and took the last available space (Longleat is always busy, even more so at weekends, so advance booking is advisable). Once sited, we hook up to the mains, set up the chairs, wind out the awning and remove the bikes from the bike rack, the latter two items being optional extras. As there is a bit of a chill in the air, we put the heating system on and set the thermostat to ensure a nice warm van to return to.

Now it's off for a bike ride before heading to the local pub for dinner. Exercised, fed and watered we return to the campsite, through the security gate and back to our pitch. While Tom goes over to the shower block to clean his teeth, I quickly make up his bed, open a bottle of wine and settle myself in front of the TV for a while.

Tom's fast asleep now and I'm looking forward to the day tomorrow. Morning arrives and guess who forgot to shut the blind over

the large roof light? It's sunny and we're both quickly out of our comfortable beds. "Bacon and egg sandwich ok?" I ask. "Yep" comes the response. "Give me a shout when they're ready, I'm going to the shop on my bike". I suppose, in Tom's eyes, I'm a sort of cross between a butler and a cash point machine, I think to myself.

After breakfast, it's time for a quick shower in the superbly maintained facilities and we're ready for the day ahead. If you've ever seen the mess a nine year old can make in a shower you will know why we chose to use the Clubs facilities! After another day in the saddle it's time to return home. The Sussex has done us proud and only a couple of minor niggles to report back to our R&D department.

So there you have it, a brief snap shot of family life in the Axton household, next time we're all off in a Mldas, I'll let you know how we get on !!

Rob Axton

Rob is the Group Marketing and Development director for Auto-Sleeper Holdings. I've exercised editorial privilege and cut this down. A lot of what was said about a vehicle which is not eligible for Club membership was obviously written by an advertising/sales person and was not really suitable for members who already are well aware of various items of equipment.

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RAVENNA GREY WATER BACK-UP

I've recently taken delivery of a 1998 Ravenna on Peugeot and find that with the grey water tank half or even less than half full the movement of the van in transit sends water back into the Shower tray, even lifting the plugs (there are three). With the plugs out, the waste comes in, then flows out again leaving a bit of a mess in the tray and a soggy mat. With the plugs in, the water lifts the plugs, come in and stays in !

The previous owners (2) seem to have been unaware of the problem or just ignored it, but the base of the shower tray shows signs of damage consistent with the mat having been lying and rubbing on a soggy base for some time. I understand that there is no trap between the tray and the tank. One suggestion, from an owner met on site, is that an air vent in the top of the tank is blocked so causing a build of air pressure as the waste moves around so sending it back up the pipes. A reply from the A/S Service Centre says "Having previously experienced this problem the best resolve we have found is to fit a non-return valve in the waste tank feedpipe. Having done this, to our knowledge there

have been no further problems*. A further email to the Service Centre asking if this means that there is a design fault has been ignored. It would be interesting to know if others have had the same problem and how they have had it dealt with. Responses through the Newsletter, or direct to me at ian@lews100.freeserve.co.uk would be most welcome.

Ian Watt

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Chairman's Chat



It seems that some people, not necessarily members although some of the latter might be included, think that the Club is a "department" of the Auto-Sleeper Group. Some even think that the officers get paid for their work!! Neither of these is true. The Club is completely autonomous and although we have an extremely good relationship with the Company, neither side can dictate to the other. And all the committee members are volunteers. Our salaries from the Club, when added together, come to a big fat ZERO! There are some expenses which are repaid so that we can attend committee meetings etc., but that is all we get.

Another item which seems to be getting a little out of hand is the wonderful world of Ideas Sheets. These were started so that any bright ideas which members might have had could be shared out around the rest of the Club. Each one is now vetted by the Company people to ensure that the suggestion is safe and suitable and does not encroach on anything which might be dangerous or even illegal. But the general feeling is that if you own an "x" conversion you would ask for one or two Ideas Sheets concerning the 'x' conversion. In my own case, we have a VW Clubman, so any idea for use with, say, a Duetto would tend to be valueless to me unless it was to do with a common item such as the taps or similar. I know that *Baz Wellard* has, on the odd occasion, been asked for rather a lot of Ideas Sheets to be sent to one person and covering quite a range of vehicles. This could seem to be someone who is trying to set themselves up as service or repair people. It was never the intention of the Club to try to do anything like that, just to help members with problems or ideas concerning their own vans.

One other thing has occurred which may amuse you. We are constantly be encouraged to use public transport instead of personal vehicles. *Sheila* and I have a reason to go up to Peterborough shortly so we checked on the cost of travelling by train. The "cheap" day return

fare was around £35.00 each (get the calculator out - that means £70.00 or so for the two of us). We then checked on the Caravan Club site at Ferry Meadows and found that we could stay there for two nights for around £24.00 all in. Add on the cost of the fuel to get us there and the bus fares from near the site into town and we will still save £20.00 - £30.00 on the deal! And with the Underground fares going up to £3.00 per trip shortly it does make us wonder which "Accountant" is at work!

Harry Henthorne

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The Questionnaire

I'm one of the guilty ones who did not respond, and I now ask myself why? It was not lack of interest or even inclination, but at the time, and even now, I'm not sure what I want the Club to be or do or why I'm part of it. I think that my primary hope and expectation on joining was that I would be able to share in the experiences of other A-S owners with regard to the ups and downs of A-S ownership, faults found and corrected, little improvements made, and all that.

I did not expect really to get involved in the rally scene, partly because my wife and I have just not, as caravan owners previously or A-S owners now, got into it, and partly because, most of the time, in Central Scotland, we are quite a way from the rally field. We had hoped to take advantage of the Club & Company Rally but, due to clash of dates, failed, and now it's not to be. I appreciate the link between the Club and the Company. The Company must surely take some notice of views expressed through the Club.

As for the AGM, I'm not sure about the Dinner/Dance format. Spring or Autumn must be the best time. Would a week-long rally over a weekend encourage both those at work, and the fortunate leisured retired class (like me) to attend? I would be more likely to travel to visit a new area and its local amenities, and take in the AGM, if there was a wider programme of possibilities (I realise that that imposes an additional burden on volunteer organisers). I might even find a suitable venue in my own area!

One thing I would make clear. My lack of response, to the questionnaire, and I would suspect that this is true of many others, does not mean that I don't appreciate the Club, or more importantly the work that the committee put into it. I surely do. From my own experience in other fields I know what the pressure of producing a monthly Newsletter is like, and I know too how increasingly difficult it is becoming to steer a Club like ours through the minefield of legislation designed to protect the

vulnerable but catching all sorts of capable and self-reliant bystanders in its path. Stay with it. We do love you !

Ian Watt

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For Sale

Outboard Motor, Johnson 1hp two stroke model Sea Horse. Ideal for small boat/dinghy/inflatable. Can safely be used by the grandchildren. Weight about as heavy as a shopping bag full of groceries etc. 50-1 oil mix. Integral fuel tank of about 2 litres/half gallon. (about 2 hours on tankful.) Selling because now need bigger engine. Can be seen running. £60.00 ono. Also bicycle, fold up, with Sturmey Archer 3 speed. Spare rear wheel with 3 speed included. Test ride fully recommended. Bit too small for me at 5' 8" but shrinks down to quite small for a child. In good nick. Purchased from Halfords yonks ago. £37.50 ono. Prices to include overnight camping in drive if required. Telephone Geoff Williamson on 016 8431 0431 (Malvern)



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Peugeot INCA EK 2005. £31,500 ono As new. Economical 2.2Hdi engine. 4 Berth. May 2005. Only 1700 miles. Cab Air-Conditioning, central-locking, alarm, electric windows/mirrors, CD/Radio, integral awning. Oven/4hobs, fridge, blown-air heating, TV-aerial/booster. Circular shower. Cassette toilet. Concertina blinds, fly-screens. 2x13kg propane cylinders. Underfloor locker. Tel. Graham Bull on 019 9246 1233 (Hoddesdon, Herts.) or email grahambull@tesco.net

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Freestanding 'drive-away' awning for sale. Ventura Freestander Verde/Sandl. Used once only and it looks like new of course. Inner tent and curtains never unpacked. Was with our recently purchased Duetto but not needed by us so save over £100.00 on new and grab this for only £300.00. This awning should be suitable for any model. Details / photos from Tim Hargreaves on 017 8257 7007 or e-mail Tim@TimHargreaves.co.uk

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Surplus equipment for Duetto Transit 02 model. External Taylor Made screen and bonnet kit. £50.00. Full width rear A-5 step complete with brackets. £15.00 Free standing Royal awning c/w curtains etc. £95.00. 5ft x 3ft wooden trailer c/w spare wheel and weather proof cover. £120.00. All equipment in first class order. Please tel: Ray Lilley on 013 5923 0013 (Bury St. Edmunds).

Thanks for the donation.

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As new Executive 2.8 Hdi, Nov, 2004 model. Mileage 3,500. In superb condition. Extras include alloy wheels, ABS brakes, reversing rear camera with 5" colour monitor, air horns, solar panel, Van Bitz Strikeback alarm, Gaslow refillable cylinder with remote filler, Status 530 directional aerial, booster and external TV aerial socket, bike rack, detachable steering wheel, extra drop down TV shelf, Amanda upholstery and 2 Silver Screens. Save over £7,000.00 on equivalent new model. Reluctant sale due to continuing health problems. £34,000.00 ono. Phone Kris and Terry Plant on 016 7653 2513 (near Solihull and Kenilworth)

Thanks for the donation.

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Contents

Taking Tess to France	2	Common Sense.....	9
Renewal of Membership	3	Riverside Rally.....	11
Shoreham Airshow Rally.....	4	What's in a Name?	11
A Site to Remember.....	4	Eberspacher Heater and Fridge.....	12
Eberspacher Heater.....	4	"A Sink Song"	13
ASOC Tours 2006.....	6	Boys Stuff.....	14
A.S.O.C. Rhine River Lights Tour	7	Grey Water Back-up	16
In Case of Emergency.....	8	Chairman's Chat.....	16
Digital camera battery chargers.....	9	The Questionnaire	18
		For Sale.....	18

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