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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



Now, this is what *I* call a 'Grand National'

## **NEWSLETTER 212**

## **MAY 2006**

# From the Editor <sup>(S)</sup>

Well, the National Rally is almost upon us and we are certainly looking forward to it. I'm sure it's going to be a 'grand' affair and let's hope the weather dries up. I don't know about hose pipe bans and droughts but we're quite water-logged in this part of the country.

We must apologise to Charles Trevelyan, there is so much good stuff coming in at the moment that at the last minute we decided to drastically trim Charles' excellent contribution. Please keep do keep sending contributions but don't be too disappointed if there is a delay in publishing.

I must also apologise profusely for mis-spelling Harry's surname in last months Newsletter. I have made doubly sure I've got it right this month for what is of course, his last 'Chairman's Chat' although I hope not his last article!!

*Chris*

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## A view on Safety

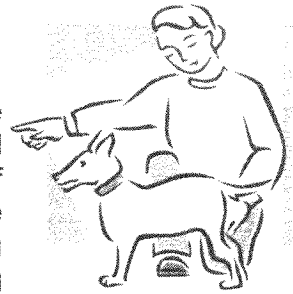
This month we've had submitted a couple of well thought out and well written pieces suggesting how wind noise generated by roof air vents whilst driving can be reduced. Both of these ideas involved reducing the design ventilation of the vehicle whilst they were in place. Whilst investigating the implications of implementing these ideas I discovered that similar ideas have already been developed by others including AS themselves.

If any of these methods of reducing wind noise whilst driving are used it is ESSENTIAL that the design ventilation of the vehicle is restored before any gas burning device is used in the vehicle to avoid the risk of dangerous gas build up if any of the burners develop a fault.

Being by nature a little forgetful at times, I personally would not restrict the ventilation in the first place as I'm sure I would forget to restore the ventilation at the wrong time!!! *Peter*

## Taking your pet abroad

Ian King writes that their little dogs are about to undertake their first trip abroad (suitably accompanied by themselves of course) and asks if any members are able to offer any advice or guidance on travelling with their pets on the Poole to Cherbourg route.



His number is 01258 840868 and his e-mail [iandjking@btinternet.com](mailto:iandjking@btinternet.com)

Knowing Andy and Angie Cavell have travelled abroad with Tess we asked for their input and Andy has responded as follows:

*"...I have never travelled by that [Poole to Cherbourg] route. My advice would be to check very carefully with the ferry operator before making a booking. We planned to use the Dover to Calais route and was advised by P&O that not only would our dog have to travel in the van during the crossing, but also would have to be in an RAC approved container in the van! We would not be allowed access to the vehicle deck during the crossing. I am told that vehicle decks on route are very noisy places and as our dog is a bit nervous we didn't think that was a possibility. And anyway, what do you do with the RAC approved container for the rest of your holiday?"*

*We subsequently made enquiries of Le Shuttle and found them to be very well organised. As you stay in your van during the crossing the dog is accompanied at all times. There are small 'relief' areas alongside the embarkation areas and the whole experience was much less stressful both for us and the dog. Having booked again for this year, I was pleasantly surprised how competitive their prices were."*

If anyone else has any advice or suggestions Ian will be happy to hear from you.

## Venice & Verona Tour

This tour, which is organised by GB Privilege exclusively for ASOC members, includes a visit to the unique city of Venice, as well as a guided tour of some of the Venetian Islands, a guided tour of the beautiful city of Verona and stay at wonderful campsites alongside Lake Luzern, alongside Lake Garda and alongside the Venetian lagoon. Your ferry ticket can be extended up to 60 days validity for no extra charge.

**Saturday 02 September 2006** We leave Dover this morning and after disembarking at Calais we have a leisurely drive of about 110 miles to our first campsite at Bruges in Belgium. The campsite is utilitarian but has the advantage of being an easy stroll into the town. We will have an informal drinks reception this evening so everybody can get to know each other.

**Sunday 03 September** Today's drive is about 210 miles and will bring us to a popular campsite near Dahn in the most northerly area of the Black Forest. This evening the group can get together at a special 'grill party' arranged with the managements. This means that after a hard day's drive the chef and chief washer-upper can have a rest!

**Monday 04 September** Today's drive of about 210 miles will bring us to a campsite near Lucerne in Switzerland.

**Tuesday 05 September** Relax and enjoy the campsite's facilities, go

swimming in the lake or stroll along the lake into town for the evening. You may even decide to take a mountain railway ride to the summit of Mt. Pilatus, or perhaps a steamer cruise on the lake.

**Wednesday 06 September** This morning we leave Switzerland and drive about 220 miles to our next campsite, right on the banks of Lake Garda. You can swim in the lake or hire a boat from the campsite if you wish.

**Thursday 07 September** Just relax and enjoy yourself—and maybe treat yourself to a genuine Italian meal in the campsite's restaurant.

**Friday 08 September** Several excursions can be organised from the campsite, or you can just take it easy.

**Saturday 09 September** A completely free day to catch up on the chores or simply stroll by the lakeside.

**Sunday 10 September** This morning we will be collected from the campsite by bus and taken into Verona for an English language guided tour of this beautiful city. We will be treated to a typical Italian lunch at mid-day and then left to explore on our own. At 17.30 the bus will collect everybody and return them to the campsite.

**Monday 11 September** There is no need to rush before driving to our next campsite alongside the Venetian lagoon. The total distance is only about 120 miles. Our campsite has its own beach, as well as its own restaurant, bar, etc. etc.

**Tuesday 12 September** This morning we go by boat on a tour of the islands of the Venetian lagoon including Murano, with an English language guide. We will take lunch on another island. After lunch the boat will drop everybody off near St Mark's Square for an afternoon of completely free exploring. If anybody wants a guided tour it can be arranged, but Venice is so small that you may prefer to tour it at your own pace and visit the parts which are of particular interest to you. At the end of the day we will be collected from near St. Mark's Square and returned to our campsite.

**Wednesday 13, Thursday 14 and Friday 15 September** Completely free days enabling you to return to Venice if you wish or to explore some of the other places of interest in the area. You can even just lay on the beach!

**Saturday 16 September** This evening we will have a wonderful Italian dinner in the campsite's top class restaurant. The wine will flow and everybody should have a great time.

**Sunday 17 September** The tour ends this morning and you can return home at your leisure or follow the tour director at a faster pace. Alternatively, stay in Italy for a while and maximise your open ferry ticket.

The price per person, based on the number of people in one motorhome will be £380 per person for three people, £475 per person for two people and £760 for one. A deposit of £200 will be required and a **minimum**

**of 15 motorhomes will be needed to operate the tour.** The maximum will be 25 motorhomes. Included in the price are an 'open' return ticket on the Dover to Calais ferry for a motorhome up to 6 metres long, one night at Bruges campsite and one night at Dahn campsite with dinner in the campsite grill restaurant. Two nights at a campsite near Lucerne and five nights at Lake Garda campsite. There will be a bus to Verona, an English language tour of Verona and a traditional lunch in a Verona restaurant. Then six nights at Venice campsite, including a dinner (with wine) at the campsite restaurant. Also an English language guided tour of the Venetian Islands including lunch (with wine) in the Venetian lagoon and a private boat to and from Venice. At all the campsite you will have a 220 volt hook-up. Finally, you will be provided with a European road map, local maps and the services of an experienced GB Privilege tour director.

Further details and a booking form can be obtained from GB Privilege Ltd., 3 The Fields, Tacolneston, Norfolk NR16 1DG. Phone 01953 789661 fax 01953 789519 e-mail [gbprivilege@yahoo.com](mailto:gbprivilege@yahoo.com).



# Technical Group & Website

**Baz Wellard**

**Chairman Technical Group & Webmaster**

## Your Lap-Top & Wi-Fi

I have been receiving quite a few enquiries recently regarding the use of hot-spots and wi-fi with a lap-top when away from home. Perhaps this may answer some queries. However I am not an expert in this field and rely on our son for his technical advice. Therefore I will not go into deep technology of the system. This is a once and only brief and not an on-going Q&A, please.

There are advantages of having the facility of using a lap-top away from home to access the internet. Indeed I am writing this in Spain (in the sunshine) and I will be sending using wi-fi and e-mail to Peter, our Editor, for publication. Dorothy and I are also currently using the Internet for:- e-bay; surfing; checking weather; accessing bank accounts (to see if we can stay longer) and also for listening to BBC radio and reading the news.

There are many hot spots (i.e a local area where wi-fi is available to access the internet by radio connection - such as at campsites), both in UK & abroad, and these are increasing all the time. Costs vary but as a guide here on a Spanish camp-site, the best value is 40 euros (£28) for a month - (cheaper than buying newspapers abroad, says Dorothy), but increasing in "effective" cost for shorter periods.

The basic requirement to use this type of service is that you must have a lap-top that is wi-fi enabled or one that can be enabled. If you have the latter ensure that it is enabled and tested before you leave home. Also before you leave you will need to have the web address of your ISP and your personal access details (username and password). If you use a dedicated program such as Outlook Express to manage your email, please ensure you can access your email outside of your ISP's dedicated modem/broadband connection (many ISPs allow email to be received (pop mail) anywhere but only send (SMTP) whilst directly connected). You can usually circumvent this problem if you access your mail via web-mail, remember however to take details of your account ID and password.

Once you have located a local wi-fi hot-spot, you will have to contact the "local source" who, on receipt of payment, will provide you with the site access code and a personal code - this will, of course, cease to be valid at the end of your paid period.

If in any doubt please seek the advice of your ISP, before you leave home. At least you now have knowledge of the questions you need to ask!

Happy wi-fi-ing

### **Safety re-calls:**

Unfortunately, there are still 75% of Auto-Sleeper motorhomes that have not yet been registered as having been checked/modified for safety recalls (November Newsletter refers).

If any member has not yet checked I would suggest you either visit the website or send an SAE to me at: 18 Greenwood Close, Fareham, Hants PO16 7UF, and I will send you the complete listings.

The models involved are:- Midas; Nuevo; Symbol; Lancashire; Inca; Sussex; Dorset; Palermo; Pollensa; Ravenna; Vivant and; Rienza. The website has now been updated (2/06) to show, in red, all the outstanding build numbers.

### **Light deflectors:**

With the approaching season many members may be travelling on the Continent, and will be aware that is essential to have deflectors on your dipped headlamps. Please do not make a possibly expensive mistake of sticking 'black-tape' (or similar) onto the headlamps, particularly on non-glass lens. Whilst in Spain I discussed this with a fellow traveller, and when we peeled the black tape off his headlamps, both had cracks where the tape had been. The cost of purchasing correct deflectors is by far cheaper than a pair of new headlamps, and use of black tape may even be illegal.

### **Unusual fused spur:**

It is possible that if you have a fused spur in your motorhome it may have 2 fuses in it. One is a spare whilst the other is 'live'. This could cause some confusion, so beware.

### **Ideas sheet:**

Two further Ideas sheets have been added to the list:-

- No. 123 'Fly screen – easier use & prevent damage'. (For newer style)
- No. 125 'Solar protection for tyres'.

Ideas Sheet number 124 offered an idea to reduce the noise through the forward roof vent when travelling. However this was not approved as it would very likely restrict the necessary flow of air into the van when camping. If you have such a problem, Auto-Sleepers have, in the past, sold a 'pad' that is a push-fit in the aperture from inside, and thus is easily removed when camping. Always beware of restricting any vents that Auto-Sleepers have fitted to your van, when camping.

## More from Baz:

### Web update:

The Club website has been updated (Ref 2/06) and contains further eligible models: Sandhurst; Eton, Windsor and a model on a Dodge chassis (circa mid 1970's). Also there is further fuel information and new information available in the Technical library. The safety re-calls update and Ideas Sheets have already been mentioned above.

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## Seat Belts

Steve Rigge

Last autumn my seat belt pretensioners both fired simultaneously without warning and while driving along normally! (I hate to think what might have happened had airbags been fitted as well, but these were not installed in 1997.) To cut a very long story short these were replaced together with the ECU that controls their firing and paid for by Peugeot as the fault was unusual and dangerous, as well as a very unpleasant shock to the system (human that is).

The point is that it made me look closely at the Peugeot Boxer service book and to my horror I saw that the airbag system and the pretensioning seats belts must be replaced very 10 years! So be warned. The seat belts and its pretensioner is sold as one unit and the pair of units cost over £300 plus fitting, add to this the cost of the airbag systems and if your lucky (or unlucky?) enough to have these as well.

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### **Is this a first?** [See Newsletter 211 April]

Well der's a ting! If the described device could produce and pump straight into the tank, diesel fuel rather than drinking water then I'd be both extremely interested and potentially, much cleaner. Nice try.

David 'Not Fuhl'dthistime' Clark

## Revolutionary Russian Research

Bill Cameron

The welcome news about Auto-sleepers revolutionary water re-circulation system which will allow up to 80% of 'grey' water to be recycled as drinking water reminds me of related research undertaken for the Russian Army based in polar regions. A system of water/ alcohol separation was developed for us in their polar stations where toilet waste was filtered and deep-frozen to separate out the alcohol inevitably present in the toilet effluent from nationals who have a notoriously high vodka consumption.

The process developed by Dr. L.L. Bezaward of Neuvograd University was intended to provide low grade fuel for the heating of polar accommodation and the propulsion of Snowcats. The process was considered for use in Russian submarines, but Putin's 1999 ban on the consumption of alcohol in military and naval installations caused the research to be shelved.

I feel that Auto-Sleepers would do well to look into this as a possible way to offset the increasing cost of petrol to motorhome owners!!

## Fitting Carpets

Pete Fisher

I, like many others, have fitted a supplementary carpet in my van for protective reasons, which led to the problems of frayed edges and holes for table legs. I have found the following answers.

1. the edges of the carpet were bound professionally at a very reasonable cost (even though it was not supplied by the binders) and I have contact details of a firm in Sutton Coldfield for anyone wishing to use them.
2. My next door neighbour kindly turned down a piece of 3" pipe to about 4" long and put a good sharp edge on one end. This I used like a pastry cutter to produce the holes. I found the best edging with double thread and a blanket stitch. Use a jar or similar to mark a stitch line about 3/8"-1/2". This gives clearance for a plastic hole bung. I would loan out the cutter if you ring on 01543 377777, All I ask is payment for P&P and a quick return.

I also found in a chandlers, some small stainless steel offset loops that screw to the floor to secure objects too big for lockers. They are about 1" long and not too obtrusive.

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**Railway Modelling**

Ray Whiley

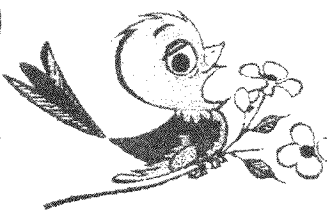
This has been one of my hobbies for more than 40 years. I don't mean 'playing trains' or 'having a train set' but creating a landscape in miniature as a setting for models which I have mostly built using raw materials—card, wood or plastic sheet.

After the usual start when I was a boy aged 7 with Hornby O-gauge tinsplate toys, my real interest began in the 1960s when I went to the National Model railway Exhibition in London and thought, "I could do that". My first layout, based on a simple plan published in a magazine was a tail-chasing oval with sidings, but with full scenic treatment. It was offered as a raffle prize in our village carnival, where I had the pleasure of sharing a tent with the Rev. Wilburt Awdry, of Thomas the Tank Engine fame, and his small layout. I was encouraged when my article and photos of this modest beginning were published in the *Railway Modeller* in January 1964.

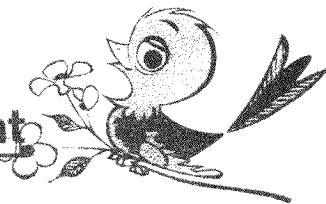
The next layout occupied one wall on my son's bedroom and again featured in *Railway Modeller* in February 1965. Then began my involvement with railway exhibitions in 1967.

The following years saw a succession of portable layouts taken to exhibitions, my joining the Norfolk Railway Society and acting as assessor in railway modelling for the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme.

I built a small N-gauge layout for a Club & Company Rally some years ago and Andy Cavell suggested last year a mini-exhibition as part of this year's Hobbies Show at Newark. So I have a new layout some 12 feet long on which I intend to show some of my collection (made during the last 40 years!) and I look forward to talking to and answering questions from interested visitors



# May 2006 Rally Supplement



Please use a rally slip, completing both sides, to book a rally by post.

All rallies start at 12 noon unless otherwise stated in this supplement.

**1<sup>st</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> .May.(4 nights).Walk the Wolds. Alford Cricket Club,**

**Well Lane.Alford,Lincs.**

**THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL.**

Directions: In East Lincolnshire take A16 Boston to Louth road and the A1104 into Alford. Turn right opposite church onto B1196 signed Welton le Marsh & Willoughby. In 1 mile turn right towards Well. Site 0.1 mile on right.

**11<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> .May.( 4 nights) Little Cotton Farm,Dartmouth,**

**Devon.TQ6 0LB.**

**THIS RALLY IS NOW FULL.**

Telephone No. 01803 932558. Fax 01803 834887. Website

**12<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> .May.The Southern Motorcaravan Show,Newbury Showground,  
Berks.**

Emergency Tel.No. Marshal's Mobile 07743 307533.

Rally Marshals:John & Daphne Hallett.

Please send a SAE ,with rally slip and rally fee of 50p per person,for a booking form.This form must be returned to Warners,the organisers, before 31<sup>st</sup>.April if you wish to rally with the Club. Send to John & Daphne Hallett,13 Linden Crescent,Grove,Wantage,Oxfordshire,OX12 7NB. Tel.No.01235 764550.

E-mail [hallettjh@AOL.com](mailto:hallettjh@AOL.com) Please let marshal know if booking by any other means ie, Internet.

**24<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup> .May (5 nights)Strathallen Games Park,Bridge of Allen,  
Nr.Stirling,Scotland.**

Emergency Tel.No.07760103335.

Rally Marshals: Joy & Donald Stott.

Site Fees:£2.50 per night. NO Electricity. Rally Fee:£3.23.(incl.VAT).

A flat field with water & elsan disposal.

It is a pleasant walk,20 mins., into village centre.Bus service to Stirling & Edinburgh near to site.This is a central location for touring this part of Scotland.

Send **SAE** with booking slips & cheques payable to: Mr. Donald Stott,  
159 Middleton St.,Alexandria,Dumbartonshire.G83 0DH. Tel.No. 01389 757358.

**Directions:** From M9, **North** until end of motorway Junction 11, at roundabout take **4<sup>th</sup>** exit sp. Bridge of Allen, continue through village until you reach small park/gardens on the right. Turn **right** immediately after the park then first **left**. The rally field gates are directly in front of you. From A9, **South** to roundabout at beginning of M9 (DO NOT go on motorway). Take the **2<sup>nd</sup>** exit sp. Bridge of Allen then as above.

From **Fife**, old A9 until 30mph restriction as you enter Bridge of Allen, turn **left** approx 100 yds then left again and as above gates are ahead of you.

**LIMIT of 20 Vans or 40 persons.**

**Rally in the West of Ireland 24<sup>th</sup> May – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2006.**

**This rally is now FULL.**

**1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> June (4 nights) Springbok Estate, Alford, Surrey.**

Site Tel. No. 01403 752 555 (Emergencies only).

Rally Marshals: Sylvia & Norman Brice.

Site Fee: £5.50 per night.                      **NO** Electricity.                      Rally Fee: £2.50 (couples)  
£1.50 (singles). Incl VAT.

**GREENFIELD SITE.** Toilet emptying & water points, toilets.

Rally Slips & cheques payable to Mrs. S. Brice, 35 Halfpenny Close, Chilworth, Guildford, Surrey, GU4 8NH. Tel. No. 01483 562 986.

**Attractions:** Large country house (home to merchant seaman) with social club. Close to Alford village, 20 min walk for papers bread etc. Lots of gentle walks around the grounds of Springbok. Fishing lakes, bring your licence. Within easy reach of Cranleigh, Guildford, Godalming, Horsham & South Coast.

Skittles & buffet evening to be arranged for Friday. Please indicate on rally slip if interested. Marquee on site for our use also model boat weekend on lake.

Dogs welcome on leads at all times.

**Directions:** Take A281 Guildford to Horsham road, at Alford crossways turn off s.p. Alford. Immediately turn **right** (caravan sign) s.p. Dunsfold. Site approx. 1 ½ miles.

**12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> June (4 nights) Lochside Park C.P., Castle**

**Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire.**

Emergency Tel. No. 0781704186 or 07969312703 (Marshals' mobiles).

Rally Marshals: Moira & Allan Blackstock.

Site Fee: £8.00 per night. Electricity: £2.50 per night. Rally Fee: £2.00 PER PERSON.

Cheques with SAE for confirmation & directions to :A & M. Blackstock, 39 Sumpter Croft, Penwortham, Preston. PR1 9UJ. Tel. No. 01772 749178.

**Attractions:** Situated beside Carlingwark Loch, a few minutes walk from the shops and within walking distance of Threave Gardens (NT) and easy driving distance to the Solway Coast or the Galloway Hills; the site is popular with tourists. A hall has been booked for evenings and we hope to arrange an evening meal.

Emergency Tel.No.07710 200547 ( marshals' mobile).

Rally Marshals: James & Jill Bertlin

Site Fee: £21.00 (3 nights). Electricity £8.25 (3 nights) - limited to 15 vans, long leads may be required. Rally Fee: £2.35 (all charges include VAT)

Booking slips and cheques to Jill Bertlin, The Rockeries, Lindale, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria LA11 6LQ. Tel. No. 015395 34500 (mobile: 07710 200547)

Rally field slightly uneven in places. Toilets & showers on site. Dogs are welcome, but as with Ralliers, they are not permitted on the racecourse track.

A simple BBQ and pudding has been arranged for Sunday evening (provide own salad if required). Please state if interested on rally slip.

**Attractions:** Cartmel village is a maze of streets, cobbled pavements and picturesque bridges, crossing the meandering streams that wind their way amongst the houses with a Priory, which was founded by the Augustine Monks back in 1190. It has an historic market square, surrounded by centuries old houses and Inns, the ancient fish slabs still survive and also the original Gatehouse. Nowadays Cartmel is full of interesting shops, including the famous sticky toffee pudding shop.

Close to the Edwardian resort of Grange-over-Sands and within a short drive of the renowned beauty of the Lake District National Park, offering some of the most spectacular scenery in the country with opportunities for walking, golfing, cruising or just sightseeing.

**Directions:** From M6 Junction 36 follow A590 towards Barrow in Furness for approx 10 miles. Follow Cartmel signs (along narrow lanes) through village square, past Cartmel Village shop on **left** (sharp right hand bend). Entrance to rally field along road on **left** through Race Course gate. **Limited to 20 vans.**

### **22<sup>nd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>. June ( 4 nights). Riverside T.P. Stratford upon Avon,Warks.**

Emergency Tel No: 07799660641 Marshals' Mobile.

Rally Marshals: Sandra and Bernie Wisely.

Site fees: £7.00pn Inc VAT No electricity Rally Fee: £2.50 per couple or £1.50 single Inc VAT.

Rally field on commercial site full facilities available a short distance from the rally field. Café, Shop, Adjacent Club House, Free Fishing and River Taxi into Stratford Town Centre.

Cheques and rally slips to: Sandra Wisely, 2 Mount Pleasant, Bishops Itchington, SOUTHAM, Warks, CV47 2QE. Tel 01926 - 614194

**Note: No arrival before 1430 hrs.**

Subject to the weather a Communal Barbeque may be organised so please bring portable off the ground Barbeques with a view to sharing. Another evening we hope to arrange a bring your own meal and we could all sit together during the evening and catch up.

**Directions:** Take the B4086 Tiddington Road from the bridge in Stratford. As you enter the village of Tiddington the Park entrance is on the **left** hand side opposite the new NFU building, pull into the parks and follow signs.

( iii. )

**30<sup>th</sup> June.- 2<sup>nd</sup> July. ( 2 nights) Prestwood Steam Fair,Great Missenden  
Bucks.**

Emergency Tel.No. 07775570182 or 07749378587.

Rally Marshals:Jan & Vic Hicklin & Margaret & Bob Cleaver.

Fee for weekend: £17.00 per unit. **NO** Electricity. Rally Fee:£1.75 per unit.(Incl.VAT).

The fee includes unlimited entrance to the Steam Rally.

This is a **GREEN FIELD SITE** – own toilets are essential.

Rally slips & cheques to Mrs.J.Hicklin,381 Manor Road,Brimington,Chesterfield,  
Derbyshire.S43 1PP. Tel N.o 01246 236 157.

**Directions:**From A413 Great Missenden take A4128 to Prestwood and follow Steam  
Rally signs.

**NO ARRIVALS BEFORE 1.00p.m. FRIDAY.**

**6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> July. (4 nights) JCB visit and Rocester Football Club,  
Staffordshire.**

Emergency phone nos. Marshals' mobiles: Mike 07939 288586, Peter 07771 827711  
(Please only use over rally weekend.

Rally marshals: Peter Brown, Chris Mawdsley, Jeanne & Mike Hal.

Site fee £4 per van per night. Rally fee £1.20 per person. (Both incl. VAT).

Booking slips and cheques to Chris Mawdsley, 5, Kenilworth Walk, Cheadle, Staffs,  
ST10 1WA. Telephone: 07919 538622.

A **green field** site but water and toilet emptying. No electricity. Toilets and basic  
showers available when club house is open.

**Attractions:** Tour of JCB factory on Friday morning (max. 50 people) plus an option of  
lunch. The tour is £5.00 per person or free to senior citizens and the lunch is £8.50.  
Please book and pay with the rally slip stating "JCB tour" and/or "JCB lunch" followed  
by the no. of persons. Please note that the tour is on foot and is 3 miles and stout  
footwear must be worn.

We will have the use of the club house and bar for most of the weekend.

Many walks in the area.

**Directions:** North of Uttoxeter. From A50 Stoke-on-Trent to Burton-on-Trent road, turn  
north onto B5030 and, when you see JCB factory on your left, turn **right** towards  
Rocester. Go over the bridge and follow the High Street to a mini roundabout. Turn  
**right** into Mill Street and wend your way through until you are leaving the town. You  
will see Rocester FC ground on the **left**.

**10th -13th July (3nights) Hereford Racecourse Hereford**

Emergency Tel no 07791 582881 Marshals Mobile.

Rally Marshals Joan & Max Cooke, Sheila & Ivor Barnett.

Site fees including electric hook up £10-50 per night.

Rally fees £2.35 (incl vat) Toilet block, drinking & waste water near by. **Sloping site  
chocks required.**

Rally slips & cheques to Mrs J.E.Cooke, The Magnolias, Canon Pyon Rd., Hereford.  
HR4 7RB Tel no 01432 274906.

The Race Course is on the northern outskirts of the city and on a bus route to the city.  
Places of interest include Hereford Cathedral & The Mappa Mundi, Black & White  
Village Trail & Wye Valley.

**Directions:** Hereford Racecourse is on the A4103 1/2 mile west of the junction with  
the A49. **Limit of 40 vans**

**14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> July ( 2 nights) Severn Gorge C.P. Bridgenorth Road,  
Tweedale, Telford, Shropshire.**

Emergency Tel.No.07960627094 ( Marshals' mobile).

Rally Marshals: Rita Jone & Keith Taylor assisted by Mavis & Steve Heath.

Site Fee: £11.75 per night including electric. Rally Fee: £2.50 per van. (All include  
VAT).

Rally slips & cheques payable to Rita A. Jones, 8 Checkley ane, St. Georges, Telford.  
TF2 9UD. Tel.No. 01952 293 532.

Please include a SAE if you require directions to the site.

Dogs are allowed on site.

**Attractions:** Ironbridge Gorge & Museum sites, for the more energetic a walk up the  
Wrekin please indicate on your form so that we can make the necessary transport  
arrangements for Sat. afternoon.

It will be possible to arrange a meal in a pub within walking distance on Sat. evening. If  
anyone is interested please indicate on rally slip and we will send menu details.

**Rally starts at 10.00 a.m 14<sup>th</sup> July and ends 12.00 noon 16<sup>th</sup> July.**

**LIMIT of 20 Vans.**

**20th - 23rd July (3 nights) Beacon Park, Lichfield, Staffs.**

Emergency tel no. Marshals mobile 07713186508.

Rally Marshals Ted & Trish Pratt & Vic & Jan Hickli.

Site Fee £4.50 per night. NO Electricity. Rally Fee £2.35 all inc. vat.

Booking slips and cheques Payable to P.M.Pratt, 3 Grafton Rd Stapenhill Burton on  
Trent. Staffs DE15 9DN PHONE 01283538818.

You may arrive on Thurs AFTER 12 noon NOT BEFORE PLEASE ( this is virtually a  
green field site although there are toilets in Beacon Park).

Sat evening get together includes Jacket potato, dessert and drink - £4.50

Per person Pay with booking slip.

**Attractions** Beacon Park is adjacent to Lichfield City centre.

**Directions:** Beacon Park is situated in Lichfield, just off the A51 Tamworth to Rugeley  
Road. Go round the island with the Bowling Green Pub in the middle. Then take A 51  
Rugeley/Stafford Road; turn immediately **right** down Walsall Road, then immediately  
**left** into Lower Sandford Street. Follow signs for Car Park, the site is through the car  
park keeping to the **right**.

**27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> July Motorhome & US RV Show,,The Showground,Great Driffield,East Yorkshire.**

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

Rally Marshals: Jan & Vic Hicklin.

Site Fee: Special Club prices. Arrive Wednesday £33.00,Thursday £28.00 Friday £23.00.

Rally Fee:£2.35( Incl.VAT).

Send **rally fees** with **rally slip** & **SAE** for Show application form by **12<sup>th</sup> July** to:- Mrs.

J. Hicklin,381 Manor Road, Brimington,Chesterfield,Derbyshire.S43 1PP.

Tel.No. 01246 236 157.

Return the application forms to the organisers ,Stone Leisure,address on form, by the closing date **18th July**.

*If you wish to run a rally in 2006 please contact me to check dates **before** booking with a site.This prevents any clash of dates.*

*.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 & help is available.*

*Committee members are also available to assist if required. I have some sites that have offered a rally site,they are not vetted as to the suitability for rallies.*

*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**

**16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> June 2006 (3 nights) Cartmel Park Race Course, Cartmel, Cumbria LA11 6QF**

## **Reliability Issues**

Alan Waugh

The following comments do not mean that Celia and I are unhappy with our Symbol—far from it in fact. It is thoroughly well designed, both base vehicle and conversion, which we have enjoyed for the last 4 years and 23,000 miles, both in this country and abroad. However, there are certain issues with regard to reliability that leave us feeling frustrated.

From time to time we read stories of various mechanical mishaps and accounts of incompetence on the part of dealers and I fully understand that faults are bound to arise now and again. No design, no brand and no dealer is infallible. However, it does seem as if the reliability we take for granted in our cars is not reflected in our motorhomes.

Having owned lots of cars since the late sixties costing from £300—£8,500 I have not had many mechanical malfunctions, other than what could be described as fair wear and tear. Admittedly rust was a problem until comparatively recently. In fact our rustiest car was the only new car we ever bought—a 1975 Ford Cortina Mk3—which needed attention before the second year was up and carried on rusting for the whole of the 7 years of our ownership! In the last 10 years we have owned mainly Vauxhalls and each successive one has proved even better than the one before.

However, our Symbol (new in early 2002) knows its own way to the various dealers only too well. Many visits for habitation problems and just as many for base vehicle ones in addition to the normal servicing requirements. Such as:

Base vehicle—rear shock absorber leaked and was replaced, wiring recall safety check, exhaust flange kit full of water, (the main dealer had never heard of that problem before!) resulting in modifications and several oil flushes, automatic clutch adjustment needed adjusting manually, spare wheel carriage bolts inoperable to tool provided.

Habitation—water pump failed twice before replacement, faulty 12 volt master switch replaced, 12 volt switch jammed in the 'off' position, 12 volt strip light fitting melted and started smoking, severe stains in high top roof lining due to original roof panel sagging.

Sigma alarm—keypad switch failed. The whole system is a constant cause of annoyance due to the oversensitivity of the sensors, especially in the middle of the night.

Cab aircon—condensation pipe leaked over carpet, fluid leaks from various pipe joints.

Are we being picky? The more faults we get the fussier we are!

And service? One dealer in we used is (in our opinion) useless. There is a catalogue of bookings for things to be done that weren't because they hadn't got the spare parts. For example, the van had to go in 3 times before the speedo was repaired. They denied all knowledge of the water in the gearbox problem, despite the fact it had been common knowledge for some years. On one occasion they rang me at 11am to say the van was ready for collection, but when I got there at 3pm they couldn't find it—it was still on the workshop ramp being worked on.

Conversely another dealer has been brilliant when we turned up with the 12 volt switch jammed off (meaning a night without water, flushing toilet and lighting). They were closed when we arrived but a kind mechanic spotted us and isolated the fault so we could have electricity overnight and said he would fit a new switch the following morning. He then refused payment because the problem shouldn't have happened.

It was decided that Auto-Sleepers would be the best people to sort out the roof lining but the downside was the distance between Exeter and Willersey. However, we bed and breakfasted at a nearby farmhouse and the casseroled venison evening meal can be strongly recommended, but the 8 hours downtime exploring Evesham cannot, due to the wind, rain and sleet of this miserable Spring. We will return to Evesham in fine weather but hopefully not because the van needs another visit to its maker.

Many of the items were covered by guarantees (apart from the two most expensive repairs) but the hassle, time and expense of journeys to dealers, not to mention the long trip back to Willersey have proved frustrating and annoying.

Some neighbours of ours have had 3 vans in more or less the same time We have had ours. The first, a Symbol, seemed fine but was too small. The second, not an Auto-Sleeper, was of such poor quality they moved

on to yet another brand. The third new van has been back to the dealer twice and has not even been slept in yet!

From this should I conclude that, despite all repeated claims of good quality control, motorhome manufacturers have not got their acts together like the car manufacturers have? Perhaps it is really their suppliers whose quality is unacceptable and manufacturers are not tough enough on them. Whatever, it is us, the customer, who forks out upward of £30,000 for an unreliable product. No matter, we wouldn't be without our Symbol and the pleasure we get from our numerous trips, short and long, in the UK and abroad and hope to see our ASOC friends again this year.

**We passed this article to Auto-Sleepers and they have responded as follows:**

We are sorry to had concerns about your Peugeot base vehicle. Although we have a very close relationship with our base vehicle manufacturers to ensure that our motorhomes are built on the best quality chassis, some technical problems may unfortunately occur.

With regard to the issues mentioned about the habitation of the vehicle, our records show that the water pumps used on the Symbol are normally extremely reliable and we are sorry that you were the victim of this very rare problems. Please be assured that this is exceptional, rather than the norm. Concerning the stain on your roof lining, this has been investigated by our Research & Development Department and was found to be the cause of a design shortcoming, which has now been rectified and we appreciate your valuable feedback on this matter.

We are sorry that you also experienced problems with your alarm and air conditioning system. However, our records seem to show that these features were retro fitted to the standard base vehicle after its purchase, and it is therefore impossible for us to investigate the root of these problems. However, as you know, our Service Centre in Willersey, which provides various habitation checks and improvements, would be able to investigate this matter further for you. If you feel this would be useful, please contact Charles Trevelyan directly on 01386 853511, who will be happy to assist you.

On a more positive note, we are glad to read that you are generally happy with your Symbol motorhome, which we note you find well designed and hope that these unfortunate incidents will not deter you and your wife from enjoying many more happy trips. Maybe another one in Willersey when the weather is more clement?

## ***Always look on the bright side of life***

Like us, many members will only have heard of Maureen and Cedric's distressing house break-in after reading of it in the ASOC Newsletter. The resulting damage made redecorating necessary. Those who know Cedric know how little enthusiasm he has for decorating and his dismay upon receiving a gift of a paint brush from a well wishing club member, who shall remain nameless. This prompted the following poetic letter from us and the equally poetic reply...

### **Ode to Decorating**

There are no excuses Cedric, can't put it off any more  
The state of that wallpaper and also of the door.  
T'was nasty circumstances that brought about this plight,  
Now "guess who's got to decorate" (much to Mo's delight).

With carpets new and sofas too and posh new window frame  
Tis 12 long years Mo waits to say, "Oh that smell of paint again".  
We know you have new brushes Ced, we all were there to see  
this gift bestowed upon you. How lucky can one be.

In case you can't remember just how these brushes work  
the bristles dip into the paint, not the handle end you jerk!  
They do not run on batteries, instructions they are few,  
just up and down arm movements, or side to side will do.

Don't drip upon the carpet, don't splash the window pane,  
Just do a darn good job our Ced then get on with life again.

### **SOD THE DECORATING!!**

There once was a man called Brian,  
with a great big wooden spoon  
He would smile as he sat and stirred it  
humming a well known tune.

His wife was not much better  
she encouraged him on you see.  
But they didn't reckon with our Ced  
no-one's as stubborn as he.

Paint was Cedric's one big hate  
blood and guts he took in his stride  
But not a brush picked up in twelve long years  
Even Mo had threatened to ride...  
(off into the sunset!)

A burglary brought it all to a head  
New carpets had to be laid  
Cedric sank to a very low ebb  
As Mo had to be obeyed

She went off and bought pots of paint  
and left them on the table  
Ced hasn't been seen for many a day  
Please help if you are able.

Well, what can we say other than ...

### **In Search of Cedric**

We had no way of knowing of Cedric's saddened plight  
How brush and paint could give a man such a dreadful fright

We thought we once saw Cedric, buying paint in the D.I.Y  
We were obviously mistaken, now we understand just why.

So into the local papers we promptly placed an ad.  
for anyone who sees this man, looking lost and very sad

Contact Mo or anyone of us, at ASOC or at home  
We really want our Cedric back, never more to roam.

Tis just a pot of paint our Ced, so easy once you start  
We've given you instructions, chin up and please take heart.

Look on the bright side Cedric, once done stand back in bliss,  
be full of pride, with chest stuck out and say "I did all this".

When finally you've finished, you'll soon forget the pain,  
Then it will be 12 more years before Mo makes you paint again.

**Linda and Brian Ellis**



# From the Factory

**From Charles Trevelyan**

We are delighted to welcome Simon Vaughan as our new Operations Director and on behalf of all member of the Club, I extend a very warm welcome. Below is Simon's contribution to the Newsletter—which I know you will find most interesting.

Dear Club Members

Well! Four weeks into my tenure and I'm still standing!!

Building quality Motorhomes is a complex business with a plethora of challenges. But importantly I am enjoying the experience and looking forward to contributing to the brand's prosperity over the forthcoming years.

I've joined Auto-Sleepers at an exciting time with the Factory gearing up to start production of its three new models in Sandhurst, Eton and Windsor during mid April and early May.

I am looking forward to meeting ASOC members at the earliest opportunity so you can assist in my education of the Auto-Sleeper family. I also want to listen to your comments and importantly, where appropriate –act on them.

I have spoken to one ASOC member who is Andy Cavell. We will meet during April at the launch of the New Model Working Group set up to review the next batch of new models due later in the year. The working group will look at all aspects of the vehicle design and invite comments/ suggestions from dealers, sales and marketing, ASOC and supply partners.

During the Easter period I am taking my first, tentative steps into the Motorhome experience as a user!! I live in Cardiff so I do not need to go far—especially as my first vehicle is the Midas!!! Anyway, I hope you wish me luck and you never know, I am bump into some of you. But be assured I will report back my experience in the June issue.

Regards

**Simon Vaughan**  
**Operations Director**

## Ex-Chairman's Chat



The title of this piece should be correct by the time you read this. At the A.G.M. this year I completed my stint of three years as your Chairman and I must say that I have enjoyed the experience. I confess to some surprise when I was proposed as Chairman at the committee meeting because I had never really thought about the job. But I have been very fortunate, as have my predecessors, in having a hard working committee to support me. So my very grateful thanks to them all and I hope that I have not let down this wonderful Club of ours. My very best wishes to the next and following Chairmen and indeed to the committee members.

A few years ago we had the M.A.D. air suspension system fitted to our Clubman. It was very successful in "stiffening" the original suspension and lessening the swaying we had experienced when the big goods vehicles had passed. It has a warning signal when the pressure in the system drops below 1 bar and we noticed this signal on occasions when we went over one of the speed humps in the road. It just meant that we had to pump it up a bit next time we were in a fuel station. Recently, however, we had to pump it up on a daily basis because there was a leak in the system. We finally managed to get to a place which understands these things and they had a look at it. I was taken in to the workshop to look at the underside of the van while it was on a hoist and was shown, with suitable soapy water, just where the couple of leaks had occurred. The gentleman who attended to me did a minor adjustment to keep us going for the time being until he could obtain the spare bits required. At the time of writing we still await them but we keep hoping.

Fortunately, some time ago we bought an electric inflator which operates from the battery of the vehicle. Just as well, because the only foot pump that we have left (as a result of our fire at home) does not have a long enough hose to reach the air pump into the well of the step! We have also discovered a remarkably simple pressure gauge which records in figures rather than on a rotary dial. It makes it much easier to read.

Right, that's the end of my shift so I'll bid you farewell and all the best for the future. Cheerio.

**Harry Henthorne**



**Fiamma Bike Rack** as new for VW T4 £50  
**Mehler 2003 Mistral** tunnel type awning to fit VW Trooper. As new only used twice with separate bedroom compartment £85 ono  
**Caravanstore** rollout awning. Fits to awning rail, size 1.90m, excellent condition £75 ono  
**Contact Robert or Lesley Cutts 0121 353 2197**  
(Streetly, West Midlands).

Thanks for the donation

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**Steering Wheel Disklok** high security, 3 keys VGC Size 42 - 44cm. Fit Ford Transit. New £105.00 will accept £50  
**Contact Bryan Jones 01942 671377** (Leigh, Lancashire)

Thanks for the donation

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Re-print with apologies for incorrect telephone number  
**Peugeot Nuevo Reg. 08.08.02** 3,600 miles. Extras rear corner steadies drivers swivel seat Omnistor 3m awning, internal wind screen covers. Immaculate condition. Illness reason for sale. £25,500.  
**Contact Tony Cooke 02476 542777** (Near Coventry)

Thanks again for the donation

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**A-S Gatcombe** Sept.2004. 2.5 TDi. 4,000 miles. Alarm. Heiki roof light. Swivel seat. Shower/cass.toilet 4 burner hob/overn& grill. 3 way fridge. Fiamma twin bike rack. Status aerial 18 months guarantee. £32,000 (£6,000 under list price). Ill health forces reluctant sale.  
**Contact Dennis & Ruby Peel 01903 242132** (Worthing)

Thanks for the donation

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**Ford Duetto 2.5D** 1999 V 2 berth tax/MOT Nov.2006. 30,500 miles. Electric windows, radio/cassette, alarm. Oven/grill/2 burner hob. Shower/cassette toilet. Fly screens. 2 x 3.9kg propane cylinders. Blown-air heating. Gas/ electric water heater. Cover. No smokers/pets/children. £16,750 ono.  
**Contact Michael Robinson 01904 761920 e-mail**  
**michaelrobinson@sandringham10.freeserve.co.uk** (Haxby, York)

Thanks for the donation

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**Harmony 2000 X reg.** 15,600 miles. With side awning, grade 1 Thatcham alarm. 2.0 petrol. Compact 15'10" long. Immaculate £19,950.  
**Contact N J Riddett 020 8941 1314** (SW London)

Thanks for the donation

**A-S Symbol Y reg.** (2000) Peugeot 1.9 TD. 21,800 miles. No pets, non smokers, no children. Mint condition. Omnistor awning. Electric passenger step. MOT Feb.07 £23,000 ono. Relucant sale due to ill health.

**Contact Peter Legg 01903 761312** (Lancing, Sussex)

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**A-S 2005 Inca EK** Peugeot 2.8HDI 4 berth. 7,000 miles. 3 year extended warranty on vehicle and van. Twin cycle rack, swivel drivers seat, additional mains sockets, full AS specification as new excellent condition. NON smokers, NO pets. House move forces sale. £31,995 ono.

**Contact Steve Tolson 01304 832666 e-mail [steve@cadeas.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:steve@cadeas.fsnet.co.uk)**  
(Dover) Thanks for the donation

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**A-S Inca EK 2005** Peugeot Boxer 2.2 HDi. 1800 miles only. Immaculate condition. 4 berth. Full AS spec. plus cab a/c, alarm, 2 x 14kg gas bottles included. Non-smokers, no pets. £30,500 ono.

**Contact Graham Bull 01992 461233 or 07732 279553 e-mail [grahambull@tesco.net](mailto:grahambull@tesco.net)** (Hoddesdon, Herts)

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**TV Aqruria Toura** 10" screen. Light grey/ blue. 36 channels, remote control. 12 volts/ mains portable. £25.

**Clutch foot brake lock** in stainless steel Cost £90 new will accept £40.

**Contact Geoff Rothwell 01745 826752 or 07773 270485** (Can deliver N. Wales or available at AGM) Thanks for the donation

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**Peugeot 1.9 TD Talisman GX** 4 berth 2001 Y reg. only 15,200 miles. One owner. 6 months tax, 12 months MOT. Full service history. Fiamma awning, bike rack, ladder guard, beeny box, cobra alarm, silver screen to front. Fanmaster. Non-smokers, no pets, excellent condition £21,500. Ill health forces sale.

**Contact Keith or Betty Andrews 0121 458 7033** (Birmingham)

Thanks for the donation

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**A-S Peugeot Boxer Nuevo 2L July 2004** HDi engine, 2 berth, central locking. 8,500 miles. Non-smokers, no children, no pets. CD player altraheat/ store. Hot & cold water, duel swivel seats, patterned green upholstery, single/double beds, solar panel, Fiamma door lock. Oven 3 gas/electric hob, fridge, blown air heating gas/electric fire, TV aerial and booster. Shower and cassette toilet £26,000 ono.

**Contact Dennis Carter 01590 689319 or 07775 676604** (Lymington, Hants)

---

**A-S Symphony 1999** T reg. 2 litre petrol. 25,000 miles. Luxury 2 berth. Full service history, MOT, Taxed. Fiamma awning. Drive away awning, bike rack, back box, winter storage cover, Van Bits alarm. Immaculate condition £18,750 ono.

**Contact Daniel Freemam 01832 280540 e-mail [Clairefreeman4@AOL.com](mailto:Clairefreeman4@AOL.com)**  
(Peterborough)

## Contents

From the Editors ... ..	2	Hobbies Forum ... ..	10
Taking your Pets Abroad ... ..	3	Reliability Issues ... ..	11
Venice & Verona Tour ... ..	4	Always Look on the Bright Side of Life	14
Technical Group & Website ... ..	6	From the Factory ... ..	16
Seat Belts ... ..	8	Ex-Chairman's Chat ... ..	17
Is This a First? ... ..	8	For Sale ... ..	18
Revolutionary Russian Research ... ..	9		
Fitting Carpets ... ..	9		

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*\*Please note that Harry & Brian are not standing for re-election at this AGM*

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Items for the Newsletter **MUST** reach your Editor by the **TENTH** of the month. You may post them to 5 Kenilworth Walk, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 1WA or e-mail to:

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