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# **AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB**

A Company Limited by Guarantee  
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Registered No: 4616969



*Happy New (Motorcaravanning) Year*

**NEWSLETTER 232**

**January 2008**

# From the Editor (S)

Well here we are at the beginning of 2008—*already!!!* and it looks as if it's going to be another great year for rallies—the 2008 Rally List is enclosed, so start planning.

You may have noticed the Newsletter envelope is a bit bulky this month, that's because in addition to the Rally List, there is a nomination form for election to the management committee enclosed, also the National Rally booking form, which must be returned to Sheila Henthorne by 14th March 2008 at the latest, though any special needs need be notified to her by 2nd February 2008 *and* the 2008 Regalia price list and order form.

Unusually for this time of year, we have a fair bit of input for the Newsletter, for which we thank you, but please keep it coming. We have also included a '*Blast from the Past*' in this edition for those of us who weren't present to witness this momentous event.

We've also had two responses to the article on GB Privilege Tours, one from Tony Barker, who was on the Black Forest Tour, his second. He said he enjoyed both and felt they were good value. The other was from Keith Taylor and Rita Jones, who again have been on two—Paris and the Champagne Tour. They had a wonderful time on both occasions and feel the company do an excellent job.

Keith and Rita also wished to thank everyone who arranged great UK rallies this year which they attended and they are looking forward to this years rally list.

We thought you'd like to know that Jill Bertlin is now easing into the role of Membership Secretary and that she produced the address labels for this months Newsletter.

We must just say a big THANK YOU to Dudley and Kathleen for editing the Newsletter for a couple of months, I think they enjoyed it - sort of..... By the way that was Dudley on the front of last months Newsletter.

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Derek Jackson has written to mention the contents of a comprehensive article on Clean Water that he read in 'The Waterways World' of September 2007.

In the article it reminds that habitation water systems and particularly the plastic components of them are easily contaminated and should be purified frequently. For example leaving a hosepipe unused for as little as a month could allow microbe growth to 4/5 times safe levels hence it is good practice to allow water to flow freely through a hose for a while before introducing it to the fresh water tank. Derek also passed on details from the article concerning purification however I would rather suggest that you procure a proprietary fresh water tank purification product and follow the manufacturer's instructions for use.

## Charity 2008

The Charity chosen for 2008 is 'CHICKS Making Memories', registered charity number 1080953. CHICKS is a charity that provides free respite breaks for disadvantaged children from all over the UK. If you need any more information go to [www.chicks.org.uk](http://www.chicks.org.uk) or telephone 01822 811020.

## Regalia

Nothing new at the moment, but still on the lookout. Enclosed is an up to date Regalia Price List and Order Form.

Wishing you all a very Happy (Motorhoming) New Year.

*John Jones*

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## Update on Tesco Vouchers

*Heather Tidbury*

Following John's article on P&O Ferries and Tesco vouchers, the latest Tesco Deals booklet states that vouchers can no longer be used on P&O ferries for the North Sea routes, they can however, be used for P&O Irish Sea ferries, [Irishferries.com](http://Irishferries.com), Wrightlink and Stena Line to Ireland and the Hook of Holland. If you shop at Tesco they are well worth using at 4 times the face value. Also John and I got admission tickets for the Eden Project for £2.50 each via Tesco vouchers (normal senior admission £10!!) There are other things you can save on and we have been surprised how few people who shop at Tesco realise the savings they can make, far better than face value off your shopping.

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We've had the following response to Derek and Maureen Moras appeal for help in last months magazine

An internet search of the websites of Dixon-Bate and Whitter will produce views of each company's four double steps, which I assume is what you have in mind. If not you may wish to let us have more details on [djmrob@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:djmrob@hotmail.co.uk) or 01322 667556

*David Maddison-Roberts*

## YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU!

"There aren't any rallies in our part of the world."

Yes, this is a comment we've so often heard.

Well, now is your chance to show it's not true,  
'Cos to run lots of rallies, "Your Club Needs You".  
A sports field, a school yard, a posh licensed site.

Any of these venues could work out just right

As a place to meet, for a group of good friends

At a rally – say two nights or more. It all depends

On what you want and find easiest to arrange,

At a favourite location, somewhere new or quite strange.

Why not get together and work along as a team

And run us a rally? Don't just sit there and dream .

"But what about V.A.T?" We'll hear you all say.

"What kind of biscuits and how do we pay?"

Don't worry or wonder or say the scene's just not mine.

'Cos there's plenty of help at the end of a line.

For the Rally Co-ordinator will help all he can,

With ideas and the 'info' for a good rally to plan .

So don't leave it to others , come join in the fun.

For we're sure you'll have lots, if a rally you run.

## ***A Rally Marshal***

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### **Photo Competition**

Just a reminder that the Photographic Competition will be held at the National Rally and entries need to be sent to me before the end of March. Prints either 6x4 or 7x5 with name, address, membership number and section to be entered,

General must include an Auto-Sleeper or be taken on a rally.

Humorous must be taken on a Rally.

These should be sent to me at: Rita Tubb  
70 Chamwood Crescent  
Chandlersford  
Hants SO53 5QL

Looking forward to receiving Your Photos in the near future.

***Rita***

The following letter was sent to the Newsletter in early November and has now moved to the top of the pile for publishing. I have just read the letter. It would have been appropriate for Baz Wellard on behalf of the Committee to provide a response to accompany it but I don't want to discourage such a regular contributor to the Newsletter by delaying further and I'm sure there will be some response next month:

### ***Ideas in the Newsletter***

When we first joined the Club in 1999, I was always interested in reading in our Newsletters other members ideas for improvements to our vans. They ranged from the sublime to the ridiculous but the majority had their worth in their own way. A number I have used myself, be it modifying it to my own needs, while some have been the basis of an idea that I approached from a different angle. It also gave me food for thought and I sent a number of *Ideas* to the Newsletter myself. I am sure readers *Ideas* must have inspired many other of our members to send in their *Ideas*.

But alas we do not see these *Ideas* anymore in our Newsletter. In about 2004 these *Ideas* seemed to have disappeared and I feel this has left a void in our Newsletter. Whether it was true I do not know, but I did hear that the Club was concerned that if anything went wrong, the Club could be held responsible for anything printed in the Newsletter. If the Club is worried about this, could we not insert a caveat similar to that published in the letters column of the MMM?

We are always hearing that the Newsletter is looking for articles, which the dropping of *Ideas* must have left gaps. So let's bring back *Ideas* to our Newsletter and from there we can take them to be considered as official *Ideas* to be accepted by our Technical Group and Auto-Sleeper. So come on Newsletter, let's put the seeds of our *Ideas* back into the Newsletter, and then let them grow with our Technical Group.

**Robin Gardner**

I have read all previous Newsletters and I know exactly where Robin is coming from – it was the technical bits that I read word for word, however as Editor of the Newsletter for the last couple of years I can tell you that as far as I can recall I have printed in one form or another every *Idea* received. In other words the root of the problem that Robin perceives exists is not with the Club or the Newsletter but with the lack of *Ideas* from the Members!

**Peter**

**My 2007 Rallies** – (or some things I wouldn't have done or seen without joining in these activities!)

**Peter Brown**

- \* A few miles walk to Fords Crater from the Burton rally – the site of the largest war time explosion in the UK - and it *is* a very big hole.
- \* Being exhausted after supporting the National Rally at Newark
- \* The companionship of the Italian holiday ralliers and of course the continued debate on rubber tyre valves.
- \* Holker Hall with the Lakeland Motor Museum, Sticky Toffee Pudding (now a firm favourite) and an unexpected *cheeky* cabaret (those who attended know) during the Cartmel rally.
- \* Ordering fish & chips for 20, a trip round the JCB factory (the morning after being introduced to Vodka!) and a puddle full of plastic ducks at Rocester.
- \* Being amazed that anyone could arrange a pause in the weekends torrential rain for us all to gather at the marshals van and enjoy our baked potatoes outside during the Lichfield rally.
- \* Finding out that for over 100 years teams have been rowing from the harbour out to sea and then back as fast as they can, finding out who Bram Stoker was and then reading his book on Dracula and standing *above* the Red Arrows while they display – all during the Whitby Regatta.
- \* Wine and Cheese, a Cream Tea, fabulous grounds and a very unique house at the National Trust's Wimpole Hall
- \* A first trip to Brighton Pavilion followed by fish, chips and Pinot Grigio on the pier, then two days of the fabulous (although this year also tragic) air show at Shoreham, including of course the infamous torchlight loo run across the runway.
- \* Enjoying the best ever music/comedy entertainment in an acoustically challenging hall during the ACCEO rally at Norwich

- \* The Marshalls prepared food, indoor cricket and boules and excellent walks in the Wolds during the Alford rally.
- \* My absolute amazement at the quality, size and quantity of floats in the carnival parade; my surprise at enjoying a trip to a shopping mall (and the amount of stuff we bought) and my disappointment at not winning a single prize in the raffle all during the Burnham rally.
- \* Joining lots of other club members dressing up for the Dickensian weekend and entering the grand parade, a walk to one of the best view points in the UK (although a little longer than first suggested), a manic beetle drive and not being embarrassed at winning 25% of the raffle prizes during the Ulverston rally.

If you haven't rallied yet I hope the above whets your appetite. For those who have then I expect you'll have met the subject of the next piece – it's a rally report from the Newsletter of October 2000 (an issue that also contained the obituary of Phil Daley – a founder member of the club and first editor of the Newsletter – plus an introductory piece from Ian Capes following his acquisition of the Company) – enjoy...

## **The Peacock – Cutthorpe**

***Brian Smith***

If it is true that laughter is the best medicine then everyone who attended this rally is now as fit as a fiddle.

It all started formally enough with Marshall Ted Hancock welcoming the assembly on the first evening and we were all delighted to see Ray Young obviously on his way to full recovery, although still very sore, after his serious illness. Jan Hicklin had made and decorated a magnificent birthday cake which was presented to Sylvia Smith together with a card and large badge which proclaimed 'I'm still not sixty!' This was accompanied by much singing of 'Happy Birthday to You', and 'Twenty-one Today'.

After most folk had explored the delights of Chesterfield on Friday, a beautiful evening saw all gathered for a communal meal by the Marshall's vans. Then who should arrive carrying his big Red

Book but Michael Aspel (*in the shape of Ted Hancock*) to announce, "This is Your Life - Cedric Jones"

Cedric of course, was speechless. Well almost! We were told of his early life in Liverpool and introduced to his very first teacher Miss Blossom Tyme (*Barbara Kaye*,). Cedric moved up from the infants when he was twelve and came under the influence of headmaster Ben Dover (*Ray Whiley*) who produced the very cane he had occasion to use frequently on the young Jones's posterior. Cedric was apparently very good at sport and we were introduced to his swimming instructor Duncan Goodnews (*Neil Rogers*) who explained that he had tried to teach him to swim under water but unfortunately he always came up!

It was at this time that Cedric had his first romantic liaison and he used to meet Alice Slack (*Irene Boydell*) behind the bike sheds. Cedric claimed he was only patching her tubes, but Alice told a different story.

Leaving school at twenty-one with an 'O' level in Embroidery Cedric had a succession of jobs and formed a close friendship with Pete who eventually emigrated to Australia and became famous as Crocodile Dunrong. Pete had sent a 'E mail' of greeting and good wishes. Having failed at most other occupations Cedric joined the constabulary and as the crime rate escalated he became involved, in the cause and course of duty, with W.P.C. Anne Cuffs (*Jean Sellers*) who reminded us of the goings on in the cells on the night shift.

Cedric maintained that as a result of his treatment at the hands of Blossom Tyme, and particularly Ben Dover, he had become introverted and found-it difficult to make friends. However he was overcome with emotion when, as he closed the Red Book, Michael brought forward, adorned with bush hat complete with corks, none other than that old mate, that sport from Oz ,-Pete Crocodile Dunrong!, (*Vic Hicklin*) .

Many wet hankies and sitting ovation all round!

# **Rally News**

## ***Masham***

Can we start by thanking all the Marshals and helpers for their time and effort in arranging the rallies throughout the year, it's very much appreciated.

The Masham rally was our last for this season and the old lass (motorhome that is) is now in hibernation.

This rally was one of our shortest runs at 92 miles, but was a real treat, using the 'A' roads through the Yorkshire Dales, passing through the lovely villages and hamlets.

Anyone travelling north should try the run from the A1 at Bedale and across the A684 to Sedbergh, near to the M6 - simply stunning!!

To the old and new friends we met, thanks for a truly enjoyable rally - we'll be back.

***Jeff & Gel Atkinson***

## **Burnham-on-Sea** ***Chris Mawdsley***

It might seem a bit odd going to the seaside in November, except when it's Burnham and it's Carnival time. We've been trying to get to this rally ever since we joined the Club, nearly four years ago, but for various reasons have never made it. Anyway, this year we made it.

We were parked at the Haven Holiday Village, who had decided it might be an idea to stay open until after the carnival week-end, so the indoor facilities were open for those who wanted them and the marshals organised a 'dingbat' session in part of the café one evening, which proved to be very popular. Peter and I took a walk along the promenade on our first evening, in what felt like a force 9 gale I might add - very bracing....

However, the wind eased and the rest of the week-end was calmer so we had two more very pleasant walks along the front; one into Highbridge to the market on Sunday, and another in the opposite direction on the Monday morning. The latter, due to the closure of a pub for refurbishment, resulted in excellent business for the British Legion club at Berrow. There was to have been a firework display on the Sunday evening, but a combination of the weather and high tide meant it had to be cancelled. But the piece de résistance was definitely the carnival on Monday evening.



The floats were *very* impressive (for each imagine 3 high sided lorry trailers connected together and covered in lights) and something of a surprise; I didn't know we had such events in this country, and very well attended in spite of the considerable cold. You had to admire the skimpily dressed dancers and tableau artists on the floats, but you had to admire even more the ones dancing between the floats. At least the ones on board had the heat from all those lights to keep out the cold, but the ones in between could only have had their enthusiasm, and hopefully several layers of clothing, to keep them going.

The float entitled '*The Wrath of Neptune*' was simply incredible and deservedly won Best Entry for Entire Procession. There are photos on the website and if you have access they're worth a look.

We had heard this rally was a really good one and having now been, we certainly agree. If you haven't seen this carnival I can only say it is worth braving the cold for; lots of layers and a good pair of boots does the trick. Brian did ask on the final morning, if we thought it was worth while doing the rally again next year and was answered with a resounding "YES". So thanks very much to the rally marshals, Linda and Brian Ellis and Sheila and Ivor Barnett. Thanks also to Cedric Jones, who must have cycled miles pitching all the vans, and to Mo Jones who helped organise the trip to the excellent shopping mall in Street on Saturday.



## January 2008 Rally Supplement

*A Happy New Year to all members.*

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

Please remember to notify the marshals if you wish to take a car, trailer or tent to a rally.

All rallies, with the exception of the National Rally, must be applied for by using only official A.S.O.C. rally slips sent by post to the relevant marshals.

### 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>. February 2008 ( 4 nights ).Whitemead Forest Park, Parkend, Lydney, Gloucestershire.

Emergency Tel.No. 0845 345 3425 (site office). Mobile phone reception poor to nil on site, but there is a pay phone.

**Rally Marshals:** Jeannette Jones & Graham Fortune assisted by Helen & Geoff Gray.

**Site Fees** to include hard standing pitch, electric hook up, hire of room for 2 nights and use of all facilities:- Couples £59.50, Singles £56.75, (Incl.VAT).

28 pitches are available.

**Please send rally slip & cheque with SAE for reply & directions** to Mrs. Jeannette Jones, 58 Dundry Lane, Dundry, Nr. Bristol. BS41 8JQ. Tel.No. 01275 472888.

**Attractions:-** Enjoy a keep fit winter break at this all facilities site in the heart of the Forest of Dean.

Warm heated swimming pool, gym, steam room hairdressers, restaurant & small shop all on site.

Good walking & cycling direct from site.

### Rally in Ireland. 29<sup>th</sup> May – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2008. 20 nights

Rally marshals Liz and Bryn Morgan and Nora and Ven Venables.

A rally on 4 sites

1. The Hideaway

5 nights @ €1

and Sherkin

marshals in March 2008.

2. Fossa C & C P, Nr. Killarney, Co. Kerry. Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> June - Tues 10<sup>th</sup> June. 7 nights @

€20 p.n. incl. EHU. Nr. Ring of Kerry, Gap of Dunloe, Dingle Peninsula.

3. Nagles Doolin C & C P. Doolin Co. Clare. Tues 10<sup>th</sup> June - Fri 13<sup>th</sup> June. 3 nights @

€19 p.n. incl. EHU. Nr. ferry port for Aran Islands and Cliffs of Moher.

**This rally is now fully booked.**

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ve to be paid to the

the time.

Tues 10<sup>th</sup> June. 7 nights @

Dingle Peninsula.

Fri 13<sup>th</sup> June. 3 nights @

Moher.

4.Cong C & C P. Cong Co. Mayo. Fri 13<sup>th</sup> June-Wed 18<sup>th</sup> June. 5 nights @ € 20 p.n. incl. EHU. Nr. Connemara. 24 miles from Galway City.

We must stress that if you want to get the most out of this rally you will need to use your own vehicle to get about. There are many interesting and beautiful places within day-trip reach of the sites. Public transport in rural Ireland is limited.

Rosslare is 168 miles to first site. Dun Laoghaire/ Dublin Port are approx 210 miles to first site. Last site to Rosslare is 200 miles. Last site to Dun Laoghaire/ Dublin Port is approx. 160 miles. Journey times in Eire invariably take longer than in the UK.

Bookings will only be taken for the 20 nights. We have secured site fee discounts on condition that you pay for all 20 nights.

Rally fee is £16.00 and includes a Caravan and Camping Guide to Ireland 2008, which we will send to you when published. If you are offered a place and you decide to accept then the rally fee is non-returnable. Please send a cheque for £16.00, a rally slip and a 9X6 addressed envelope (no postage) to: B Morgan 44 Mersey Road Heaton Mersey Stockport SK4 3DJ Tel: 0161 432 4869. Mobile: 07890876859.

*If you wish to run a rally in 2008 please contact me to check dates **before** booking with a site. This prevents any clash of dates.*

*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 have not been vetted as to suitability for rallies, please ask if interested.*

*A "Guide to New/Possible Marshals" is available. If you would like one please contact me, details below.*

*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)**

**E & OE**

Rally ..... Date .....

Your name and address (Please PRINT) .....

.....

..... Post Code .....

Phone No. .... Mobile No. ....

Van Reg. .... Length ..... Membership No. ....

e-mail ..... 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 this form.**

.....

Rally ..... Date .....

Your name and address (Please PRINT) .....

.....

..... Post Code .....

Phone No. .... Mobile No. ....

Van Reg. .... Length ..... Membership No. ....

e-mail ..... 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 this form.**

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes  No

Number of people in your van: Adults..... Children.....

Adults' names (Incl. forenames).....

Childrens' names (incl. ages).....

Cheque enclosed for £..... for..... nights incl. rally fee.

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.  
Enclose a SAE if confirmation is required.**

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes  No

Number of people in your van: Adults..... Children.....

Adults' names (Incl. forenames).....

Childrens' names (incl. ages).....

Cheque enclosed for £..... for..... nights incl. rally fee.

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

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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.  
Enclose a SAE if confirmation is required..**

## A Step Back in Time

*Chris Mawdsley*

Imagine if you will narrow cobbled streets, busy shops, market stalls and people wandering around in long skirts, button boots and bonnets; or top hats, frock coats or tails, a scene perhaps from the new period drama *Cranford*? No actually, the Furness Peninsular on a cold week-end in November. Again with the assistance of several layers of warm clothing, Peter and I, along with a large number of ralliers, donned Victorian costume to join in the Dickensian Week-End at Ulverston. It was great fun and you'll find a lot of the photographs on the website.

Don Bland, Roy Loveys and John Garlick did an outstanding job organising the rally at Ford Park in Ulverston over this week-end, suitably attired of course. There was the opportunity to get together every evening, coffee and a chat on Thursday, a meal in The Lancastrian on Friday, a Beetle Drive on Saturday, and the raffle on Sunday was something else; more like Christmas with each raffle prize gift wrapped (all 90-odd of them!!!!). It all added to the fun with everyone ripping off the wrapping paper with gay abandon to see what they'd won. And yes Peter and I did win an unfair share of the prizes, and are we embarrassed? Er....No. Incidentally, I don't know where the

quiz questions came from, but they gave a lot of us a headache, can we have something a little easier next time??

Don lead an excellent six-mile walk on Sunday morning, which actually turned out to be closer to ten..... it seems Peter's not the only one who has difficulty estimating mileage when we're walking. However, it was a lovely morning and an enjoyable walk.

I think there were more vans this year than last and there were certainly a larger number of 'Victorian' ralliers, which was great. James Bertlin actually won best gents costume on Sunday, for which he received a royal commemorative coin, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip that is, not Queen Victoria, although she did actually attend the festivities on both days to present the prizes, Queen Victoria that is not Queen Elizabeth.

An excellent week-end with reasonable weather considering the time of year, no-one needed a tow off as far as I am aware, although I managed to smash one of our plastic tracks quite effectively. Thanks very much and very well done to the 3 Musketeers - Don, Roy and John and to the various other people who helped out. They'll have to run it again next year as people are already planning their costumes.

## Tired of tyre talk?

**Mike Hall.**

Fifteen months ago, whilst travelling at 65mph on the M1, we had a rear tyre blow out. We continued to travel whilst the van spun, eventually ending up facing forward in the centre lane. How the van managed to stay upright, not hit anything or for any other traffic not to hit us on a very busy motorway, I do not know. Having come to a standstill, we pulled over to the hard shoulder and phoned the recovery people who arrived very soon.

We never want this to happen again so I have been looking into sealants that you put into new tyres which claim to permanently seal a puncture and slow down a sudden deflation. I have also been asking about the suggestion of using "Tyron", a device to cover the fitting well of a tyre to prevent a flat tyre dropping into the fitting well enabling you to maintain control.

I think the definitive advice about liquid sealants is from Duncan Vernon, Road Safety Manager for England at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA):

*"There are two different types of liquid sealants - ones which work before a puncture and ones which work after it.*

### *Pre-puncture Sealants*

*This type of sealant is usually applied*

*through a tyre's valve when it is fitted. It works by 'sealing' a tyre from the inside if it becomes punctured and its effect is almost instantaneous. This can pose a serious danger, because the driver may not be aware of the damage caused to the tyre and there is a risk that the damage may spread. The continued use of the tyre may lead to a serious failure.*

### *Post-puncture Sealants*

*These are applied through a valve following a puncture, and should be used only to get you home or to a garage where you can get the tyre replaced. In most cases, a tyre will have been used for a distance before the sealant is applied and may have suffered internal damage. We do see a positive use for this type of sealant - for example if a lone driver is unable to physically change a tyre by the road side - but this must be balanced by a driver taking the necessary steps to replace the damaged tyre after using it. Drivers using a tyre which they have repaired in this manner must take precautions not to travel too far or too fast when using a 'sealed' tyre, and should always follow a sealant manufacturer's instructions.*

*Fundamentally, neither type of sealant will repair a tyre to the necessary standards (BS AU 159) and so should not be considered as a permanent repair."*

He also commented on the steel band to cover the tyre fitting well:

*"Some vehicle manufacturers are also*

*talking about a similar runflat system, although I don't think that a version has made it onto a production model yet. Most manufacturers are going down the route of re-enforcing a tyre's side walls in order to produce a similar runflat capability. There is some advice on this web page which may help - [http://www.rosipa.com/roadsafety/advice/motorvehicles/runflat\\_tyres.htm](http://www.rosipa.com/roadsafety/advice/motorvehicles/runflat_tyres.htm).*

*Essentially, before fitting this product, I'd take advice from your vehicle manufacturers. You'd also need to be able to have a way of being alerted to a deflation in the tyre so that you don't run on it for longer than Tyron recommend."*

Kim Adams, Consumer Editor of Auto Express gave her personal view: *"My view on sealants is don't. By sealing the hole they may hide significant damage to the tyre which could lead to eventual sudden failure. There can also be problems in getting treated tyres repaired so even the smallest hole requires a replacement tyre.*

*My solution would be run flat tyres although size availability may be limited for your motorhome. These maintain control even with sudden air loss and have special beads to keep the tyre on the rim. I have done cornering tests at motorway speeds with sudden air loss and the tyres simply do not come off the rim - standard rubber was a tangled mess.*

*Failing run flats, ensure your tyres are*

*relatively new. Anti aging agents in the compound requires movement to work. Caravan tyres are designed specially to cope but a little used motorhome would use - I guess - standard van or car tyres. There will be a four digit code on the sidewall say 1407. This means the tyre was made in the 14th week of 2007. If your tyres are around five years old I would replace - regardless of tread depth - as the compound will have hardened and there may be corrosion in the casing if little used. Apart from anything else wet road performance, particularly braking, will have dropped off significantly."*

The Caravan Club gave very similar advice and I read their very informative booklet; "Tyres and Wheels" on caravan tyres but their booklet about motorhome tyres is currently out of print. The booklet also gave a glossary of all the codes used on tyres emphasising the importance of the date of manufacture – as opposed to the date of purchase - and the maximum speed. They also advised me that The British Tyre Manufacturers Association advise against using such sealants.

One more very interesting fact is that, if you use sealants or tyre well covering bands, you are modifying your vehicle and need the approval of your insurer before doing so.

My conclusion is: I will put a note in the glove compartment to replace the tyres on their fifth anniversary as well as regularly examining them for damage.

# Technical Group & Website

**Baz Wellard**  
**Chairman Technical Group & Webmaster**



**Sargent Control Panel:** I have had reports that the Sargent Digital Control Panel can 'lock-up', and the only corrective action, as described in the vehicle handbook, is to remove and reinsert the connecting cable. I have asked, however, if a simpler method can be designed. I will advise the results of my request in due course.

**Nuevo X2/50 Caravan Doors:** Charles Trevelyan has advised me that on some early Nuevo X2/50 models there can be a tendency for the caravan door to open back onto a protruding corner of the skirt cut-out around the caravan door frame, that can result not only in damage to the caravan door but also the inability of the door to lock back in a secure condition. There is a modification to fit a shorter stay as well as a set of hinge brackets. If you have such a problem then your dealer should contact the Service Centre at Willersey for fitting details and supply of components. The modification is simple and should only take around 15 minutes.

**Tow-bars:** Charles also advises me that Watling Engineering now produce tow-bars specifically designed, by them, for the majority of Auto~Sleeper models. For details contact Watling on [www.tow-bars.co.uk](http://www.tow-bars.co.uk) tel. 01727-873661; or the Service Centre.

## **Work-in-progress:**

### **Sigma spare wheel:**

Auto~Sleepers have now designed a 'Sigma spare wheel adaptor' which is available, with instructions, through your dealer - part number EFO545. However Auto~Sleepers do recommend that customers should not attempt to change wheels. In the case of an emergency it is recommended that they seek assistance as provided by the vehicle breakdown service. Motorhome wheels and tyres are extremely heavy, locating the jack in the correct position and ensuring it remains in the correct position are not easy tasks.

The wheel nuts are large and hence the tightening torques are high making removal difficult. Plus having a Motorhome jacked up with the wheel removed is not an activity that is recommended to be undertaken by customers

**Peugeot X2/50 radio problem:**

Auto~Sleepers are back in touch with Peugeot on our behalf and I will report back in due course.

**Membership contacts:**

Please remember you can be included on the e-mail listing to let you know when anything urgent needs to be promulgated to members and also be advised when the website is updated. Currently only 12% of the membership have registered! If you wish to be included simply send your e-mail address to [baz.wellard@virgin.net](mailto:baz.wellard@virgin.net)

**E-mail:**

May I suggest that you be very wary of forwarding any of the many 'round-robin' or 'pyramid' E-mails that are always circulating on the internet. They are more-often-than-not malicious and are designed to disrupt the system. As an example - of all the ones I have received I've not considered that any have merited forwarding on!

**Website:**

Update No. 12/07 contained:

Recall of the Wilton (*for exhaust modification*) and reference to the X2/50 water scuttle solution.

Rally report & photographs of the Burnham & Ulverston rallies.

**And finally:**

Best wishes for a safe, healthy and prosperous New Year.

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*In response to Bernie Roberts comment suggesting a Web Forum, David Robinson reminds us (and I know this to be a fact) - "by no means are all club members connected to the Internet and therefore the answer must be, No."*

*Contributions from Geoff Williamson and David Horder have been on the spike for a while and I hope they accept my apologies for deferring publication.*

## From the Factory

### A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE AUTO-SLEEPER SALES MANAGER

Let me introduce myself to you all and fill you in on my background. I have been with Auto-Sleepers for over 22 years, like some of you we have seen many changes within the Company and with the model range over those years. When I first joined Auto-Sleepers, it was as an unskilled fitter, as time went on I gained the experience to become, as we were once known, a hand picked Cotswold craftsman. My A/S life began as a French polisher in the days when shall we say the furniture was more traditionally made. After 6 months I progressed to unit fitting and continued to move through different departments learning many skills along the way. In the past 10 years I moved off the shop floor and into the Management Team. My first role was running the Wood Shop, then the Panel van line and then onto the Styro I production line, this led to an opportunity to become Assistant Manufacturing Manager. Three years ago the opportunity arose to join the Sales Team, I jumped at it. You may be asking yourselves why after 18 years spent in Manufacturing I would want to take the plunge into sales; well it was not only another challenge but I pretty much knew everything about the product, how it goes together and also how Auto-Sleepers functions behind the scenes. It was now time to discover what happens to an Auto-Sleeper once it leaves the factory.

So what is a typical day as Sales Manager? In one word *busy*. Rather than

a single day lets take an overview of a typical week.

Monday is office day. Generally this involves what we call the ring round, we call each dealer to keep in touch with any product sales, and this allows me to track dealer sales and also stock levels throughout the network, it also open up opportunities to pay the dealers a visit regarding their stock and forward orders. Meetings are also held on Monday's, from Sales, Marketing, Scheduling, New Product Development, to Design and After Sales. In general a very busy day and a fresh workload generated.

Tuesdays are the start of the week's dealer visits, with a 42 dealer network split between the Auto-Sleeper and Orian Networks. In case you are unaware the dealer networks geographically cover the UK and Northern Ireland, many, many miles are covered each week servicing the dealers requirements, most weeks there will be an overnight stay away from home. In between travelling to the dealers a lot of time is spent on the phone. In fact my mobile is on pretty much 24/7, there are always lots of inquiries regarding the product, everything from delivery dates base vehicle specification, to optional extras. On many occasions I rely on my team back in the Sales Office, all this whilst negotiating today's road network and its users. The dealer visits are the easy part, its getting there and back that's the

challenge.

Wednesday to Friday are either more dealer visits or its Show Time. During the course of a year there will be approx 28 weekend shows or Dealer Open Weekend's to attend, as a Company there are the two major indoor show's (February & October) both held at the NEC Birmingham, where we have our own stand displaying the full range of Auto-Sleepers. At all other shows it is the dealers who take along their stock Auto-Sleeper/Orian product for display. As Auto-Sleeper representatives we attend each show to support the dealer should they have any enquiries from customers regarding our products, as we can generally offer the customer more detailed information regarding specification etc which in many cases this will enable the customer to make their purchase of a new Auto-Sleeper.

weekends, most of the dealers hold at least one open weekend a year, once again we will be there supporting the dealer. You may ask what benefit can we offer the dealer and is it beneficial to spend so much time at the shows, Sales support is an invaluable service for both the dealer and the Manufacturer, as many of the sales staff are not as knowledgeable as ourselves and this can make quite a difference when speaking to the customer such as yourselves. As we generate sales at the shows we then create an opportunity for the dealer to replace the sold model.

With December upon us and the 2007 season coming to a close it is now time for me to take some holidays, I look forward to meeting you at the shows throughout 2008. Until then I wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Between the major Indoor and Outdoor shows there are the regular dealer open

*Dave Clarkson*

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We've received a letter from Wendy and Fred Keys. It is with regret that they are having to leave the Club as they couldn't find an AS vehicle that met their current requirements to replace their 5½ year old Duetto.

They would like to say a very special thank you to Charles Trevalyan. "He always takes the view that any complaints/suggestions are valid unless the contrary is proved which is the exact opposite of the line taken by many so called Customer Service organisations. Taken in conjunction with Terry the wonder mechanic at the Service Centre this is the dream team."

Finally they would like to say many thanks to the various people who have helped to make the Club a big success over the years. They also liked the Newsletter and passed on all of their back issues to the people who bought their Duetto and hope they become members in due course.

## Association of Caravan and Camping Exempted Organisations (ACCEO)

Our Club, ASOC, is a member organisation of ACCEO. One of our members, Ray Whiley (an ex chairman of ASOC) is the ASOC liaison officer with ACCEO and in fulfilling this role for us Ray attends the ACCEO AGM. Ray was unable to attend for this year and I volunteered to take his place. In doing so I learnt quite a lot and thought I would pass it on - of course many longer standing members of the Club will already know this so my apologies.

I will mention the ACCEO AGM and associated rally at the end of this piece but firstly I will explain what ACCEO is, why it exists and why ASOC is a member organisation.

The UK government have in place a process governed by an act of parliament (Caravan Sites and Control of Development 1960) to license caravan sites. The Act also recognises that there are certain responsible organisations who make recreational use of caravanning and provides a mechanism whereby such organisations can apply to use land for recreational caravanning on occasion without the need to hold a licence. The way this is facilitated is for the caravanning organisation to apply to the relevant government department (currently Natural England but until very recently the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs - defra) for an Exemption Certificate. There are several categories of exemption detailed in paragraphs of a schedule to the Act. ASOC has applied for and been given exemption in accordance with paragraph 6 which says *"a site licence shall not be required for the use of land as a caravan site if the use is under the supervision of a exempted organisation and is in pursuance of arrangements made by that organisation for a meeting of its members lasting not more than five days."*

Natural England has the power to withdraw Exemption Certificates and will do so if the responsibilities of holding a certificate are not complied with. Two of the key responsibilities that ASOC has are that a member of ASOC must supervise a meeting held under paragraph 6 and must have a suitable code of conduct for activities carried out under the certificate. ASOC has developed the necessary procedures and codes and they are enshrined in the ASOC Bye-Laws published in the Members Handbook.

I hope that what you have read up till now helps you understand that the ability to legally hold club rallies away from licensed (ie expensive) caravan sites is dependant on the club holding an Exemption Certificate and that retention of the certificate is dependant on club members complying with the codes that have been developed. It should also have explained the constraints that are applied to rally marshals by the Club.

I guess by now you are wondering where ACCEO comes into this. Well there are circa 350 organisations holding Exemption Certificates and ASOC is very near the top in the terms of size, many are very small indeed. The government (Natural England) would find it very difficult to consult with a large number of very small organisations and therefore encouraged the development of ACCEO as a body to represent them. Enshrined in the ACCEO constitution are the "aim to unite all member organisations and give them one voice in governmental and other consultative matters and processes affecting their

interests" and to "represent and channel the views and needs of member organisations to local and central government and protect the rights of member organisations". Currently 210 of the organisations holding Exemption Certificates are affiliated to ACCEO.

ACCEO can and does facilitate events and arrange services (such as insurance) for member clubs who choose to avail themselves of them. Individual members of member organisations can become Personal Members of ACCEO, receiving the quarterly newsletter and benefiting from certain services. At the recent AGM that I attended the ACCEO committee reported that they had had a very constructive meeting with defra representatives and were optimistic for liaison in the future.

The ACCEO AGM was held during a rally in a similar vane to the ASOC National Rally. This year it was held on the Royal Norfolk Showground near Norwich. You don't have to be the official club representative to attend this rally (or indeed to attend the AGM - although you can't speak or vote if your not). This year ASOC arranged our own rally within the ACCEO rally and 11 vans attended. There was a good bus service into Norwich and a hall available for meeting up most nights. On the Friday night a chip van was arranged and his fare was excellent. On Saturday night there was professional entertainment - Nigel 'Boy' Sayer (a musical comedian) and Hayley Moryses (violin, guitar and singer). Both were true entertainers and those of us who attended the event really - in a table banging foot stamping sort of way - enjoyed it. Next years ACCEO AGM rally will be at the Newark showground 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> October if you are interested. ACCEO are also looking for a new Motorhome Representative to support their committee so if you are interested get in touch with our ASOC committee and let us know.

*Peter Brown*

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## WANTED

AS Clubman Anniversary model (preferably with blue upholstery). I have a P reg model and would like to change to a newer version.  
Contact P R Ferris 01962 732054 ferrispp@tiscali.co.uk  
(Hampshire).



2005 VW T5 Trident 130 bhp Tiptronic automatic, cruise control, air conditioning. CD multichanger 16" alloy wheels, awning, cycle rack. 15,000 miles. No pets, smoking, children.  
£27,500  
Contact Tim Pritchard 01934 852568 (Somerset)

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### Committee Members

President	Charles Trevelyan	01386 853511
Chairman	Andy Cavell	01635 201976
Secretary	John Osland-Jones	0121 744 8065
Treasurer	John Tidbury	01235 538593
Vice-Chairman	Mike Valentine	02392 482818
Chairman, AGM Sub-Committee	Nora Venables	01902 332105
Rally Co-ordinator	Neil Rogers	01325 374540
Minutes Secretary	Mike Hall	01773 778016
Chief Rally Marshal	Ben Mansfield	01723 369769
Webmaster & Chair, Tech.Group	Baz Wellard	01329 231259
Regalia Officer	John Jones	01623 627903
Newsletter Editor	Peter Brown	07771 827711
Membership Secretary**	Jill Bertlin	01539 534500

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\*\* Jill Bertlin

The Rockeries, Sunny Terrace, Lindale, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria, LA11 6 LQ email TBA