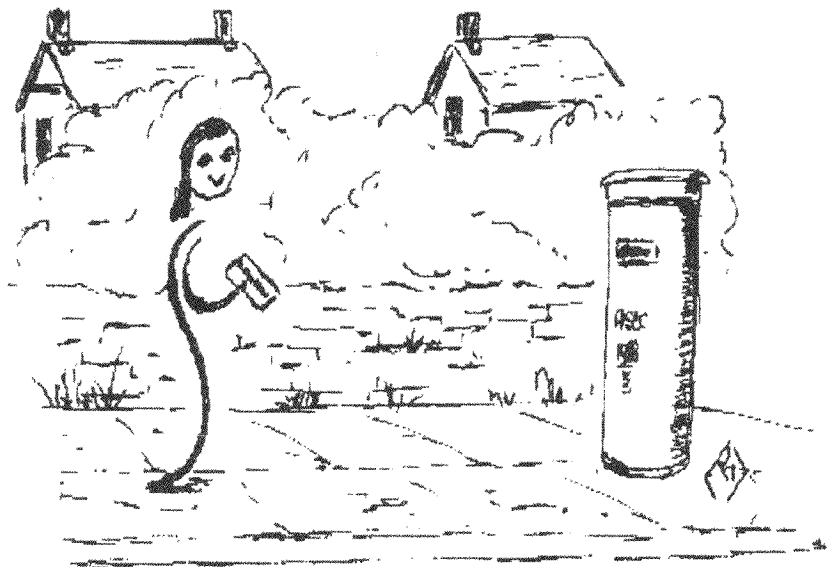




[www.asoc.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.asoc.fsnet.co.uk)

# **AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB**

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



*You've done the post early for Christmas bit -  
Now you need the post early for the National bit*

## **NEWSLETTER 233**

### **February 2008**

# From the Editor (S)

We've just enjoyed our first week-end away in the van, and what a particularly good week-end it was, the weather was glorious. However in this day and age you has always to be careful with your possessions and due to its unique location the CC site in Clumber is particularly vulnerable. On this first weekend in January the occupiers of the pitch next to us had a Quad Bike stolen in the early hours of the morning. The Bike was no more than 5 yards from us and we didn't hear a thing. That same night 3 bicycles were also stolen from the site!

## Contributions to Newsletter

In talking to fellow Club members over the last couple of years I've noted a few activities other than our main interest that are/were widely practised by members; walking, cycling, sailing, narrow boating, motoring etc. It would be nice to complement the usual content of the Newsletter with the occasional piece on one of these other activities so please feel free to submit pieces that you think your fellow members might enjoy reading.

Can we also remind you that should you wish to display a hobby at the National Rally, or have a query in this regard, you should contact Jim Henwood, 1 Fairfield Avenue, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough TS5 5HB, telephone 01642 805237, email james.henwood1@ntlworld.com

Tim Pritchard has sent copies of the record he made of trips to Russia, the Baltic States, Scandinavia and various other, what were Eastern Bloc countries between 1982 and 2004. They are far too lengthy to re-produce in the Newsletter but too informative to ignore so we propose to give a brief review of each at various times, the first on page 16 of this issue

Maureen & Derek Moras would like us to pass on their thanks to everyone who responded to their appeal for help on steps and extra cupboard shelving. They are currently investigating various suggestions to find the most suitable solution to their needs and they are very grateful for all your help.

With this Newsletter you should have received a copy of the 2008 issue of the Members Handbook. The Clubs Articles of Association have been amended as agreed at the 2007 AGM and the National Codes that guide the way we use our Motorhomes have been updated.

## **WANTED**

Used greetings cards, birthday, Christmas, get well, etc., for recycling. Please bring to the National Rally and I will arrange to have a box for collection.

**Eileen Kellard**

## *A Problem Shared....*

This letter is long overdue, for which we apologise. It refers to the last National Rally where we had some serious problems with our leisure battery.

To set the scene, we have a 1992 Executive on a Talbot Express chassis and although the battery was charging, it was not holding on to the charge and we ended up having to use a generator for several hours every day.... another profuse apology! This had caused much annoyance with one of our neighbours at the previous rally in Peterborough, where we were called "extremely unsociable", even though we tried to explain the problem. However, we encountered no 'neighbour problems' at Newark, for which we are extremely grateful to you all.

The main reason for writing this letter is to highlight the help and assistance we received at Newark. We wish to express our sincere thanks to Vic, Jim, Ben and Peter Brown, who all spent several hours of their time trying to solve our problem. Peter was particularly upset because he wanted to spend more time testing our system but was called away to a meeting. Vic may have blown his multimeter whilst trying to test our battery, however, Ben assured him that he had a spare one that Vic could have. What a wonderful group of guys! Although we have found the camaraderie at all the rallies we have been on before and since is second to none. Thanks guys!

Also we wish to thank Baz for persuading us to bring the problem up at the Technical Q and A session. Charles Trevelyan advised us to go back to the dealer and insist they sort it out; the dealer had previously told us there was no problem. We did go back to the dealer, who again could find nothing wrong, but referred it to an independent Auto-electrician, who discovered the battery was starting the break down and needed changing. They advised a battery upgrade to 110ah; this we did and the dealer paid 50%.

So all turned out well in the end and our 12v system now works perfectly. Thanks again.

*Dian Hart & John Rowlands-Jones.*

## A couple of queries

I have an Excelsior with a Van Bitz alarm fitted and am having problems with the back up siren, which does not seem to have a solution. I have just had a new siren fitted as the original one failed. I left the alarm armed while I was out and when I returned the siren was chirping. I was told it could be a low battery fault, but it is not.

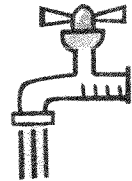
Has anyone else had the same problem and found what the fault was?

*Stuart Wood*

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### 1994 VW Trident Queries

1. When I turn on the cold tap the first two or three spurts are so powerful as to drench me and most of the kitchen!! One 'expert' says I need to fit a non-return valve as close to the cold tap as possible; another tells me there is a leak in the diaphragm in the pump .... Help! There's no problem with the hot tap.



2. Does anyone have any experience of fitting a roof box on such a vehicle?

*Bill Cottle*

*Email bill@egsscotland.co.uk 01332 824652*

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### Sargent PSU 2007 – Charging Vehicle Battery

Those of you who have Motorhomes with the Sargent PSU 2007 Electronic Control System installed will be aware that the Battery Select button on the control panel allows the habitation 12 volt supply to be provided by either the leisure battery or the vehicle battery.

You may not be aware that if the vehicle battery is selected whilst on hook up, then it is the vehicle battery rather than the leisure battery that is charged. This is a very useful feature when the Motorhome is on site or unused for long periods to 'top up' the charge of the vehicle battery. A 6 to 8 hour charge every 2 or 3 weeks should replenish the charge drained by alarms etc.

*Peter Brown*

## **Rally News**

### **A Word of Warning from Elizabeth and Bill Grimsley**

We are running a rally after the National Rally in May at a site not used by the Club before. It is a full facilities caravan site, opened in 2002 on a very open, exposed site in Rutland, a few miles north of Oakham and it's very near to the RAF base at Cottesmore.

This is where there could be a problem with really noisy aeroplanes during the week. If you are a plane spotter you'll love it, but if you can't stand the noise of Harriers leaving the runway or coming in to land (the worst) you'll have to give our rally a miss. We were there a few months ago during the week, and one evening they were still coming and going until after 11 pm, when we were already in bed. The NOISE is just tremendous!!

The village of Greetham is accessible on a footpath directly from the site, but a long way round by road. There is a bus through the village every two hours to Oakham or Melton Mowbray. We are hoping to organise a guided walk in Oakham, using the bus to get there and back. There are three pubs in the village all serving food, so if there's enough interest we could organise a meal one evening. There's a Garden Centre with a tea room at the southern end of the village and a Post Office/general store in the centre, and lots of interesting places further afield.

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### **Come to Stone....**

Peter and I have chosen to run a rally at Stone this year (as Rocester is not on the cards) to coincide with the Stone Food Festival in October. Stone is a delightful canal town not far from Stafford and although we have not been to the Food Festival before, I'm sure it will provide some interest. The site is the Little Stoke Cricket Club, which is about a mile outside of Stone and has a very comfortable club house we may use. Peter will be organising his usual 6 mile walk, which will turn out to be 10 and there are several shops, pubs and restaurants in the town itself.

Hope to see you there.

***Chris Mawdsley & Peter Brown***

## **In fear and trepidation**

*Alvar & Ann Thorn*

Despite our initial trepidation's about attending our first rally, we need not have worried.

When we arrived at Ulverston, the initial very friendly welcome which we received from Don, Roy and John set the whole tone for a very enjoyable weekend. This friendship continued to be extended to us by all the other Club members who attended, and made us feel like long lost friends, we were somewhat overwhelmed.

The Dickensian Fair was very enjoyable and interesting, and the evening gatherings in Ford Park House were a great social affair. We are still amazed as to how our intrepid organisers managed to gather together so many raffle prizes for the final social evening; Ann did manage to win one.

Our thanks go out to Don, Roy and John for all their efforts in organising the event, *and* the weather, and to all those who so very kindly gave us Christmas cards, this was something else we did not expect.

This may have been our first rally, but you can be assured that it will not be our last, we will be back but as to where and when we are not sure. Thanks to all who made our weekend such a pleasurable experience.

Can we also take this opportunity of wishing all members of the Club

**A Happy, Healthy and Propserous New Year.**

## **Maybe we'll meet some new people...?**

*Pearl & Warren England*

We recently joined the Club with a view to attending some rallies and hopefully meeting new people with the common interest of using the motorvans. We booked the Bishops Lydeard Team Rally as our first, but also booked Topsham and Portsmouth just in case we weren't keen at first - we would make ourselves keep going and try to join in and be social; something we've always found quite hard to do. Although if you could see us now you would never think this had ever been the case!!!

Unfortunately, Bishops Lydeard was cancelled due to bad weather, so I wrote a note to Liz telling her Topsham was, after all, our first rally.

We arrived to a very warm welcome from Liz and Nora and were then greeted by Cedric (with usual head attire) on his bicycle leading the way to the pitches. Ven then lined us up, introduced us to our neighbours and made us start to feel very relaxed about the whole thing.

What fun we had, the whole time. We met so many lovely people - at coffee evenings, walking to the pub for lunch, in Topsham eating cream teas and really just about everywhere we went over the next few days. We enjoyed it all very much and came away looking forward with relish to Portsmouth and meeting some of our new found friends again.

Nor were we disappointed, from beginning to end it really was great fun. Our third and last rally of the year was Burnham Carnival which we also enjoyed tremendously meeting 'old' friends from the previous two rallies and new ones.

We are so looking forward now to the new Rally List coming out in January so we can book up as many as we can manage next year. So if you have just joined the Club and are concerned about your first rally - don't be! You'll have a fun time with lovely people and will immediately be bitten by the Rallying Bug!!!

**Here's wishing everyone happy vanning and rallying for 2008**

## *Farewell*

*Sorry!!!* But due to age we are having to retire from the Club. We wish to thank all the Marshals for all the hard work put in to making this such a wonderful club and we wish all our friends and the Club every success for the future.

**Happy Holidays for 2008  
Joan & Eddie Williams (No.0111)**

### **Au Revoir**

For some time now we had been hoping to avoid writing this note, but must now let you know that we are changing our van in the Spring and sadly its replacement will not be an Auto Sleeper.

Believe us we have thought long and hard before making our decision, but regrettably just cannot find another model in the current AS range to suite our requirements. We shall miss Tilly. She has done us proud for the last, nearly, 8 years and we have had some wonderful holidays in her, not to mention the immense enjoyment we have had attending the ASOC rallies, our personal involvement in the Lake District rallies and all the wonderful friends we have made.

Needless to say we will both be taking away with us lots of happy memories of our association with the Club and hope to retain many of the friendships we have made over the past 9 years. May we record our thanks to all the hard working Committee member and Rally Marshals who have made this possible and, of course, to Charles Trevelyan who has also always given us excellent service. We realise we may not find this elsewhere.

We do hope that our friends in the Club will not forget us and that we may still meet up with them on our future travels. Please keep in touch.

***Peter & Sue Coward***

## **A Brand New Wilton**

*John Geeson*

I took delivery of my new Wilton on Friday 5th October 2007, but during the journey home exhaust fumes were apparent in the cab. A telephone call to the dealer initiated a speedy return to confirm the problem, and along with Auto Sleepers' equally speedy response, a modification was fabricated and the dealer had the new exhaust fitted. We were loaded and on our way to France by Tuesday the 9th.

On return from our holiday we had a short list of minor faults and adjustment which Charles and his team have now rectified without question.

Where else is this type of service available at such short notice, this is one of the reasons why we have chosen Auto Sleepers for the past 12 years, the Wilton being our third van.

*It is a real pleasure to be able to print a letter such as John's where he expresses such satisfaction with both product and service.*

*John showed me around his van at Burnham in November and despite the faults he had experienced he was obviously delighted with the Wilton. I am extremely envious as we ordered a Wilton last February for estimated delivery in July/August, delayed until September and then a very definite early October.*

*Late September I received a phone call from Simon Vaughan - Ford has messed up, the chassis had not been delivered. Ian Capes and Simon invited Chris and I to meet them when they explained that after meeting the Ford team it turned out the chassis would not be built till November and delivered to AS till December.*

*I wrote to Ford in December advising them that I intended to be critical of their ability to deliver chassis for motorhome construction. They acknowledged receipt of the letter but as they have chosen not to reply I must hold them culpable but do expect that the quality of the product is much better than the production process.*

*I am told our Wilton is on the line at Willersey now and I'm hoping we'll be able to take delivery early in March. I also hope not to have to attend the dealer or the Service Centre for other than routine servicing during the period of the two year habitation warranty. Should that be the case I will be absolutely delighted to preach it far and wide.*

## Cam belts – a mine of mixed opinions

Unless you have a push-rod engine that does not have a cam-belt (e.g. Talbott Express) then, perhaps like me, you have pondered from time to time when the one in your vehicle should be changed?

We have a June 2001 Talisman GX, now six and a half years old with a low mileage of just 16,750. Now as a general rule I've often heard two things said, (1) Cam belts should be changed when the vehicle has reached a given mileage, e.g., 50,000 or a given age, often advised as 5 years, whichever comes first. So in the case of age we should be thinking of a change and yet in the matter of mileage we have plenty in hand. What do we do?

Last year and the year before I mentioned it to the owner of the long established family garage to whom I entrust the servicing. Two years ago when the mileage was about 12,000 he said if it was his he wouldn't do it until 2008. Last year he said much the same. I asked again this year, the answer was the same, bearing in mind the modest mileage. However, if we wanted it done he would be pleased to oblige and gave a verbal quote of £185 including Vat but excluding tensioners and pulleys which he expects to find in sound order – if not, he will change them as necessary at additional cost to a very max of say £100. Until they open up the covers to reveal the cam belt it is not possible to tell other than that worn bearings are sometimes noisy; there is no sound arising at the moment.

Opinions vary widely, some like our son say if either the recommended age limit or the mileage limit has been reached change the belt for peace of mind. If you choose to ignore the limits and your belt fails for any reason you will be looking at a high cost for a major engine repair probably ranging from £1,800 up to an excess of £5,000, depending on the extent of the damage and who quotes for the job! Others are prepared to exceed the limits within reason in the light of factors known about the vehicle – such as in our own case of very low mileage. After all 'white van man' does thousands of miles in a year and its no wonder the belt needs changing more often on mileage than on age. As motor homes our vehicles tend to be driven with a lot more consideration over far fewer miles so it seems reasonable to exceed the age limit by a bit. The question is how big or little a bit?

The pressing thought on when to change increases as *tempus fugit*! If in trying to save the cost for a year or two you lose the gamble and have to bite the expensive bullet will your conscience be satisfied? We doubt it. You may have sensed we are leaning towards changing our cam belt around early April this year viewing the cost as very fair for the job and another form of insurance – i.e., peace of mind, removing the gamble at least for another 5 to 7 years. This notwithstanding our garage man said he would bet his life on our belt doing another year at least without problem.



**February 2008**  
**Rally Supplement**



\*\*\*\*\*New Rally 19<sup>TH</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> .May Butlins Holiday Camp,  
Minehead.,Somerset. \*\*\*\*\*

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 # **THIS RALLY IS NOW FULLY BOOKED** e assisted by Helen & Geoff

**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

**THIS RALLY IS NOW FULLY BOOKED.**

1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> September 2008 – (10 nights) – Chinon in the Loire Valley France.

**Rally marshals:** Dorothy & Baz Wellard; assisted by Marion & Jimmy Henwood.

**Fees:** Site fees are not yet known, but will be payable directly to the site management. As a guide - last year they were around £8.50 per night; inc. electricity. This will not be a 'drop-in' rally and ralliers will be obliged to stay the **full 10 nights**, please.

**Rally fee:** £16.50 inc. vat, non re-refundable - if successful. Rally slips (*with email address if possible*), with rally fee (*payable to Mrs D. Wellard*), and SAE to 18 Greenwood Close, Fareham, PO16 7UF.

**Town:** Chinon is approximately 350 miles from Calais; with a convenient overnight stop 2 hours out of the port. Chinon is a very attractive small mediaeval town on the banks of the River Vienne, (*a tributary of the Loire*). Photographs of the town & campsite can be seen at: - [www.picasaweb.google.co.uk/bazils2/ChinonSeptember2007](http://www.picasaweb.google.co.uk/bazils2/ChinonSeptember2007)

**Site:** The 2 star site is actually on the south side of the river with views across the Vienne, to the town and Chateau. It is only a short walk across the bridge to the centre. We have been offered an area that has the advantage that 24 units can all be camped together.

**Attractions:** Chinon's Chateau dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> Century, and the town has attractive buildings with narrow streets and open air cafes and restaurants..

There are a great many other Chateaux and attractions in the Loire valley area and it may be possible to organise a coach trip.

**Logistics:** We only have a verbal agreement with the campsite at this time and cannot confirm in writing until April; however we do not anticipate any problems. Members have shown a great interest, so much so that we must select on the basis of 'first-come- first-served', sorry no phone calls, please. We will however maintain a waiting list should that prove necessary.

**3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> April ( 3nights) Marston's Rally. Albion Hotel, Burton on Trent, Staffs.**

Site behind the Albion Hotel, Shobnall Road, Burton on Trent.

Emergency Tel .No. 07713186508 Marshal's mobile.

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

Marshals Tel.No. 01283538818 or please ring Jan on 01246236157 if I am not available.

Site Fee: £4.00 per night, all hardstanding. Rally Fee: £2.35, all inc VAT.

No Electricity. Booking slip & Cheques payable to P.M.Pratt, 3 Grafton Rd, Stapenhill, Burton on Trent. Staffs. DE15 9DN.

A VISIT ROUND THE BREWERY ON THE FRIDAY MORNING will be arranged.

Cost £6 each, please send cheque with site fees if you would like to participate in this trip.

A MEAL FRIDAY EVENING IN THE VISITORS' CENTRE AT THE BREWERY AND A FURTHER MEAL ON SATURDAY EVENING IN THE ALBION HOTEL PUB will also be available (WEEKEND OFF COOKING DUTIES LADIES).

**Directions:** The Albion Hotel. is situated on the B5017 on the Burton to Uttoxeter road and is on the bus route into Burton on Trent.

Please send **SAE** for acceptance and further directions.

Dogs are allowed.

**Rally starts at 12noon Thursday. NOT BEFORE PLEASE.**

**7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> April Monday - Friday (4 nights). Elm Cottage Caravan Park Little Budworth Nr. Winsford Cheshire. CW7 2QJ Tel 01829 760544**

Website [www.elmcottagecp.co.uk](http://www.elmcottagecp.co.uk) **Rally limited to 30 units.** Dogs allowed.

Rally marshals Liz & Bryn Morgan Tel.No. 0161 432 4869. Mobile 07890876859 and Nora & Ven Venables.

**Site fees** to include electric hook-up, rally fee & hire of the Site's barn for 4 evenings. £44.35 for couples £40.18 for singles inc VAT.

**Please send rally slip & cheque with SAE** to B. Morgan 44 Mersey Road Heaton Mersey Stockport SK4 3DJ for confirmation of booking and site directions.

We will have a homemade meal provided by the site owners one

evening. Chicken & leek casserole with herby dumplings served with vegetable medley and creamed potatoes & Dessert £7.90. They will also cater for dietary requirements. Please say on rally slip if interested. Pay site owner at rally.

**Attractions:** In 2008 Liverpool is the designated City of Culture so we plan to organise the hire of a coach for a day trip to Liverpool. Please indicate on rally slip if you are interested in going so we can make a provisional booking. Elm Cottage is 0.75 miles from the Whitegate Way, which is a cycle/footpath on an old railway track. The Anderton Boat Lift is 9 miles away. Chester is 13 miles and there is parking for motorhomes at the Park & Ride.

**18th - 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008 (4 nights). Peak Rail. Rowsley South Station near Matlock, Derbyshire.**

Emergency Tel No. 07985 021779 or 07939 288586 (Marshals' mobiles).

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

Site fee: £4.70 **per van** per night. Rally fee: £1.20 **per person** (both inc. VAT).

Water and Elsan disposal. **Green field** site but toilets open during station hours. There are two electrical hook up points which could be used if people have a special need -please state on rally slip.

Booking slips and cheques to Mike & Jeanne Hall, 45, Bunyan Green Road, Selston, Nottingham, NG16 6GF. Cheques payable to M.T. Hall.

**Attractions:** In the picturesque picnic area of this preserved steam railway, beside the River Derwent with miles of walks, 10% off all-day tickets for steam trains to Matlock to ride all day or spend time in Matlock. Within the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site and The Peak National Park. Nearby are Chatsworth House, Haddon Hall, Carriage museum, and Bakewell's famous Market on Monday. We hope to arrange a meal at The Shalimar Indian Restaurant on the Monday evening (which also has an English menu). Please indicate on the booking form if you would be interested.

Busses to Sheffield, Matlock, Bakewell, Derby, Stockport & Manchester.

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

**24<sup>th</sup>.-27<sup>th</sup>.April.National Motorhome Show,East of England  
Showground,Peterborough.**

Emergency Tel.No. 07714 091 349

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

Please use the booking form enclosed in the February Newsletter if possible.

If you use a form from other magazines please mark the form ASOC and note the *special Club site fees:Arrive Thursday:£35,arrive Friday £32, arrive Saturday £29.*

***All bookings for the Saturday evening entertainment must be made with Warners when returning the application form.***

**Please note that ALL booking forms *MUST* be returned to Warners, the organisers, by Monday 7<sup>th</sup>.April if you wish to rally with the Club.**

**\*\*\*\*\*Then you must also complete a Club rally slip, (this also applies to internet bookings)** and return it,with the Rally Fee of £2.00 couples,£1.50 singles (both inclusive of VAT) to:N.C. & P. Rogers, 3 Appleby Close,Aldbrough St.John,Richmond, North Yorks.DL11 7TT. Tel.No. 01325 374 540 Cheques payable to N.C.& P. Rogers.

Please collect the *Club* rally information pack from the ASOC marshal before parking.

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

**1<sup>st</sup>. – 5<sup>th</sup>. May National Rally & AGM. Nottingham  
Showground,Newark.**

Application forms in January 2008  
Newsletter.Completed forms & cheques for  
camping & meals must be returned by  
14<sup>th</sup>.March 2008.

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:

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..

Yes, but he owns the garage and that would enable him to better recover from such a disaster at less cost than his customers.

We made some enquiries and sought quotes for the job. Ace Auto Services based in Nottingham have an interesting web sight but their quote was £465+VAT = £546.37 oh, and they collect & deliver your vehicle. In our case they have approved agents in Cardiff who would do the work. They claim to be cheaper than the Peugeot dealer! The next quote was from West Country Motor Homes from where we bought the Talisman in 2003, they do not give a fixed quote for a cambelt job but indicated £250 including VAT as an approximation. Finally our local garage, (who used to do a lot of work for WCMH before they opened their own workshop) was as first stated £185. inc VAT. What do you think? We would welcome feedback on this matter in the Newsletter and/or to e-mail address:- [richard@mcallister59.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:richard@mcallister59.freeserve.co.uk) We will road tax or Talisman again after March.

***Richard & Jill McAllister, Burnham on Sea.***

*Editor's comment : There is no doubt in my mind that in this matter you should always follow the manufacturers guidance - never mind the cost of repairs - if your engine fails and seizes the transmission, the effect on vehicle stability could cause a serious accident.*

*Also always consult a 'main dealer'. When I bought my car the documentation guidance was to change the cambelt at 80,000 miles however when it was being serviced at circa 50,000 miles the dealer informed me that, in light of experience, the maximum mileage limit was now 40,000. After checking the validity of the information (I'm like that!) I had mine replaced then without question.*

---

## ***Some Ideas and a Query from Richard Hill***

After buying our 1993 Rambler last June we did a few renovations and as exchanging experiences can provide useful tips, here goes.

### ***Windscreen Leak***

In looking for the source of a few drops of water we found a small hole in the metal seating underneath the right hand bottom corner of the surround rubber gasket. This was invisible without lifting the gasket up a fraction to look underneath. The best tools for this were two artist's thin and flexible painting knives and a table knife. The hole was surrounded by an edge of rusty metal which was emiered clean. Then a small, thin and flexible piece of aluminium sheeting was cut with tin snips to cover the hole. It was fixed in place with a thin layer of two-part fibre glass resin filler underneath the

aluminium and another thin layer on top. When dry it was sanded down and painted the same colour as the bodywork.

Next was to ensure there was no water trapped under the rubber anywhere else. Using the same tools we found a little film of water inside a few inches of the lower rubber gasket. We sucked this out with kitchen roll, then decided to put a thin bead of transparent silicone sealant between the rubber gasket and the glass along the upper edge (not the lower edge) at the top, bottom and each edge of the windscreen. It is hardly visible and should last a few years.

### ***Sticking Drawers and Cupboard Doors***

After warming the cabin up to ensure all the wood was as dry as possible I applied some drops of Free'n'easy silicone liquid with a thin cloth on the tip of a finger. It should be put on both surfaces at the point of sticking. It can also be used on curtain tracks. It is available from Lakeland kitchen shops [*and possibly other suppliers*]

### ***Now for the Query....***

My Rambler is kept in the open. After 5 days of frost I opened the bonnet and found the whole engine was soaking wet due to condensation dripping from the inner surface of the bonnet. Even the spare wheel had a lake in the middle.

My Peugeot 206 has a felt lining stuck to the underside of the bonnet which seems to avoid this sort of condensation. The Rambler bonnet is of a two-piece box construction with air holes in the inner metal liner to allow ventilation between the two metal sheets. All the condensation seems to collect under the inner sheet, even though it is protected by the air gap from the outside surface. Has anyone any ideas on what can be done?

---

### ***Was She Worth It....?***

***Geoff Williamson***

You will remember we purchased a Tom-Tom SatNav system last year, well we took it on a 3 week holiday through Germany and Austria. There were hiccups..... In dense forests, but in particular climbing or descending mountain passes. Descending from Hitlers *Eagles Nest* (a 20% gradient and steeper) we found that when we turned round a hairpin bend *She* requested we do a 'U' turn; although after going round the next hairpin *She* was now happy, until the next

one, and so on and so on....

Relying on *Her* to take us through one lovely little German village we eventually ended up on a forest track; conversely in one German town where the road was closed due to repairs *She* did us proud, down little narrow streets and back on course.

We also discovered it's no use putting in the last place we intended to finish at as *She* would stick to the main roads and *we* would rather take the scenic route, or the shortest. For example we saw a sign for our camp site at showing 3Km to go, but *She* wanted to go along the main road - 15Km to the campsite!!

Later on back home we loaned *Her* to some friends (as we live out in the sticks) with the instruction "Just press the 'Home' button". Imagine the giggles when we got a call from the local police station asking "Are you expecting visitors?"

So *Was She Worth It?* As an aid to mapping skills, the answer is definitely YES.

---

David Maddison-Roberts has written on the subject of ideas

Firstly he points out that in the piece at the bottom of page 3 of the January Newsletter the companies name is 'Witter' and not the 'Whitter' that we printed.

Secondly he mentioned some modifications/repairs he has devised himself over the years. These may be of interest to members who own older vehicles and I'm hoping David will send more information (although I won't be publishing detailed instructions in the Newsletter). David has developed ideas to heat door mirrors, fix disintegrating heat shields, charge vehicle battery on hook-up, operated electric windows without the ignition

key, cure reluctant starting and an alternative to completely draining a water system during cold weather.

David did give detail of a modification he installed to eliminate interference with the lights on a motorhome when the water pump was operated. On this particular vehicle the water pump 12v supply was fed via the main control panel and the wiring wasn't thick enough to prevent voltage reduction when the pump operated. Rather than re-wire the vehicle David introduced the operating coil of a relay into the circuit in place of the water pump and then installed new (appropriately fused and properly rated) wiring from the leisure battery to the water pump via the relay contacts. This completely solved the problem.

# Technical Group & Website

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



## London Emission Zone:

The following may come as news to many of you? As from February 4<sup>th</sup> 2008 there will be a London Emission Zone (LEZ) in which it is intended to decrease vehicle emission and thus improve the air quality within the area of the Greater London Authority (*i.e. very roughly inside the M25*). This will affect all larger diesel engine vehicles, not cars, but will include motorhomes (not petrol or LPG). A shortened guide of the schedule, affecting motorhomes is:-

4 <sup>th</sup> February 2008	> 12 tonnes gross	LEZ starts for heaviest lorries
July 2008	3.5 to 12 tonnes	includes motorhomes
October 2010	2.5 to 3.5 tonnes	motorhomes

The LEZ will be using cameras 24 hours every day of the year from 4<sup>th</sup> February 2008 to check all vehicles for emission compliance. Charges for non-compliant smaller class of vehicles (*i.e. motorhomes*) will be £100 per day; whilst larger classes will be £200. There is no exemption for owners of motorhomes living within the LEZ!

It is not possible to give guidance on compliance due to the large number of ages, model ranges and base vehicles used by Auto-Sleepers. It is however very easy to check by going to the website below and click on "compliance check" and enter your vehicle registration number. Or ring the LEZ office on 0845 607 0009, I have spoken to them and they are extremely helpful. As well as checking for compliance they will also give you a compliance statement if required, as well as a comprehensive 29 page booklet.

If your motorhome is non-compliant, it may be possible to fit pollution abatement equipment which would be either a particulate trap or a partial filter. You will have to seek the advice from your vehicle or other competent dealer.

More details can be obtained at the website [www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/lez](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/lez) (there is a link on the "Stop Press" page of the Club website). If you do not have access to the internet you can go to the local library where it is free.

**Difficult to find spares:**

I now have a further list of dealers who might be able to supply those difficult to locate spares for 'older' vans. For a copy please send me an SAE to 18 Greenwood Close, Fareham, Hants PO16 7UF.

**Ideas Sheets:**

In last month's Newsletter Peter Brown (Co-editor) confirmed, in reply to Robin Gardner, that there was no editorial reason why Ideas/suggestions were few and far between in the Newsletter. Basically if members don't send them in then they cannot be considered for publishing.

It would however be remiss of me not to explain the difference between ideas/suggestions appearing in the Newsletter and those formally issued as Ideas Sheets:-

● **Ideas/suggestions:**

The ideas/suggestions in the Newsletter are clearly those direct from individual members, and members undertake them at their own risk.

● **Ideas Sheets:**

Ideas Sheets will have been reviewed and approved by Auto~Sleepers, and as such there can be confidence in their implementation, if one has the expertise and tools. A full list is given to all new members on joining and to existing members once a year; as well as being listed on the Club website. They are now up to No. 141 and 5,188 have been issued; so interest remains high.

Whatever method you use, just keep those ideas coming in, please?

**Work-in-progress:**

Unfortunately I still await a positive reply from Auto~Sleepers regarding Peugeot 20 minute radio and Sargent power panel problems.

**Website:**

Update No. 1/08 contained –

- \* Information on the London Emission Zone (LEZ) and how it affects motorhomes
- \* Rally list for 2008
- \* Availability of an additional review of the Warwick
- \* Availability of a list of dealers for difficult-to-find spare parts.

## **In praise of our Amethyst**

***David Horder***

It is unfortunate that some members have quality problems with their vans and servicing thereof. I am writing to sing the praises of our 1999 Amethyst, which only covers about 5000 miles annually and therefore only has one Ford dealer service each spring. I do all the domestic servicing myself.

Our main trips have been to Spain, Morocco, Switzerland, Venice and northern Scotland. In 2007 we went to Austria and Holland. For 8 years the few problems we have had have been due to lack of use. The most expensive was new back axle oil seals, probably caused by rust on axle and drive shafts. The other was an MoT failure after a winter lay-up (never again!). I had used the brakes hard to clear rust, but exhaust emissions caused the failure. This was easily cured by a high rev blast around the ring road to clear the injectors.

Concerning all the correspondence about tyres, I always keep the original 8 year old Michelins inflated to 41 and 53 psi and the valves are original rubber-covered ones. We have never had any trouble in this area, but before someone writes to chastise me, I do intend to fit a new set of tyres in the Spring.

Despite keeping the vehicle outside we have had no trouble with body leaks or equipment failure. We like the internal layout as rear passengers face forward, have seat belts and are not far away from the people in front. There is a huge double bed and we can always sleep with heads uphill at whatever angle the van is parked. My only criticism of the layout is the inability to turn the drivers seat and to use it as part of the lounge.

We have camped in all weathers including thick snow in Spain, but using silver screens we have always been comfortable.

We have made some changes and if anyone wants more details I shall be happy to oblige:

- Cruise Control - wonderful on long journeys
- 'Fridge Cooling - the wine rack above the fridge became warm so I fitted a computer fan in the vent ducting.

- Security - I found an unused void and fitted a small hidden door, ideal for passports, cash, etc.
- Drain Smells - a 'U' bend was fitted at the entry to the grey water tank.
- Door Security - I added a mortice lock to the rear door.
- Over-sink cupboard - Changed the front panel from sloping to vertical nearly doubling its capacity.
- Crockery Storage - Use normal wire racks in place of AS wooden rack, increasing capacity.
- Flyscreen - added to rear doorway.
- Ladders - 2 were supplied one for Luton beds and one to reach fixed rear ladders. Kids nip up to bed without a ladder and I (aged 75) can reach the fixed ladder without an extension (2 ladders offered for sale). Can't AS devise one ladder to be used in either place; they're never required at the same time?

---

**Tim Pritchard** has travelled extensively over the years with his 'camper vans'. I believe they have all been Volkswagen conversions, the latest of which is a Trident. As these vehicles have very basic bathroom facilities I am happy with Tim calling it a camper rather than a Motorhome. I've not met Tim or his wife Margaret and have only had a brief telephone call but reading between the lines of his reports I get the impression that he enjoys a challenge and is competent in international communications. All of Tim's tours combine a mixture of what he calls 'Rough Camping' (off the main road and up a track till you find a secluded spot for the night) and full facility camp sites (and occasionally even hotel rooms).

The first report I have from Tim is

a record of a tour of Russia, Poland & Czechoslovakia with his sons Robert and Michael in August 1982. Ages are not mentioned but as one son is recorded as being a history teacher and they were both very independent I'm guessing the boys were in their early twenties.

They decided to make the trip more interesting by travelling from England through Scandinavia, entering Russia, as it were by the back door and travelling home through as many Eastern Bloc countries as possible. Tim particularly wanted the boys to live behind the Iron Curtain for a couple of weeks to heighten the experience of re-entering the West, but was prepared to start with some restful long boat trips and Scandinavian comfort via

Copenhagen, Stockholm and Helsinki to prepare for Russia.

Although I'm sure the boat trips were restful, the family seemed to fly through Scandinavia to the Russian Border. Before leaving, a detailed itinerary of the Russian visit had to be approved by their tourist board but that approval did not prevent an experience at the Russian border lasting over 2 hours when *everything*, including bits of the vehicle was removed and inspected.

Tim carries on with a day by day record of the trip that covers many pages and describes lots of experiences and challenging journeys. They certainly seemed to make the most of days by not starting the next leg of the trip, say 250 miles, till 5 pm, arriving at a locked site and camping outside the gate on more than one occasion.

Tim notes his impressions from the trip:

**Russia:** Big country, two weeks and 2000 miles but only crossed a corner of it.

A country full of contradictions; so much land, so little used; the average person unfriendly and uninterested, the intellectuals thirsting for knowledge and contact with the West; no

shortage of money, nothing to buy; good and cheap public transport, a five year wait for a car; litter free streets, disgusting lavatories; crude manners, beautiful ballet; unhygienic serving of food and drink, excellent natural foods like bread cheese and ice cream.

The system patently does not work. The State and bureaucracy stifle everything. Nobody wants to be responsible for anything or put the more than the minimum effort into anything.

**Poland and Czechoslovakia:** so different. For the most part you would not think you were in a communist country.

Tim expresses some personal political opinions – his crystal ball must have been very clear the day he wrote them!!!

A few things Tim knew he would remember:

The fantastic Smolensk Cathedral, the beautiful Ballet and the lovely Volga river. Polish hospitality, Prague beer, Finnish boats (and ladies [*you have to read the full text to appreciate this one*]), Russian forest roads, Berlin Wall, Bruges and Dover.

## WANTED

Awning for AS Talbot Rambler

AS fibreglass front bumper spoiler (I think that's the right description!)

Standard 8 cine film Editor (so I can have my 40 year old family films put onto DVDs)

**Contact Les Travell email: [travelljosel@hotmail.com](mailto:travelljosel@hotmail.com)**



**New Pro Tec** breathable full cover for Peugeot Symbol (unused). Fabric Protex 003 in grey. £330.00 new any reasonable offer

considered buyer to collect or pay postage. **Contact David or Christine 01242 512212** (Cheltenham)

*Thanks for the donation and apologies for the delay in inserting this ad.*

**Omnistat** tripod stand + attachments with 60cm folding arm dish LNB cable etc. **£60**

**Omnistore** top box 130ABS.

130x94x45cm. Cost 250 reduced price as although fully watertight and secure, lock on one side needs attention **£75**

**Contact Peter Coward 015394 35828** (Grasmere, Cumbria)

*Thanks for the donation*

**Mercedes Medallion** reg May 1998 2.9 turbo diesel automatic ABS anti-slip system alloy wheels. One owner 17,000 miles. Rust proofed. Age demands sale. No smoking, pets or children. Cost £47,000 will accept **£20,000** ono. **Contact Jack Garratt 01594 861322** (Gloucestershire).

*Thanks for the donation*

### AS Crockery Odds

Fushia design. Bittons plain flower head—1 saucer, pink flower head—2 cereal bowls, side plate, 2 dinner plates (both with chips but usable) 1 Coloroll saucer plain flower head, 1 Staffordshire cereal bowl pink flower head, 2 unmarked side plates pink flower head.

**Contact David Clark 01189 427264** (eves) email [david@humber.org.uk](mailto:david@humber.org.uk)

**AS Trident** 2.5 automatic, 2001, only 13,500 miles. Alloys, alarm, towbar, 2 cycle rack, awning, multi CD. Immaculate condition. Only **£17,500**. **Contact N Stocks 01472 697310** (NE Lincs).

*Thanks for the donation*

**VW AS Trident** 1991 (Aug) J. 2100cc. Usual AS fitting including original crockery plus tow ball, immobiliser, 2 Calor gas bottles fitted, extra sliding side window, Fiamma awning. New MoT on purchase. 43,000 miles only. Excellent condition in all areas. **£9,700** (Upgrading to a coachbuilt)

**Contact Paul on 01984 639150 or 07939 251008 or email [paul@mollard.co.uk](mailto:paul@mollard.co.uk)**

**Compact Sat.System** in carry case. 37cm sat dish, LNB, cable, compass, mounting kit. Etc. **£45**

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\*\* Jill Bertlin

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