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# **AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB**

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



*Rally time is here again.....*

## **NEWSLETTER 234**

### **March 2008**

# From the Editor (S)

It's always sad when members write to say they're leaving the Club, but it is especially so when one of the founder members *membership number 30*, writes to say "cherrio". But Duncan and Jean Ellis feel it's time to say goodbye and write:

*"Being founder members of ASOC we have enjoyed such good and genuine friendships, but we have decided to finish motor caravanning. Our van has lasted us for 27 years and is still going strong.*

*We thank all those who attended our many rallies at Chester and Denbigh.*

*Best wishes for the New Year."*

You will recall we summarised Tim Pritchard's experiences in Russia, Poland and Czechoslovakia in last months' magazine and intend to publish similar summaries of his other trips in future magazines. Space will not permit us to publish the travel-logs in full, however, Tim has said that if anyone would like the complete documents they should telephone or e-mail him and he will forward them. His contact details are 01934 852568 stantonys@hotmail.co.uk. The documents cover:

Russia & Eastern Europe	1982
Poland & Eastern Europe	1999
Scandinavia, Russia, Baltic States & Germany	2004
Outer Hebrides	2006

Our Deputy Editor, Dudley Woodhams will edit the July and August issues of the Newsletter so please note in your diaries to send contributions for those issues to Dudley.

Prompted by the last Newsletter, Geoff Williamson makes the following comment:

**CAMBELTS**—a garage owner that Geoff knows used his Ferrari once or twice a year to go to owners meets. On inspecting the engine before the journey he would always find the cam belt 'frozen' to the shape of the pulleys. To avoid this problem on his Motorhome, Geoff uses it once a week to collect the shopping. This has the added advantage of moving the tyres to a new flat spot and keeping them pliable. *I have always done the same with the additional benefit of keeping brake discs rust free and batteries active.*

**COLD TAP SPURTING**—Geoff avoids this by switching the water pump on AFTER opening the cold tap. In Geoff's Duetto all the taps and switches are in the same area so this is not inconvenient. In bigger vans this is not such a practical solution.

# National Rally

*Have you sent in your National Rally booking form yet? Don't forget the closing date is 14th March 2008. If you have sent your form and have not had an acknowledgement from me, please contact me as I know that things get lost in the post.*

**Sheila Henthorne**

The date for the rally is fast approaching, there was a flurry of bookings when the January magazine was received and again when the February magazine went out. Hopefully after this magazine is received many more of you will send off your application forms.

I had hoped this month to give you news of Traders coming to the rally, but unfortunately not many seem to be interested. I am still awaiting replies from Eberspacher (UK) and Solar Solutions. Phil Lorimer, the Dometic Engineer, has confirmed he will be on hand on Friday and Saturday afternoons to carry out warranty repairs and give a discount on all other repairs. We will also have Vehvac Climate Components Limited, who supply automatic clutches etc., on Friday afternoon only. As they have requested to be indoors you will find them in the Stuart Goodwin Pavilion along with the Hobbies.

I can confirm there will be a gas supply on site at the Showground, details of where and times of opening will be with the letter in your rally envelope. Brownhills have confirmed they will be providing transport to their Leisure Centre and also cream teas; the Air Museum will again give 50p discount on entry tickets.

Anyone displaying a Hobby should contact Jim Henwood on 01642 805237; for the photo competition contact Rita Tubb on 023 8026 7294. The recipe for the cake competition is in this months' magazine and Sheila Barnett will be looking for your cakes on Friday 2nd May. Ian and Marion Wood will be looking after the For Sale Board so take your notices to them in the Stuart Goodwin Pavilion. Any donations for these and the Hobbies will go to the charity, as will money raised from the cake auction.

For the benefit of new members, music for the Dinner Dance will be provided by Nick Martin and on Sunday evening we will be entertained by the Houghton Weavers.

**April 30th to May 4th is the date of the 2009 rally and it will be a special one to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the club. After the committee meeting I will probably be able to give you more news, so watch this space....**

***Nora Venables***

## **Photo Competition**

This year our competition will be judged for us by Charles Trevelyan, our President, so come on let's have your entries. There is nothing stopping anyone entering, the more photos the better the competition.

Prints can be either 6 x 4 or 6 x 5 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.

Entries should be sent to: Rita Tubb  
70 Charnwood Crescent  
Chandlersford  
Hampshire SO53 5QL

## Cake Competition

*Pages*

### CHERRY CAKE

*1st £30  
2nd £20  
3rd £10*

- 6 ozs Butter
- 6 ozs Castor sugar
- Finely grated rind of one lemon
- 2 Eggs beaten together
- 3 ozs Plain Flour and 3 oz Self Raising Flour, plus a pinch of salt
- 8 ozs Glacé Cherries halved
- 3 ozs Ground Almonds

### Method

- Cream butter, sugar and lemon rind until creamy
- Add beaten egg, a little at a time.
- Add tablespoon of flour with last amount of egg.
- Fold in the flour, cherries and ground almonds, adding a little milk to make a fairly stiff dropping consistency.
- Turn mixture into a lined 7 inch round cake tin.
- Bake in a moderate oven for approximately 1¼ hours.

Place the cake on a cardboard plate and cover with cling film.

Please bring to the Stuart Goodwin Hall on Friday between 10am and 4pm



All the cakes will be auctioned off for the chosen charity.

**Sheila Barnett**

## *Thank you*

*I would like to express my thanks for the kindness of so many members when my husband was taken ill at Topsham Rally last year. Liz and Bryn Morgan were very kind and Doreen Turner, with her nursing skills was very helpful. She provided Colin (my husband) with a water bottle to ease the pain in his back for the long drive home to Walton-on-Thames. Angela, Rose and Mike were also very helpful, carrying water to the van etc.*

*Returning from Topsham Colin went into hospital on 25th August and was diagnosed with cancer of the pancreas; he died on 6th October.*

*We had owned Auto-Sleepers since the 1970s and I shall miss my trips with ASOC, which we loved and our dog Jamie, a greyhound, will miss his holidays with Gracie, his girlfriend greyhound, (Angela's dog).*

*Love to everyone we made friends with, such lovely friendly people. I shall be with them in thought and shall follow the rallies through the Newsletters through the years.*

*The van is advertised in the Newsletter; I shall not be advertising it anywhere else as I would like it to go to a member.*

***Nina Robson***

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Farewell.....**

We will be changing our van soon, but regrettably not for an Auto-Sleeper. Like many before us the decision has been difficult - to match our requirements from the Auto-Sleeper range or change manufacturer and leave the Club.

We have enjoyed warm friendship on many rallies, as well as technical help and assistance and we sincerely hope that whilst we are no longer eligible for membership we may meet many of you again at other events outside of the Club.

***Jean & Mike Barman***

## **AUTO-SLEEPERS GROUP ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Auto-Sleepers (ASG) has announced the appointment of Geoff Scott as Chief Executive. Geoff, who will retain his position as ASG's Chief Financial Officer, replaces Ian Capes who leaves Auto-Sleeper after seven years.

Auto-Sleepers is part of SEA, the third largest European Motorhomes producer. Luca Bianchi, SEA's Chief Executive Officer, said: "We are very pleased to announce Geoff's appointment. His experience will prove invaluable in helping guide the company through its future challenges and developments.

The appointment comes at an important time for the group, with Auto-Sleepers having a record order book, the new model Symbol winning MMM's Award for High Top of the Year 2008 and Marquis Gloucester winning MMM's Dealer of the Year 2008. Auto-Sleepers has recently secured a partnership with Mercedes Benz and will be launching a totally new range of motor homes at the NEC in February in conjunction with the Marquis nationwide network of dealerships. The business is looking forward to a great future".

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### **Just when do you change a cam belt?**

***Keith Taylor and Rita Jones***

When we took our Trident for its annual service/MOT to our local VW dealer in November 2006 we were informed it was due a new cam belt. At that time the mileage was 28,038 and the van just 4 years old.

Following the article in the magazine, purely out of curiosity, we phoned the dealer today to ask on what basis they felt the cam belt needed changing and it was suggested the next change should be with the 2010 service/MOT.

The cost in 2006 was £357.50 plus VAT. We clocked 4,022 miles to November 2007 and by November 2008, if all goes according to plan it will be a far greater figure. It will be interesting to see what we are told at that time.....

# Rally News

## Why not try running a rally?

The day after the February Newsletter arrived at our house, a deluge of applications began to arrive for the Little Budworth Rally. We had a limit of 30 places but received 48 applications.

To me this indicates that there is a need for other members to put something back into the Club and seriously consider running a rally. The Spring seems a very popular time. Though not essential, electric hook-up and a well drained site makes an early rally more desirable.

If you have thought about marshalling a rally then maybe you should do something. Neil Rogers is always helpful in giving advice and guidance. So how about doing a rally in Spring 2009?

*Liz Morgan*

\*\*\*\*\*

On behalf of Roy and John may I thank everyone for singing the praises of the Ulverston 'Dickensian Festival' Rally.

You may have noticed the rally is not on the list for 2008, the reason being that Ford Park is to undergo alterations. Planning Permission has been granted for a £3m scheme. The choice is therefore to hold the rally next to a building site with a lot of the facilities unavailable, or not hold the rally and then find work has not started....

I have therefore, arranged to see the Park Manager around the end of July/ beginning of August. I should then have an idea of the work schedule and be in a position to make a decision about the rally.

*Don Bland*

## ***Rallies and Post Codes*** ***Valerie & Robin Gardner***

While a lot of us navigate with a GPS we find it most helpful when a post code is given for a rally site, it makes it very easy to programme the route with accuracy. In the directions to our rally at Masham we gave the post code and I'm sure it was helpful to the ralliers with GPS.

*Before anyone puts pen to paper....* I know there can be a problem with a post code in the country. Whilst our own post code covers only a few houses in an area of less than 100 yards, I know it's different out in the sticks. We programmed a commercial site in the country into our GPS once and when we got to the destination we were at a farm, with no camp site in view. However it was less than ½ a mile further on, over the brow of a hill, so it didn't take much finding.

So bearing this in mind I feel it would be very helpful if all rallies had the postcode as well as directions to the site.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Rally Lottery** ***Una & Eric Austin***

We think the rally at Chinon is an excellent idea - lovely area and time of year.

We showed our interest when it was first proposed and immediately returned a rally slip when the final information came in the February Newsletter. This arrived on 2nd February, having been posted second class on 31st January.

The reply from Baz was that the 31 places had been filled by Saturday 2nd February on a first-come first-served basis. Our reply was not received until 5th February and we are on the reserve list.

So the rally was fully booked before we received our newsletter.

What is the answer to the 'rally lottery'?

From the supply end, are all the Newsletters posted together? If all

copies are despatched by the same post we then become dependent on the vagaries of the postal service - no chance for those in remote areas.

From the receiving end, do we follow the old maxim "If at first you don't succeed try, try again" or the modern, more comfortable approach "If at first you don't succeed, give up"?

Editors' response

*"Our printer labels and fills the envelopes and then takes them to his local post office. They check the size and weight then agree a day on which they will be dispatched with the aim of arriving at their destination on the last day of the preceding month. The post office apply the stamps and dispatch by second class post on the agreed date. From then it is down to the postal service that can take 1 to 3 days from posting to delivery.*

*I can tell that our Newsletter arrives always one, and often two days after others because of the e-mail responses I get from readers, so I sympathise with Una's plight and have suffered in the same way."*

*A fellow Club member quite rightly pointed out that the only way to guarantee a place on a rally is to run it!*

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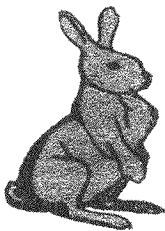
### **Condensation in a 2002 Gatcombe Michael & Jean Shaftoe**

We spent Christmas and New Year in the Lake District, it was cold and wet, something we are used to in the Lakes but we still keep returning!

Something we are not used to was the wet found in the bottom cupboard at the kitchen end and the storage area under the off-side bunk, the carpets were sodden. After a thorough investigation we could find no leak and therefore concluded it must be condensation.

With a fan heater and de-humidifier we eventually dried it out but how to avoid it happening again as we use our motorhome all year round in all weathers.

Has anyone else experienced the same problem and if so, what was the solution?



## March 2008 Rally Supplement



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

\*\*\*\*\*New Rally 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>. June Cambridge Camping &  
Caravanning Club Site.

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.

### **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**

**THIS RALLY IS NOW FULLY BOOKED.**

**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 Eisan 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.

Tel.No.01773 778016.

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.

**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.

**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.

### 6<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>. May (3 nights) Rutland C & C, Greetham, Oakham, Rutland.

Site tel. No., 01572813520 Office hours only. Marshals' mobile 07810 455318.

Rally marshals: Elizabeth & Bill Grimsley assisted by Linda & Alan Hood.

Site Fees:- Grass pitches, all with electric hook up. £37.50 per couple for 3 nights, £27.00 for singles for 3 nights. Additional adults £3.50 per night. Rally Fee:-£1.50 per person. All fees include VAT.

Please send rally slip & cheque for full amount to :-Mrs. E. Grimsley, 24 Paul Drive, Leicester, LE4 9FY. Cheques payable to **E.W. & Mrs. E. Grimsley**. Tel. No. 0116 269 2220.

Limit of 20 vans.

**Warning:** The site is next to R.A.F. Cottesmore where Harriers & Tornados are used for training. These are very noisy and may fly day or night.

**Attractions:** 1. We can arrange a guided walk in Oakham with a Blue Badge Guide on Wednesday Market Day. The cost is £2.50 per person, with a minimum of 10 & a maximum of 25 people. We will use the two hourly bus service between Greetham & Oakham. Please indicate your interest, but do **NOT** send any money.

2. There are three pubs in Greetham, all serving food. Please indicate if interested in a group meal on Thursday evening and we can make a provisional booking if there are enough people. Access to the village from the camp site is on a footpath taking 10 minutes.

3. There are many places of interest in the area.

Please enclose a S.A.E. (at least 9" x 4.5") for confirmation and information leaflets.

**Directions:** Use **B668** between Greetham & **A1**. Turn at crossroads following Brown Signs, **left** at 2<sup>nd</sup>. Junction, to the end & **right** into the site.

(iii.)

**15th -19th May (4 nights ) Camping & Caravanning Club Site, Canterbury Kent,**

Emergency Telephone No. 07803 238878.

Rally Marshals:-Joy & Nigel Wilkins and Karen & Mike Ryman,

Site fee:- £9-15 per night plus £2-90 electricity if required,

Rally fee:- £1-70 per person,(All include VAT).

Rally slips and cheques to Joy Wilkins, 13 Oakfield Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent, TN24 9LL, Telephone 01233 620204

**Directions**, Leave Canterbury on A257 signposted Sandwich, in 1 mile opposite Golf Club turn **right** signposted Bekesbourne & Camping site.

Do not forget your bus pass.

Rally limit 20 Vans, Rally starts 12 noon.

**16<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> .May Southern Motorcaravan Show, Newbury Showground, Berks.**

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

Rally Marshals:John & Daphne Hallett.

Please send a SAE ,with rally slip and rally fee of £2.00 per unit,for a booking form to John & Daphne Hallett,13 Linden Crescent,Grove,Wantage,Oxfordshire,OX12 7NB.

Tel.No.01235 764550. E-mail [hallettjh@AOL.com](mailto:hallettjh@AOL.com) This form must be returned to

**Warners**,the organisers, before **Monday 28th.April** if you wish to rally with the Club.

Please let the marshal know if booking by any other means ie, Internet.A rally slip is still required.

***Fees for the next two rallies are subject to confirmation from the site.***

**15<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>May (4 nights)Little Cotton Farm,C.P.,Dartmouth.**

Site Tel.No.01803 832558.Fax 01803 834887.Website:-[www.littlecotton.co.uk](http://www.littlecotton.co.uk)

Any additional nights should be booked with the owners Paul & Dot White.

Rally Marshals:-Richard & Jill McAllister,assisted by John & Rita Tubb.

Site Fees:- Basic pitch £8.25 (no electric) per unit per night.

Standard pitch:-£10.50 ( includes electric ) per unit per night.

Rally Fee:- £3.00 couples. £1.50 singles. All include VAT.

Booking slips & cheques payable to R.J.McAllister with SAE to "Milesaway" Steart Drive,Burnham on Sea. TA8 1BZ. Tel.No. 01278 781976.Mob.07840076771.

The site has 7.5 acres of level & gently sloping ground an award winning toilet /shower complex with disabled facilities,dishwashing area, launderette style washing machines, large tumble dryers & ironing boards are available.

**Dogs** are welcome but they **MUST** use the doggy walk on site and be **KEPT** on the lead on site.

There is a well stocked shop,papers must be ordered the day before.

**Attractions:** The site is adjacent to the Park & Ride bus service into Dartmouth (tickets available at the camp shop).

This will be the 11<sup>th</sup> year of the Dartmouth Music Festival held from Friday 16<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May. There are plenty of boat trips operating out of Dartmouth, either up river to Totnes or out to sea. One boat trip goes to Greenway Quay from where you can visit Greenway House & Gardens (NT) one time home of Agatha Christie. There are other NT properties in the area. Two local steam trains operate from Kingswear to Paignton & Totnes to Buckfastleigh.

**Please DO NOT arrive before Noon.**

***Butlins Minehead rally is a follow on to this one and starts at 1.00p.m. on 19<sup>th</sup> May. Please give the marshal time to travel from Dartmouth.***

### **19<sup>th</sup>. 23<sup>rd</sup>. May (4 nights ).Butlins,Minehead,Somerset.**

Marshal's Mobile 07840076771

Rally Marshals: Jill & Richard McAllister .

Site Fee: £55 covers 4 nights. Fee includes hook up & all Butlins entertainment facilities.

Rally Fee: Couples £3.00, Singles £1.50, all include VAT.

Rally slips & cheques with **S.A.E** to R.J. McAllister, Milesway, Steart Drive, Burnham on Sea. TA8 1BZ. Tel.No. 01278 781976

The site is a commercial touring site with full facilities including electricity. If any member would like to avail themselves of a breakfast & evening meal package in the dining room commencing with the Monday evening meal & concluding with breakfast on Friday, "Meal Deal Tickets" should be available from Reception on arrival (cost in 2006 £39).

**Pets welcome.**

**Attractions:** In addition to the Butlin complex which includes Splash Waterworld, a funfair & two supermarkets on site, a Tesco supermarket is approx 10 mins walk away, the town centre 15 mins. The main gate is 15 minutes from the site. Butlins Land Train runs every 30 minutes to the harbour from Splashworld. The West Somerset Railway to Bishop Lydiard nr. Taunton is nearby. There are a number of walks & coach trips available. The medieval village of Dunster with its Yarn Market & National Trust Castle is nearby. Cycles could prove useful for reaching the Main Gate, top of town, Tescos & the cycle path to Dunster. More details on arrival.

**Directions:** These will be included with welcome letter but as this rally immediately follows on from the Dartmouth rally (19<sup>th</sup> May) the Marshals need to drive from Dartmouth to Minehead to be ready for ralliers.

**So please do not arrive on site before 1.00p.m.**

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.

**THIS RALLY IS NOW FULLY BOOKED.**

*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**

**E & OE**

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

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

.....

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

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

e-mail ..... Membership No. ....

Van Reg. .... Length ..... Arrival Day/Time .....

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. ....

e-mail ..... Membership No. ....

Van Reg. .... Length ..... Arrival Day/Time .....

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..

## From the Factory

### APPROACHING FIVE YEARS AT THE MOTORHOME SERVICE CENTRE

By Charles Trevelyan

Looking back when I joined Auto-Sleepers in 1986, now almost 22 years ago, we had no Motorhome Service Centre and on the occasions that customers required either insurance, retail or warranty work, and this was rare indeed, we duly looked after them by drawing labour off the production lines.

We did, at our old factory before it was destroyed by fire, in October 1992, have a bay adjacent to the metalwork shop, where the more long term repairs were carried out, but this if I remember correctly, was manned only by two operatives and at the times when they were not fully employed, they helped out on the production lines.

For this, the good Neville (Membership No. 6!) was only too pleased to help, and if, on the rare occasions, he saw that the workmanship didn't match his exacting needs, firm words were said! I remember, oh so well, the enormous sense of genuine co-operation that was prevalent; helpfulness abounded as I experienced, of course, at first hand when I joined the Company – good days indeed!

All those years back, of course, the design of motorhomes was very much more simple – long before the days of the legislative requirements being imposed upon us as they are now. For example, the bed boxes were simply rectangular wooden boxes with a series of hinges that allowed them to be extended both to make up the bed and to form the settee. Thus, all that could go wrong was in effect a hinge becoming loose whereas these days we have metal slide-out bed mechanisms with intermediate locks and struts allowing access from on top and indeed much more.

Indeed, the complexity of the current motorhome is so very different to those of twenty years ago when there was really little need, nor demand, for such sophistication.

A little over five years ago, it was decided that we should form a motorhome service centre here at Willersey. It was a completely cold start and we purchased our own office furniture, a very basic computer system was installed, and we had four operatives. The motorhome technicians were Paul Oliver, Tim Hudd and Darren Grove, and Terry Hemming was our automotive technician.

The office was looked after by myself and a clerical assistant – and shortly after our formation we were joined by Adrian Stanford who helped move the business forward in those early years. Very soon, by endeavouring to carry out work of the highest quality with the aim of offering exemplary aftersales service, our name became rather more widely known.

With a degree of trepidation, we advertised in the motorhome press and invited certain motorhome journalists to come and visit us. The latter resulted in some most encouraging articles, not least from Mike Jago, the Editor of MMM, John Wickersham and indeed others, who not only had the opportunity of inspecting the standard and level of work that we did at first hand, but of experiencing other aspects of our business also.

They saw, for example, that each customer was warmly met and introduced to the technician who would subsequently be carrying out the work on their vehicle. Unusually, these days, they had the opportunities as indeed they do now, of discussing the work to be carried out with the appropriate technician who, during the course of the day, gives them regular updates on progress.

A comfortable waiting room has always been available with coffee and other refreshments, a daily newspaper, and current motorhome and appropriate magazines.

As time went on, and our workload increased, we enlarged our premises somewhat to incorporate an extra two bays in the building where we had previously had our offices, moving our offices to the far end of the aforementioned unit. This, in effect, enabled us to divide our operation into an automotive/technical/PDI unit adjacent to our office complex and our main unit, at the other side of our storage yard, is used for conversion, warranty, repair and long term motorhome work.

Some three years ago, we recruited more labour and we now have five conversion technicians – Paul Oliver, who has so loyally remained with us, Tim Hudd too, assisted by Mark Burdett and his brother Chris, and in Terry Hemming's workshop, we now have Shaun Watson-Bryant.

As an indication of the amount of work that we have carried out, our turnover for the last financial year was a little under £685,000 – no bad achievement for almost five years of existence. Likewise, each motorhome that is booked into us – remembering that we look after all models, not just Auto-Sleepers – is given a job number pertaining to whether it is warranty, retail, insurance etc. Thus, for example, one motorhome in one visit, could have two job numbers, one for warranty and one for retail work. Our latest job number is within the region of 15850. That is not to say that we have this number of customers, but certainly at least 9,000 – 10,000 have passed through our hands in the course of our existence.

Previously in the winter life has been relatively quiet for us but perhaps with the recent good weather, and typically I write this whilst it's pouring with rain, the motorhome season has been extended somewhat. In the early part of January, we have remained remarkably busy with a large amount of work already booked in. We always have in hand a significant number of long-term insurance/repair jobs to undertake, and in order to look after our customers' needs, we always under-sell our hours so that we can deal with short notice bookings and emergencies (such as gas and water leaks).

In this way, we can look after customers and their problems very rapidly – often immediately – which we know to be very greatly appreciated. I would not wish owners to think that we were flying our flag; life is by no means perfect but in general we do receive many pleasing accolades, letters and words of thanks, from our customers as is borne out by the many postcards and letters of gratitude that we receive and associated letters that are to be found in books in our waiting room.



# Technical Group & Website

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



## London Emission Zone:

As of 4<sup>th</sup> of February the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in London commenced affecting all heavy diesel vehicles over 12 tonnes, and will be followed very quickly in July by non-compliant motorhomes over 3.5 tonnes. 2010 is not too far away for non-compliant motorhomes between 2.5 and 3.5 tonnes.

There is great deal of anger, frustration and impotence on the internet to the inclusion of motorhomes into the LEZ, but it is very evident that the imposition of the LEZ is a 'fait accompli', unfortunately. I have communicated with both DVLA and the LEZ office over our concern and a posed possible technical opt-out – but to no avail – not surprisingly!

For Londoners with non compliant motorhomes the cost of daily use is extortionate at up to £36,500 to £73,000 depending on weight, clearly not viable. The only options will be either - leaving this hobby and way of life; buying a new motorhome or trying to get modification to ensure compliance. I have found one company that professes to provide a suitable modification but I have no costing at the moment. There are, no doubt, other dealers and I will continue to try to seek them out, but a visit to your main chassis dealer, or other competent dealer, is worth pursuing. Searching the internet, monthly periodicals or other Club magazines is another possibility.

If you are not sure if your motorhome is compliant I suggest you do so soon - tel 0845 6070009 or the website [www.tfl.gov.uk/lezlondon](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/lezlondon) - there is a link on the Club website. I have sent out several LEZ booklets but these are easily available from the LEZ office. Incidentally, our motorhome was registered as non-compliant on the LEZ website database and I would have been picked up, no doubt, by the 24/7 cameras. It turned out that it was my cherished number plate that was

the problem and subsequently I asked for, and received, documented proof from the LEZ that it was compliant. For more details on the LEZ see last month's Newsletter.

## **National Rally**

This year at the National Rally we will still have the usual 'Technical Enquiry Desk' in the Stuart Goodwin Pavilion, where I will again be ably supported by Brian Smith and Albert Brown. Hopefully we will, between us, be able to answer your technical and other queries; as well as having technical documentation for your perusal. Do drop in and see us.

As you will be aware, Friday's 'Technical Q&A Session' will be replaced by a general 'Open Session'. You will be able to put your complaints, ideas, and queries - on the Company and its products - directly to Auto-Sleepers Senior Management. Should we not have been able to satisfactorily answer your technical queries at the 'technical enquiry desk' you will, of course, still be able to raise them at this 'Open Session'.



### **Can you help?**

We previously owned a Symbol without a roll out awning and accommodated our dog in a side Dorema annex that affixed to the guttering above the side door. Whilst it was heavy and a little cumbersome it served its purpose very well. We lost our dog and didn't immediately replace him. We purchased a 2005 Dorset (Same as Symbol) which had a roll out awning. We succumbed to adopting a rescue dog just before Christmas and now wonder what can be done to accommodate her with the van as the side annex Dorema Highlander can no longer be affixed to the side as the guttering is obstructed by the roll out awning. Has any member adapted the dorema or used an annex attached to the rear successfully? I would be happy to receive comments/solutions to either telephone 01394 285346 or email [peterhales@btinternet.com](mailto:peterhales@btinternet.com).

*Peter Hales*

## **Gas regulators**

*Neil Rogers*

I recently took the Northern ASOC gas boiler into a recognised Calor Gas dealer for the annual service. For this service the burners are cleaned, the gas pipe replaced and the regulator checked. The first two I understand but the regulator checked. Why? It worked with no problems, or so I thought.

Regulators have, it appears, a working life of approximately ten years. Our regulator worked but the pressure was not what it should have been. As a regulator ages the pressure of the gas it supplies to the appliances in the van may vary. If the gas pressure is not correct then it may cause an appliance to be inefficient or perhaps even dangerous. It is recommended that regulators are replaced at least every ten years and checked regularly. How many of us have regulators that date back many years and unless they have been checked we have no idea whether they supply the correct pressure.

It may be a good idea to look at your regulator and try to remember how many years ago it was bought and have the pressure checked by a Calor Gas registered dealer. The new rally season will be with us soon and many vans have been sitting through the winter not in use. A check now may save problems later

.....

## ***Ideas and Tyres (January)***

*Ray Whiley*

### **IDEAS**

Whilst agreeing with Robin Gardner that members' ideas in the Newsletter were always of interest and often helpful, I must point out that the disclaimer of liability which he suggests was first printed in *Newsletter 15, December 1989*, and to the best of my knowledge - although I have not checked - has been included each month since then. However.....

When I became Chairman in 2000, the Committee was already considering the possibility that the Club might be sued for damages as a result of ideas published in the Newsletter. Legal advice confirmed that this was indeed possible and that if the costs incurred exceeded the total of the Club's assets, all members would be legally liable to contribute to any outstanding debt. Worse, as the Club was an unincorporated association, any one member could be picked on and sued for the full amount!

To protect members, the Club became a Company Limited by Guarantee. With this status, the Club is regarded as an individual (person) in its own right. It can still be sued and if a debt exceeded its assets, members would still have to contribute to any shortfall, with this difference: *the maximum liability to each member is £1 (one pound)*. It may be thought that the cost to any creditor of collecting these small, individual sums would be prohibitive - but having recently received a cheque for two pence in settlement of a closed bank account, I'm not so sure!!

As for the disclaimer, although it is a fair warning, it is not a legal defence and does not absolve the Club from all responsibility.

## TYRES

Although I had been wondering for some time about having Tyron bands fitted, I finally went ahead in early December using KwikFit Mobile, who came to my home and took about an hour to do all five wheels. For Christmas we travelled in our Clubman to our son's house, about an hour's journey away. Although daylight, there was thick fog with visibility limited to one vehicle ahead and at least half the journey was along a very narrow, winding country road.

Before we left for home on Boxing Day, our son's neighbour called to point out that we had a flat near-side rear tyre - the first in 14 years of 'Auto-Sleeping'. Green Flag came within half an hour and changed the wheel. My point is that had this flat tyre happened during our foggy journey I think we would have been glad to be able to drive, slowly and with care, on the Tyron bands to somewhere we could pull off the road safely.

The fault turned out to be a failed valve, but I checked with the mechanic as to whether it would be possible to continue driving with a flat tyre without knowing. He confirmed the vehicle's handling would change and it would be immediately obvious something was wrong.

*Please not this is a description of my own experience and in no way recommends or endorses the bands!*

## Chairman's Chat



We were all taken by surprise at the end of January when Auto-Sleepers announced that Ian Capes had left the company. The official press release appears elsewhere in this Newsletter. Ian had been at Auto-Sleepers for seven years and was instrumental in the combination of A-S and

Marquis into one group. Although not always happy with some of the things which appeared in the Newsletter !!! Ian was a strong supporter of the Club and a regular attendee at the National Rally. I know we all wish Ian and his family well for the future.

Ian's responsibilities will be taken on by Geoff Scott in addition to his current role as Chief Financial Officer. We wish Geoff well in this new role and look forward to meeting him in the future. We have invited him to the National Rally and he is hoping to attend but does have a prior family commitment which may limit his involvement.

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Barbara Buckett has written to advise of POSSIBLE DELAYS ON THE A20 IN DOVER from 3rd March to middle June.

The Highways Agency is going to replace the existing road surface on both carriageways and on all five roundabouts on the A20 in Dover from the Western Heights Roundabout (Aycliff Roundabout) to the Eastern Docks Roundabout. For more information ring 08457 504030 or [www.highways.gov.uk/a20doverresurfacing](http://www.highways.gov.uk/a20doverresurfacing).

### WANTED

**AS Clubman Anniversary** model VW pref.2 berth with blue upholstery. Mr P R Ferris 01962 732054 ferrispp@tiscali.co.uk (Hampshire)

**Ladder Guard to fit Clubman** Liz & Bryn Morgan 0161 432 4869 lizandbryn@talktalk.net (Stockport)

**AS Topaz** Would prefer T5 based model 2.5 but would consider T4 or any other VW based motorhome. 3-4 years old price range. John Ireland 01492 583561 Ireland@madasafish.com.



**1 pr Heosafe cab deadlocks** used for less than 1 season cost £110.64 accept **£70**

1 pr headlamp protectors suit same van, one cracked but repaired **£15**. 1 set wheel trims to suit 16" wheels. **£15**. All items were on Executive 05 year, now surplus to requirement due to van change.

**Contact Mike Valentine 023 9248 2818** (Hants)

*Thanks for the donation*

**97 Trophy 2.5 petrol.** Full AS complement. Genuine 23,600 miles. FSH cab aircon. Omnistor. New tyres & cam belt. One owner garaged from new superb condition extras.

Owners condition dictates reluctant sale of this cherished vehicle.

**£13,750. F.J. Vickery 020 8654 8271** (Croydon)

*Thanks for the donation*

**AS Legend Dec.1997 reg.** 2.5 turbo diesel. 35,000 miles in excellent condition. Non smokers, no pets.

Lots of extras, top box, solar panel, canopy, 6 disc cd, tow bar & bike rack. New tyres & Tyrons. New cam belt & servicing. New brake discs & pads. Taxed & Tested. ~~Private~~ number plate if required. **£24,000**

**ono. Contact Rae or Philip Gledhill 01484 654186** (W.Yorks)

*Thanks for donation*

*Amicus*  
*Feb 03*

**Peugeot Boxer AS Talisman 2.8**

hdi.Reg Feb 03. 1 yr tax & MOT.

Excellent condition. 36,000 one

owner. Non-smokers, no children. Cobra alarm. Hope save tow bar. Alloy wheels, silver screen and other extras. **£25,000** no offers. Sale due to bereavement. **Contact Mrs N Robson 01932 267174 or 07973 673730** (Walton on Thames).

*Thanks for the donation*

**Unused items** purchased for subsequently exchanged 2005 Duetto. Silver Screens 'Solarfrost' cover **£40**. (cost £59). Vanco (Continental) tyre 215/75 CR16 **£80** (cost £115). Pair of wipers **£15** (cost £26). **Contact David Clark 01202 824901** (Dorset).

*Thanks for the donation*

**AS Crockery** originally from early AS VW camper van. 4 teacups. 4 small plates. 4 desert bowls. 4 dinner plates. All white with blue pattern to rims. **FOC or donation to the Club.** **Contact Alan Broome 07968 150694** (Bournemouth).

**1999 For Excelsior** spare items. Pair of complete new rear light units. New Ford left hand adjustable armrest covered in Freesia fabric. 5 lengths of different adhesive external body stripes. Roof ventilator (removed to fit extractor fan ). Used but in good condition. **£20. plus postage. Contact Derek Thornton 01332 514681** (Derby).

## Contents

From the Editors ... .. 2	Rallies & Post Codes ... .. 9
National Rally ... .. 3	Rally Lottery ... .. 9
Photo competition ... .. 4	Condensation in a Gatcombe ... .. 10
Cake competition ... .. 5	From the Factory... .. 11
Thank You ... .. 6	Technical Group & Website ... .. 14
Farewell... .. 6	Can you help? ... .. 15
New Chief Executive ... .. 7	Gas Regulators ... .. 16
Just when do you change a cam belt? 7	Ideas & Tyres ... .. 16
Rally News	Chairman's Chat ... .. 18
Why not try running a rally? 8	Possible Delays ... .. 18
Thanks from Ulverston ... .. 8	Wanted ... .. 18
	For Sale ... .. 19

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\*\* Jill Bertlin

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