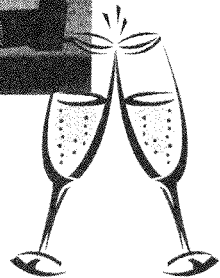
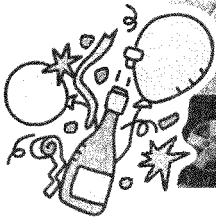




# **AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB**

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

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



## **NEWSLETTER 256**

### **January 2010**

# From the Editor (S)

If you have joined the Club in the last couple of years you may not be aware of some of the important topics that have been raised and debated in the past by members in the Newsletter so here are a few:

The fact that the Club's registered office address is the Autosleepers Factory gives some the impression that there is a management connection between the Company and the Club. There is none. When the Club was formed, the Company volunteered the address as a post box and have kindly continued to offer that free service with no obligation to the Club since.

All of the Committee and others who carry out activities on behalf of the Club (such as rally marshalls) are volunteers. They use their motorhomes and are often away from home so you may not get an instant response to phone call, letter or e-mail message. At certain times of the year it can be 4 weeks before I see a letter sent to my home. If you think a matter urgent, ring round the Committee members until you get a response.

Tyre valves that are inflated to over 65psi should have metal barrels, rubber valves will fail and I have personally seen the resultant failure (not on my wheel).

Tyres deteriorate with age. The date of manufacturer is marked on the wall and it is not advisable to use a tyre that is over 5 years old irrespective of mileage/tread wear. Get information on motorhome tyres (including pressures) from [www.tyresafe.org/data/files/motorhome%2008.pdf](http://www.tyresafe.org/data/files/motorhome%2008.pdf).

Now for some new editorial comment.

Chris and I are in the Camping and Caravan Club and in the last few months I have twice sent correspondence by e-mail to that clubs magazine forum. Despite having specifically requested it in

the second mail, I have not had receipt acknowledged. I telephoned the club and spoke to a very helpful lady who advised that I should have at least received an automatic acknowledgement that their system had received the mails but irrespective, she confirmed receipt of mails that I re-sent and she passed them on to the forum management. Unfortunately the "friendly club" has still not thought it worth their effort to reply!!

It will surprise those of you who know me that I have not (up till now) accessed any of the Motorhome Forums on the internet. I looked at one this morning. It presented itself as a forum of facts but largely consisted of contributors' opinion, very little of which was objective. A lot of contributions were of a technical nature but very few of those were based on sound engineering. I would caution strongly against taking advice offered on this forum. If you are technically qualified to sort the wheat from the chaff, you wouldn't be asking technical questions in the first place! However if you want to spend an hour or so reading what contributors think they know.....

We must apologise for not including the articles on Shetland and Denmark this month; we've just run out of space!! but they will be in next month, honestly.

Like a lot of people we enjoyed our rallying last year, although we were a bit naughty going to two foreign rallies - Rudesheim and St Sylvestre sur Lot - but what excellent rallies they were. We've had a quick look at the rally list for 2010 (enclosed with this Newsletter) and it looks we're going to have yet another good year. And for those of you who are new to the Club, numbers are limited on many rallies so if there's one you really want to go to be quick off the mark; as soon as it's advertised (usually a couple of months before the event) get your application form in.

Now, all that's really left for us is to wish you a very Happy New Year, lots of travelling, lots of rallies, lots of good weather(?)....



**Peter & Chris**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR  
TO ALL MEMBERS OF  
ASOC**

Along with my Best Wishes,  
may I remind those of you who  
have not sent me their completed  
Renewal Form, please do so  
before your Membership lapses  
and your name is deleted from the  
Newsletter Mailing List.

(I would also appreciate receiving confirmation  
if Membership is not to be renewed, so that  
Club records may be updated)

With thanks



Jill Bertlin, Membership Secretary

# The National Rally

## *Photo Competition*

Don't forget to start sorting your photographs ready for the competition at the National Rally. Full details in next month's Newsletter.

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## **Regalia Update**

I now have a new Grille Badge at £7.50 each plus P&P, as reported in the October Newsletter. At this moment the Sun Visor is not available but I am sorting it out, so keep your eye on updates.

You should have an up to-date Regalia Price List and Order Form in this issue of the Newsletter.

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

*John Jones*  
*Reglia Officer*

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*You will also find in this month's Newsletter application forms for the National Rally - Please complete and return them to Sheila Henthorne as soon as possible.*

## *Obituaries*

It is with great sadness that we have to announce the death of Marion Wood. She had recently been diagnosed with cancer but suffered a series of mini strokes and died before treatment could begin. Our condolences go to Ian and their family.

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Our condolences also go to Gill Hopkins, whose husband Bill died peacefully on 23rd November. He loved the Club and so enjoyed meeting everyone and appreciated their friendship over the years.

Gill hopes to turn up '*like a bad penny*' (her words not ours!) at rallies in the future.

## **Rally Plaques**

With regard to Liz's letter on plaques, we have sent her a pack of blue tack and suggested she put her plaques on the shower room door in the van. We were able to easily transfer ours very easily from a door in the Trident to the shower door in the Neuvo. Actually, we were running out of convenient door space in the Trident, but should be able to put up well over 100 on the one door in the Nuevo.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the Club a very happy 2010 with lots of enjoyable holidays in their vans.

***Rita Jones & Keith Taylor***

I agree with Liz Morgan, when one considers the costs of the book going to the Marshalls then back again, but when I foolishly suggested at an AGM three years ago we could do without them, I was left in no doubt that a fair number of members did not agree with me.

Happy New Year.

***Nigel Wilkins***



## Chairman's Chat

At the beginning of 2010, it is a good time to reflect upon both those delightful and happy times and also on some those sad moments of 2009, one of these is sadly to report the untimely death of Marion, the wife of the Club's auditor, Ian Wood, our condolences go to Ian and family at this sad time, we will all miss the *Dancing Lady*.

This past year has seen a welcome growth in membership and to all of the newcomers, I, on behalf of your committee, would like to say 'Welcome to the Auto-sleepers Owners Club'. I know that you will enjoy using your 'van in the 'great outdoors' and hope that you will attend some of the many rallies, shown elsewhere in the newsletter each month. By joining in you will meet and make many new friends, *should you wish to do so of course, it is not compulsory, but great fun!!* No doubt some of you will say 'Oh I am not the rallying type' but I can assure you that you will not receive a better welcome anywhere than from the members of this club. These rally meetings are very relaxed, just come and join in or just enjoy the local countryside in your own way, all of these venues will offer you something and you will have no better excuse than to revisit an area or go somewhere that you may not have been before.

I am reminded that the organization for the 21<sup>st</sup> AGM and the National Rally on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2010, to be held at the Newark Showground, is well under way and it sounds like a promising weekend. Please do not forget to complete your nomination forms to re-elect Ozzie (Secretary) John Jones (Regalia officer) and Baz Wellard (Technical Officer) together with Al Buckett and Andy Cavell, who have recently been co-opted onto the committee, each person will need a proposer and a seconder. The committee also urgently needs someone to come forward to act as the Vice-Chairman and ultimately become the Club Chairman in May 2012, I look forward to hearing from you!

Mo and I would like to wish you all a Happy, Healthy and a successful New Year. We will look forward to meeting with you somewhere at sometime.

*Mike Valentine*

We received the following response to Bill Todd's article in the November Newsletter (unfortunately, too late to be included last month).

I hope Bill Todd is now well on the way to a full recovery. As a woman travelling alone with my Rambler, and a Labrador who doesn't do anything practical, I was most interested to read his comments and assumptions. Surely it can't be the case that women travelling with a male partner don't know how to drive the vehicle or do any of the practical everyday tasks to keep it running. Do ASOC members really divide their roles on such traditional and outdated lines? I'd be very interested to hear comments.

*Val Cornish*

As a personal response to Val it does seem to me that with the majority of couples the ladies don't drive the vans, but I think this bias will shift and more couples will share the driving (as incidentally Peter and I do) as roles become more blurred with each generation. I would say however, that I've managed to resist all efforts on Peter's part to have me deal with the loo, Though even I can see a time when a gal's got to do what a gal's got to do!!!

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## **Well done and thank you**

I recently bought a second-hand Autosleeper, with an Omnistor awning that would not fully close. On visiting Rose Awnings of Poole Dorset; in the pouring rain they came out and examined the unit. Within half an hour they had fitted a new gearbox, tested it and demonstrated the correct use of the awning to avoid overloading the fixings on the motor-home. I should add that I had not booked in and the rain did not cease. Such good service was worthy of recognition.

*Alan Greenwood*

# Rally News

## Sedgemoor Carnival Burnham On Sea 2009

Well what can I say other than thank you to all who attended the Burnham Rally 2009, and thanks to all who helped in so many different ways. It's this club spirit that makes rallies so enjoyable.

As mentioned before, this was our tenth carnival rally at Burnham and our eleventh carnival rally if you count the very first which we held in Weston Super Mare Rugby Club.

Anyone who attended that rally will remember what a disaster it started out to be. The site was over booked, caravans on pitches that were supposed to have been removed, insufficient power points and those we had kept on tripping if too many switched on together. Some members had to pitch on the car park, then the club had to get an electrician in to put on extra power points, then they tripped again, and then it rained!

Despite all this we settled in, and actually had a really good night of beer and skittles in the club, everyone enjoyed it and we all thought, well it could have been worse.

Then came Saturday and it was.

The site was between two rugby pitches, no one but Les Howell could possibly find that entertaining, but there again he *is* Welsh.

There was screaming, shouting balls flying over the vans, the car park heaving, people back and forth through our site, then the showers switched on and the power tripped again.

To redeem themselves, the club let us use their stands Saturday night

for our bar-b-q. We had an oil drum bar-b-q, plenty of meats and sausages and baked potatoes and fillings and made a good night of it. The past 24 hours all but forgotten.

Then came the Carnival. It was the first time for everyone and they were well impressed. Many asked, "Can you do another one?".

The Rugby club really wasn't suitable but then came the opportunity to use Burnham Holiday Village and the rest as they say is history.....

Ten years of it.

In those ten years, some members have been just once, some twice, many three, four or five times. This prompted me to compile a list of all those who attended and when. I had the list with me on the rally but forgot to put it out on display, so if anyone wants to see it in future I will keep it in our van.

As mentioned, Sheila and Ivor Barnett have marshalled all ten for us, our thanks to them both. It's also worth noting Len and Mary Moulder are hot on their heels having attended 9 of the rallies. Me and Linda are trailing well behind with just 3 but living less than two miles away and popping back and forth still counts.

I am a bit of a control freak and do take it a bit personal when things don't go as planned, which it never does, but so what, our very first Carnival rally didn't go to plan and we enjoyed that so come rain or shine lets see what 2010 can throw at us.

*Brian and Linda Ellis*

We had trouble getting this report from Brian, but understand this was due to a virus in his system; I think it's quite common - it's called 'c-nile'. I've *certainly* suffered from it on occasion. Chris



## January 2010 Rally Supplement.

*A Happy New Year to all members.*

Please carry your ASOC membership cards when attending rallies.

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

*Will marshals please try to put the post code in the site address.*

Applications for rallies must be made on ASOC rally slips by post. The only exception is the National & AGM Rally.

*In 2010 Warners are no longer running a show at Pickering in July but instead are moving it to the Cheshire County Showground, July 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>. If anybody is interested in running the ASOC rally at this show please contact me as soon as possible. (Contact details at the end of this supplement).*

### 10<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June 2010 Turckheim, Alsace, France.

Rally Marshals: Angie & Andy Cavell and Dorothy & Baz Wellard.

Emergency Tel. No. 00 44 (0)7880 532057. Rally Fee: £17.50 inc VAT, not refundable if offered a place. Rally slips & cheques to A. Cavell, 24 The Close, Hampstead Norreys, Thatcham, RG18 0RY. Tel.No.01635 201976 Please provide your email address if you have one, if not please enclose an SAE.

Site Fees: The site fee including electricity.

***This rally is now fully booked.***

(£14.50) a night

### 22nd - 26th February 2010 (4 nights), Whitemead Forest Park, Parkend, Lydney, Gloucestershire GL15 4LA.

Emergency Telephone Number: 0845 345 3425 (site reception). Mobile phone reception poor to nil on site, but there is a navphone

Rally Marshals: M  
Site/Rally Fee to in  
facilities: Couples

***This rally is now fully booked.***

nights and use of

Please send rally slip and cheque with SAE to: M Bardsley, 8 Hepburn Close, Aldridge, Walsall, WS9 0SU. Mike's telephone number: 01922 451964 (home), 07900677269 (mobile).

**Attractions:** Enjoy a keep fit winter break in the heart of the Forest of Dean. Facilities include heated swimming pool, Jacuzzi, steam room, sauna and gym. On site there is a bar, restaurant, health and beauty salon and small shop, with pub meals and limited public transport within easy walking distance. Good walking and cycling from the site.

### **25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2010 ( 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 phone no. 01283538818 or please ring Jan on 01246236157 if I am not available

Site Fee: £4.50 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. Tel 01283538818.

#### **Please remember your S.A.E.**

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 FRI. EVENING and MEAL SAT. EVENING will 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.

*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.*

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

*I have some sites that have offered a rally site,they have not been vetted as to suitability for rallies,please ask if interested.*

**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@mypostoffice.co.uk](mailto:ncr@mypostoffice.co.uk)**

**E & OE.**

Neil Rogers, Rally Co-ordinator received the following recently and if anyone is interested in organising a rally they should contact him.

## **Abingdon 4X4 Festival.**

There is quite a large event on the Abingdon Airfield (now called Dalton Barracks), held on the last week end in September every year. It has been going for many yeas as an off road 4X4 vehicle track event since one of the best courses in Europe is the military course at Abingdon. The weekend has blossomed and grown with arena events which give a great buzz during the day.

They have quite a lot of caravans/motorhomes who come along and I am contacting you to see if anyone at ASOC would be interested in organising a "rally". I should say it is fair to describe it as a "green field site" but with water, toilets and next year probably showers.

There are plenty of local pubs for evening gatherings but many stay around for BBQ on Saturday night culminating in a charity auction. The event raised about £20,000 for charity; the main one being the Thames Valley air ambulance.

Abingdon 4X4 Festival in 2010 in will be the 25/26 September.

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## **Clutch Judder VW T4 - Is anyone else having this problem?**

If anyone else has experienced the problem of judder when moving off from stationary in first and reverse gears in a VW T4 I would love to hear how they solved the problem.

We have a 2005 registered Clubman which suffers from judder, usually after a period of being stood for a week or two. It is particularly bad in reverse and on hills in first gear. The steeper the incline the worse it is.

We have now had 3 replacement clutch and flywheels despite VW telling us that judder is a characteristic of the vehicle. The problem was never solved under the warranty and I am pleased to say VW have reluctantly authorised further replacements since. Four Clutch and Flywheels in as many years if you count original equipment??? We just wonder if it could be something else!

*Alan & Joy Lewis*

## We're sorry to have to say goodbye to some members.

*Denise Stow* is retiring from the Club after enjoying various 'meetings' over the years, notably those at the Malvern Showground. Not only is she moving to France but having just turned her three quarters of a century she will only be driving 'Buster' on small journeys.

Having undergone the process of exporting her van to France she does recommend anyone choosing to do the same to learn to speak French!! Apparently it was something of an 'experience' anyway, but would have been impossible without the language.

Best of luck to Denise.

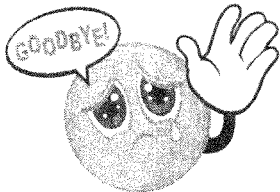
*"It is with regret that we have decided to part with our motorhome due to ill health. We have had some wonderful times at rallies and will miss you all."*

**George & Helen Gilchrist**

*"We have regretfully sold our Auto-Sleeper and so are no longer active members of the Club, though we hope to keep in contact with friends via the Newsletter and telephone."*

*We are very grateful for the many happy occasions we have had with you all and thank those members who have recently written to us. We hope the new owners of our van will join the Club, so if you see P345XAD at any rally, give it a pat on the bonnet for us and look after its humans."*

*Best wishes for the coming 2010 season—may the sun always shine!"*



**Janet Sutterby & Eileen Kellard**

## Factory Visit

On the way back from the Burnham rally I spent a day at Willersey having some long planned warranty work carried out on our Wilton. Knowing that it was sometime since I had visited the factory, Simon Vaughan offered to show me around and I was pleased to accept his offer.

Before launching into detail of the visit I should mention a couple of things.

Motorhomes that are van conversions are manufactured in a very different way to those that are coachbuilt.

Each model is different but in general, vans arrive at the factory as a standard commercial panel van. The roof is cut off, to be later placed by a Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) high top, holes are cut for windows, vents, services etc and the van is moved into the production line. There the roof and an internal raised floor as well as insulation and wall linings are added (including basics of wiring and plumbing). Next is the installation of furniture sub-assemblies and completion of the internal systems and finishes and finally off to the paint shop for final external finishes and the adding of graphics etc.

The base vehicle for a coachbuilt arrives at the factory in the form of a chassis cab. That is a closed cab for the driver and front seat passenger that is fully fitted plus, extending to the back, two main chassis members to which the axle/wheels/exhaust that enable the vehicle to 'run' are fitted. The back of the cab is cut out and then assembly of the coachbuilt begins. A floor is fitted to the chassis and wiring/plumbing components installed. The main furniture sub assemblies are then fixed to the floor followed by the external side walls. The GRP rear wall and roof complete the external construction. Overhead lockers and final internal fittings are completed and then, as for the van it is moved to the paint shop for external finishes.

Back to the visit and first of all general impressions: a marked difference to my last visit. The site, workshops and assembly lines were well organised, tidy and free from surplus material (as well as free from surplus motorhome stock). The atmosphere was professional but friendly with Simon being greeted positively in all the areas we visited. I

also noticed a new van body shell to which a conversion rear seat belt anchorage had been installed. This shell was on its way to be tested for installation type approval – an expensive exercise and one that I think will hamper smaller converters when whole vehicle type approval for Motorhomes becomes a requirement.

The design department, having been involved in developing the concept of the motorhome, have to detail (with manufacturers approval) any modifications necessary to the base vehicle, design layouts, specify large components (fridge, hob, toilet, tanks, heaters, etc.), design sub assemblies and other furniture, design electrical and plumbing installations and produce detailed design of components such as floors that are to be manufactured on site. Whilst Computer Aided Design terminals are used these are just aids to producing drawings and instructions to control machines – the designers still have to design and there is a very broad range of artistic and engineering skills required in the design of a Motorhome.

I first visited the shop where floor and walls are made. Wood, insulation, external and internal finish materials are used. The base panel is laid on a work stand and a vehicle/panel specific template laid on it. The wooden components that will form strong points and service ducts are fitted to the base then insulation panels are placed in the gaps before the template is removed and a top panel fitted. For the floor, vinyl is added and for the walls Styrofoam to the outside and a veneer to the inside. The units are glued together and passed slowly through a press before being moved to a computer controlled machine that cuts out window and other apertures specific to that panel.

In another similar workshop, wood panels for the cupboards, lockers, utility sub-assemblies are cut on computer controlled machines; very impressive to watch!

Over to the main building and the area where lockers and other furniture units are assembled, sub-assemblies with fridges/ovens/hobs created and then kits of assemblies/components/panels prepared for each vehicle on the assembly line.

On the assembly lines themselves the van conversions and coachbuilts progress in stages from the raw base vehicle to the finished motorhome in the manner described earlier, in accordance with the detailed design and using the components specified. One criticism; its easy to see how

when a van is built from the inside to the out, some components are difficult to access for maintenance in the future. AS are aware of this and will be factoring full life maintenance into future design.

A lot of electrical, plumbing, metal work, woodwork and general engineering skills are needed in the construction of a motorhome. AS recognise this and ensure that staff required to complete specific tasks are properly trained. This training is well documented and the fact that tasks are only completed by properly trained operatives is subject to regular audit.

I was impressed during my visit. I was shown work in progress on improvements to several facilities and areas within the site. It seems to me that the 2010 vintage Autosleeper will keep well!

*Peter Brown*

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## HABITATION DOORS

Really interested in the item in the Newsletter from Vic Kendall re bubbling at the bottom of the habitation door. I sent you this email ages ago but have only just realised that I got the email address wrong so the message disappeared into the ether!!

We have the same problem with our door on the 07 Windsor. We took it down to AS Service Centre in early October and got them to look at it. They were a bit non committal and advised that it should be rubbed down, filled and repainted to match the skirt colour of the van. Needless to say we are not happy and pressed Alan Curry about replacement even though it's out of warranty, (by six months). He did not want to do that as a warranty matter even though we said that this sort of problem would have been building up during the warranty period. He admitted that he has seen other cases and is trying to take up the issue with Dometic. We emailed him this past weekend and he phoned on Monday to say that there was no progress yet.

We called into a caravan/motorhome repair specialist outside Bicester on our way back from Willersley and the guy there said that to rub down, fill and repaint was only a short term answer. His view was that the bonding between the outer aluminium door panel and the steel frame of the door was faulty and that the reaction between the two metals caused the bubbling effect. It sounds to us that there may be a batch of duff doors from Dometic and we have now heard this from a completely different source, (but who

does work on motorhomes), in the North West It will be interesting to see if anyone else in ASOC responds to Vic's item. Meanwhile we await Alan Curry's efforts with Dometic and will continue to prompt him at regular intervals. Nothing from the last reminder three weeks ago.

*Jan and Dave Davies*

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## A TRIP TO KENT

We felt like an autumn break. We have always driven through Kent en route to Dover or to pay a quick visit to relatives near Brighton, but always for a specific reason and have often thought that it would be nice to spend some time just wandering around the County. So off we went.

We decided to spend four nights at the Black Horse Farm Caravan Club site at Folkstone and being members of the National Trust, pay a visit to Petworth House on our way.

We left home at 10.15 on Monday 28th September, made good time up the motorway and got to Petworth by 1.30 and went straight to the restaurant for lunch. Petworth House is well worth a visit, the paintings and furniture beautifully arranged in large rooms that still felt small enough to live in on a day to day basis, in fact part of the house is still lived in by the family. Unfortunately we ran out of time and were unable to look around the large grounds so it's on the list for a return visit one day.

Tuesday was Sissinghurst Castle Gardens, the sun some and going by the 'back roads,' little traffic and very nice countryside to see. There is no house to see here but we could go up the Tower and look in at two or three rooms on the way up the spiral staircase to see old photos of the gardens and plans of the original design of the property. At the top we were able to have a good look at the gardens and plan our route around the various 'garden rooms' and see what ideas we could take home for our own garden; we then looked at the Elizabethan Barn and the Oast Houses.

To finish off the afternoon we had a guided tour of the new vegetable garden which is in the process of being registered 'organic'.

Wednesday we drove along the coast through Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch hoping to see the railway but decided to drive on out to Dungeness for a walk

along the shingle and to see the boats and houses there.

We found it very interesting with the small clapperboard houses and shingle gardens. There were two or three houses that were being used as studios for displaying the artists work. Unfortunately the old lighthouse was not open to visitors but as we got there the RH&D train came into the station and we managed to get some photos. Although there is the large power station there, it somehow did not seem to dominate the landscape and seemed to merge into the background.

After lunch at the famous Pilot Inn, we went on to the Romney Marshes and St Dunstons Church in Snaregate which contains a wall painting of a boat. The story is that if smugglers were on the run from the Customs men, if they could reach this particular church they could claim sanctuary and be safe from arrest.

Fairford was next to see the church where it is said that Thomas a Becket spent his last night before being murdered in Canterbury Cathedral the next day. However, when we eventually got to the Church it was in the middle of a field with only a footpath to access it and unfortunately it was not open.

Thursday we decided to explore the coastline from Sandwich to Folkestone. As we drove into Sandwich we found a car park without height barriers and enjoyed a nice walk into the town along the river with many old buildings and alleyways to explore, plus a small market.

The next stop was Deal where we parked on the sea front and walked along the beach and out onto the Pier. Next, St Margaret's at Cliffe then on to Dover. There we found the National Trust car park overlooking the Port of Dover.

We left next day but visited Polesden Lacey on the way; a Regency country house remodelled in 1906-09 by the Hon. Mrs Ronald Greville, a well known Edwardian hostess. She had remarkable collections of paintings, furniture, porcelain and silver which are displayed to fine effect in the reception rooms and galleries. We also managed to look round the grounds and rose garden before tearing ourselves away for the rest of the journey home along the M25 and down the M4.

We really enjoyed our four nights away discovering some of the delights of Kent and it has made us realise that there is a lot more to see and we will be back, perhaps next year, to discover more hidden gems. If you don't know the county it's well worth a visit.

*Derek Moras*

## Welcome to New Members



Barry & Christine Samuel	Bishops Stortford	Broadway
Steve & Pauline Harding	Bristol	Devon
Jane Lowe	Gosport	Rambler
Phil & Cynthia Barker	Gloucester	Trident
Catherine Fuller & Michael Hanks	Hayling Island	Clubman
Graham & Ann Bingham	Chesterfield	Symbol
Bernie & Penny Roberts	Tunbridge Wells	Nuevo
Roger & Linda Hall	Perranporth	Symbol
Victor & Jeannette Strange	Redditch	Gatcombe
Bob & Hazel Brettell	Bridlington	Symbol
Ken & Mary Day	Oldham	Duetto
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Tony & Gwen Fryer	Harlow	Nuevo
John Stewart & Christine Dellen	Todmorden	Medallion
Tom & Sue Appleford	Bristol	Legend
Kenneth & Phyllis Tate	Wells	Pavo
Lynn Thomas & Trena Mealyer	Ascot	Dorset
Jim Winspur	Tettenhall	Rapport
Tony Green	Tamworth	Trooper
George & Janet Lewis	Bodedern	Trident

### Living with a Berkshire – On the Move

Immediately we started to use the Berkshire we found other features not to our liking. The first thing that needed attending to was the bathroom. Storage was the first problem but a trip to Argos and the purchase of a vanity unit soon solved that. The next problem that was found was a reluctance of the waste water to drain from the washbasin. A test revealed that it took nearly three minutes for a litre to drain away. Lying under the motorhome revealed that there were four waste outlets from the bathroom. Three were from the shower tray and one from the washbasin. These were then coupled together to make two pipes which fed into the waste tank. These were routed along the underside of

the floor and then up and over the chassis rail before entering the tank. I can remember from my school days that water flow is dependant on gravity and has a reluctance to flow uphill. I decided that the system needed to have a greater "drop" to ensure a good water flow. There also seemed to be a need to eliminate airlocks which were also preventing a good flow. It took three attempts to devise a new plumbing system to make drainage acceptable. In its current form a litre of water now takes ten seconds to drain away. I should add that the time does increase slightly as the waste tank fills due to the "drop" height decreasing.

We were used to a sizeable collection tank for the toilet in our American Motorhomes. The last one being some thirty gallons! You can imagine that the Thetford Cassette currently used in most European Campers came as quite a shock to us. However, I noticed that Fiamma make a holder to take a spare cassette. This made me realise that other people must be in the same situation. A spare cassette was duly purchased off the internet and fortunately it fits in one of the outside lockers. If we find that at night one is full all we have to do now is swap over them and then the full one can be emptied at a more sociable hour!

The other thing that we found was the effort involved to switch the water heater on to electric. To put it on gas all you have to do is turn a switch by the wardrobe door and set the temperature – easy! To switch to electric it is necessary to open the wardrobe door and remove anything on its floor, remove a panel in said floor, open the drawer directly below the wardrobe, lean into the wardrobe with a torch and find the switch which is part of the consumer unit placed near the floor of the motorhome. Good game, good game!! We don't do that anymore, we have a switch alongside the gas control which is a matching pair. This did involve a fair bit of rewiring but fortunately I have a mate in the trade.

Well that is us up to date with our new pride and joy. No doubt in another month or so we will have come up with some more tweaks – we will keep you informed!!

*John Bailey*

### **Does anyone know?**

I have a 1995 Boxer Symphony 2.5 diesel with 108,000 miles. Does anyone know if a later diesel engine i.e. 2.2 HDi and gearbox will fit the van?

*Chris Alcock [cralcock@googlemail.com](mailto:cralcock@googlemail.com)*



*Thanks for all your donations.*

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memory foam topper with cover **£50.** A pair of Fiamma ramps with slip mat **£5.** A Fiamma cargo bag, as new **£25.** **Contact Mike Shelton 01159 744745 email [m.j.shelton@ntlworld.com](mailto:m.j.shelton@ntlworld.com)**

**Tomson 15L/20L cd MO3B TV £50.** **Kenwood radio KDC/334SA £50.** Both from my previous motorhome. **Contact Michael Guy 01252 726872.** (Farnham)

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