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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: 4816969*



*Are you ready for the start of another  
ARDUOUS rally season?*

***NEWSLETTER 257***

***February 2010***

# From the Editor (S)

Welcome to the February issue of the Newsletter and thank you for keeping the contributions coming over the winter months. We have now used up all of our reserves so... More Please!!

One of the stalwarts of the Club and the Committee for many years, Ben Mansfield the Chief Rally Marshall, has decided to take things a little easier and has resigned from the Committee. I will miss Ben and his wife Evelyn (and no—not just his bottle of Scotch) at our get togethers after the meetings and hope that they will still make it to the occasional rally.

As we no longer have the Club and Company rally it has been decided not to continue with the a full committee post of Chief Rally Marshall. Instead the role of National Rally Marshall will be added to Nora Venables National Rally Sub-Committee.

As we were a little short of time to recruit a National Rally Marshall for the 2010 rally I have temporarily joined Nora's sub-committee and will marshal the camping aspect of the 2010 National Rally. I am expecting that we will have a National Rally Marshal designate to assist me with the 2010 rally, who will then take over marshalling the National from 2011.

All the rest of the sub-committee and other volunteers are carrying on as in the past. If you do have any queries that are specific to camping or camping facilities (not food, entertainment, papers, etc.) at the 2010 National Rally then please contact me at [pcb7ty@btinternet.com](mailto:pcb7ty@btinternet.com) or call 07771 827711.

Peter Brown

# The National Rally

## Parking

I am writing this to give members an early indication as to how the parking of vans will be managed at the National Rally this year. As most of you know the marshals at the rally are all volunteers who are there to participate in the weekends events and thus I plan to minimise the marshalling resource.

The rally starts at 1200hrs on Thursday, however, much work has to be done in preparation for the start and throughout the weekend. You will therefore, when you arrive, see the vans of those volunteer workers already parked near the Cedric Ford Pavilion. Space in that area will also be reserved for disabled members.

We expect to have available a waiting area near the main gate inside the showground. Any vans that arrive before 1200hrs will be required to wait there until the rally starts. No pitches can be reserved so any members who wish to be parked near each other should arrive at the showground together or arrange to meet up in the waiting area before entering the rally.

The marshalls will start parking vans on the furthest pitches from the rally entrance. This means that as the rally fills up and events commence, fewer marshalls will be needed at any one time.

There will be minimal provision of marshalls after 2000 hrs on Thursday and Friday. Members who arrive after that time will be shown to a temporary overnight pitch near the rally entrance and moved to a permanent pitch at a time of their convenience after 0900hrs the next morning.

*Peter Brown*

## Update from Nora

After visiting the Newark Pavilion I have taken the decision to have the Barn Dance on Sunday evening in the Cedric Ford Pavilion. The Newark Pavion was cold and draughty and nowhere near as comfortable as the Cedric Ford. This does mean of course, that we are not allowed to take in our own food or drinks.

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***Photo Competition 2010***

The details of the photo competition remain the same this year, but just to remind you:

General: Photographs must contain an Auto-Sleeper or be taken on a rally.

Humorous: All photographs must be taken at a rally.

Sizes: 6" x 4" or 7" x 5".  
Only these sizes will be accepted.

All photographs must be received **by 31 March 2010**. No photographs will be accepted after this date.

All photographs must state Category entered for, Title, name, address and membership number of entrant.

A maximum of 4 photographs per member may be entered.

Please send your entries to:

Rita Tubb  
70 Charnwood Crescent  
Chandlers Ford  
Hampshire  
SO53 5QL

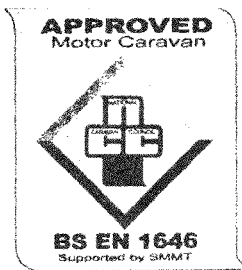
## Obituary

*It is with great regret that we announce the death of Vic Kaye, who died on 26th December 2009.*

*Vic and his wife Barbara (who survives him) were among the first to join the Club in 1988 (no 42) and attended over 200 rallies as well as running many before Vic's deteriorating health forced them to let 'Buttercup' go and say farwell to the Club at the end of 2007.*

We printed an article from Alan Lewis on 'Clutch Judder VW T4' last month and he has asked us to give his contact details, so that if anyone has any information/comments they can get in touch direct. So you can reach Alan on 01886 821714 or [alan.lewis069@btinternet.com](mailto:alan.lewis069@btinternet.com).

## Check the badge before you buy



The majority of motorhomes have been produced to comply with the European regulatory standard EN1646, which is administered in the UK by the NCC. These vehicles can easily be identified by the 'Badge of Approval' which is fitted in a prominent position, usually close to a door.

The NCC has been inspecting motorhomes since 1994 to ensure that they comply with all the relevant UK safety regulations. An NCC motorhome inspection can require as many as 600 different checks by a team of specialists. The Certification scheme covers many things, in particular the gas and electric installations. The NCC also checks that the tyres, exterior road lights and reflectors comply with UK regulations for road-going vehicles. Even the beds are weight tested to make sure they're strong enough. The motorhome's handbook is reviewed to make sure that it contains correct information on the safe use of the product and its equipment. This includes the fridge, heater and water system installations which are also individually assessed for their suitability for use in a motorhome. Only when all these boxes have been ticked can the model – and all similar models in production – wear the NCC 'Badge of Approval'.

## ***The Back-up Engine***

Readers of the December issue may have learnt of my 'back-up engine'. We spend a lot of time travelling all over the country stopping at various Camping and Caravan Club Temporary Holiday Meets. We not only get a chance to explore new places, but meet some - as described to us - '*Proper campers*'. I do have one problem though; the 'back-up engine' would start to tire after a hundred miles or so. This meant trying to book club sites of CLs en-route, invariably booked months in advance or disgustingly high prices! Even when we find somewhere '*she*' them has to cook me a meal and wash-up along with all the other jobs!

But I have found an answer, not to be confused with another couple of similar sites listing '*Wild Camping Sites*' I found '*motorhomestopover.co.uk*'. The Website lists 380 (and growing) pubs with large car parks or land adjacent on which you can park for free, although obviously it is hoped you would take a meal. You should not expect water, toilet or rubbish disposal, although some have electric to which a donation would be appreciated.

It has been suggested by critics that it's just landlords 'on the make' - so be it, but it means 'back-up engine' can pull up, walk the dogs, relax over a good meal and have several liquid fill-ups safely, completing our journey next morning.

The web site has been well thought out and for a £30 membership I got a couple of hundred well laid out A4 pages with names, addresses and phone numbers in county order with profiles of each pub and neighbourhood.

Readings of my previous letter cannot say I don't look after '*back-up engine*'!!

Og by the way, having finished clearing up from Christmas and just brought me my cup of tea, she managed to croak out "A Happy New Year to you all".

***Jim & Maureen Samuels***



## **Chairman's Chat**

Now that we are into the new decade, I trust that 2010 will be a healthy and happy year for us all. By now you will have had time to peruse the new rally list and tick those that are of interest; I know that there will be more added to this list in the next few months, so keep an eye open for the additions.

To those of you who have recently joined us, there is no time like the present to fill in your Rally Slips and get them off post haste. Some of these rallies are very popular and fill up very quickly, so you need to get cracking!!! As soon as you see the advert in the newsletter, send in your application + cheque to avoid disappointment, do not stop and think about it, **Do It!**

As a committee we have not been in hibernation over the winter months, you will see in the Technical section of this newsletter, for instance, that we have negotiated some discounts for your benefit from both A~S and Marquis. Baz has been very busy, even working on New Year's Day keeping me up to date with new vehicle recalls etc. and updating the club web-site. May I suggest that you take a look at the latest web-site and see how comprehensive it is!

During 2011 Auto~Sleepers will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> year of manufacturing motorhomes and your committee was asked to consider how the club and the company might celebrate this event together. A feasibility paper was prepared considering many facets, including holding an Open Factory Weekend, the manufacture of a Special Vehicle and Special 50th Graphics to name but a few and these ideas were submitted to Geoff Scott, the CEO at our regular meeting in December. You will be kept informed of any decisions as time moves towards the said date.

The Technical Officer Baz Wellard and I, have been invited to meet with the A~S design team at the factory, primarily to discuss the idea of having some possible future involvement on model Design and Technology, again you will be advised as to the outcome of these meetings.

*Mike Valentine*

## Living with a Berkshire – More Tweaks

As you use your Motorhome more and more so do you realise that features can be improved or you see features on other vehicles that you would like to incorporate into your own. So it was with us and our Berkshire. The first thing to catch me out was the onboard charging system. I could not get used to having to manually change over the charging from the chassis to the house batteries. I enquired about an automatic sensing system but this proved to be an expensive route to go down. A quicker and cheaper option was to purchase a Ctek battery charger unit. These can be left almost permanently connected to the battery and only provide sufficient power to keep the battery fully charged. The unit was fixed to the back of the base of the driver's seat and plugged into the adjacent mains power point. The onboard charger is now permanently switched to the house battery leaving the Ctek to look after the chassis battery.

One day whilst removing a bottle of wine from its clip in the bar, it came out with the clip still attached. The clip fixing screws had pulled clean out of the wall! This was the trigger to carry out my usual bar mod and have all the bottles standing in a false floor. To do this I make a false floor which is mounted about 2" (50mm) above the original. Having made it from a piece of 6mm plywood the next job is to stand all the bottles on it and then mark around them. I then cut holes to allow the bottles to fit into each hole. Before fixing the false floor I staple a piece of antislip sheeting to the original floor. The new floor is covered with a suitable material to improve its appearance. I used black "furry" finish Fablon. The bottles now stand in individual holes and remain upright and do not move about. The original clips are not wasted either. They are now fixed the walls of the crockery locker and hold some extra mugs we carry.

We have found it necessary to put some Fiamma stick-on guttering above the habitation door. The Berkshire has a flat roof which means that after it has rained there is a quantity of water on it. On standing on the step to enter the vehicle it tilts slightly and water pours out through the drain hole at the end of the awning straight over the poor unfortunate person entering. I realise we never had this problem with conventional awnings as the awning box made a lovely gutter!

The only other change that I have found necessary to make was to improve the reversing lights. I found that reversing into my entrance could be a bit difficult at night. Fortunately at a Kit Car Show I found that

several stands were selling identical rear lights to those used by Auto-Sleepers. They were cheap as well! I therefore took the opportunity to purchase additional fog and reversing lights. My Towtall towbar/rear bumper has approved rear reflectors mounted on it. It was a simple job to fix the additional light units in the original reflector holes. Although the fixing was easy, getting them to work was not. I could get one light to work but not both. This, apparently, is due to the very small size wiring cable now used on modern vehicles. This meant that the additional lamps were causing an overload and were tripping out. Fortunately it was found that using low wattage Halogen bulbs solved the problem. These gave out the same amount of light but with reduced power consumption.

The only thing annoying me now is to overcome the Mercedes Radio switching off after an hour when on site. Any ideas anyone? Is the timer in the radio or in the vehicle electrics? I can find only one power input to the radio.

Incidentally, I always keep a mileage log of my vehicles which enables me to keep track of fuel economy. When new the Berkshire was returning 19mpg. Now, after 4000 miles it has improved to 23mpg.

**John Bailey**

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## **Riding on the stops**

A letter in the December 2009 MMM magazine on page 154 titled "Raising suspension" reported the benefit of fitting air assistance to the rear suspension of a Ducato and mentioned that without this the rear springs were permanently touching the stops. I had a look under my Nuevo and sure enough there was no gap, even though the vehicle is off road for the winter and consequently not fully loaded.

Marquis motor homes tell me that they have fitted a number of these air assistance units.

Does anyone have experience of these ? If they do I would be most grateful for any information, preferably by E mail to [david@hayesbank.plus.com](mailto:david@hayesbank.plus.com) Thanks,

**David Garraway**

## Shetland

In August 2009 my wife Wendy and I spent 2½ weeks in Shetland and we thought Club members might be interested in some facts, costs, etc.

We left County Durham on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August, late afternoon, and stayed near Berwick on Tweed. Due to family commitments we could not pre-book the ferry so on Monday morning we phoned North Link Ferries (0845 6000449), the first sailing we could get was Wednesday the 12<sup>th</sup>.

With 3 days to fill we spent some time on the Fife coast, arriving at Nigg Bay on the outskirts of Aberdeen on Wednesday afternoon. Nigg Bay is only 15 minutes from the ferry so is a very good place to spend a bit of time, walk the dogs, sort the van out, etc. before arriving at the terminal - 7pm sailing means 6pm at the docks.

On our outward sailing we booked the reclining seats option but could not really get settled and sleep. So much so that on the return we got an inner cabin. There are lots of things to do on this 12 hour voyage – shop, food, drinks, film, etc.

On arrival in Lerwick get a copy of '*Shetland Visitor*', a free magazine worth its weight in gold - lots of info. We also got other books and maps;

- Shetland, Pevensey Books by Norman Newton £9.99
- The Shetland Guide Book by Charles Tait £12.95
- Shetland and Orkney Philips Red Books (map) £4.25
- Ordnance Survey Shetland, Unst, Yell & Fetlar Explorer 470 £7.99.

(Wendy is not happy unless she has an OS map to hand)

As I have not got space to mention every place we visited, here are just a few; but before I do can I take time to say all roads are in excellent condition some are single track with passing places but every road no matter how minor will have a place to turn around at



**February 2010**  
**Rally Supplement.**

**\*\*\*\* Change of rally location 7<sup>th</sup>. 12<sup>th</sup>. June Tattershall not Woodhall Spa.\*\*\*\***

**NEW RALLY—22<sup>nd</sup>.-27<sup>th</sup>.March Fishery Creek,Hayling Island.**

**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 ( 10 nights) 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 [ ***This rally is now fully booked.*** ] G18 0RY.  
Tel.No.01635 } if you

have one, if not please enclose an SAE.

**Site Fees:** The site fees are not set yet, but last year were in the region of 16 euros (£14.50) a night including electricity.

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

**Emergency Telephone Number:** 0845 345 3425 (site reception).  
**Mobile phone** [ ***This rally is now fully booked.*** ] payphone.  
**Rally Marsh:** [ ***This rally is now fully booked.*** ] elia and  
**Alan Waugh.**

**Site/Rally Fee** to include hard standing pitch, electric hook-up, hire of room for two nights and use of facilities: Couples £72, Singles £69 (including VAT).

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> . - Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>. March (5 Nights)**  
**Fishery Creek, Hayling Island, Nr Portsmouth.**

**Emergency No.** 07745 522 335.

**Rally Marshalls :** Mo & Mike Valentine.

**Site Fee** £15.00 per night inc. elect. and VAT.

**Rally Fee :** £3.20 per couple, £2.20 single, Both inc. VAT.

**Rally Slips + cheque** payable to M. Valentine please, with SAE for reply and directions.

Send to : M. Valentine, 11, Hamilton Close, Langstone, Havant,  
Hants. PO9 1RP (023 9248 2818).

All the usual camp site facilities, inc. disabled.

Dogs welcome on leads.

Fishery Creek is set adjoining a tidal creek of Chichester Harbour  
with pathways leading to easy walks and extensive views of the  
harbour.

The park is well maintained and the grass drains quickly.

Approx. 10 minutes walk to nearest shop, pubs, buses and the  
beach.

Attractions, City of Chichester, Emsworth, City of Portsmouth with  
its Maritime Museum & the South Downs National Park.

Rally starts 12 noon 22nd March and finishes 12 noon 27<sup>th</sup> March.

### **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 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 12 noon Thursday. NOT BEFORE PLEASE.**

**22<sup>nd</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> April National Motorhome Show, East of England Showground, Peterborough.**

**Emergency Tel.No. 07922049714**

**Rally Marshals: Pauline & Neil Rogers, & 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 to the organisers, by Thursday 1<sup>st</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)**

**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.

**29<sup>th</sup>. April – 3<sup>rd</sup>.May National Rally & A.G.M.**  
**Nottinghamshire Showground,Newark.**

***Please use the application form enclosed with the January Newsletter.The closing date for bookings for meals and camping is 3<sup>rd</sup>.April.***

*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.**

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?

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.

its end.

Here are some of the smaller islands we went to and some costs:

- Mainland to Yell £11.40 return
- Yell to Unst £0 (Ferry free yes free)
- Unst to Fetlar £0 (Ferry free)
- Fetlar to Yell £0 (Ferry free)

Some islands don't have fuel but most do have places to stay with hook ups. Some have a £1 slot for the electricity. Most places have a shop and fuel together.

- Mainland to Whalsay £11.40 return
- Mainland to Bressay £11.40 return

In the main we 'wild camped' as there are so many fantastic places to stay. There is a very nice site in Lerwick right next to the Leisure Centre, we stayed here on the last night, £11.40 including electricity (can you see a recurring £11.40 theme here?).

The people on Shetland are very very nice and friendly, quite a few have wanted to look around our VW Clubman. As for the weather it can be very changeable but in the main a bit breezy and fine. If anyone has any questions or are interested in going, give us a ring on 01740 621808. Here are some costs as a guide:

Fuel £235

Aberdeen to Lerwick (with reclining chairs) £188

Lerwick to Aberdeen (with cabin) £278

And we travelled a total of 1,331 miles.

***George and Wendy Simpson***

PS: Have you ever been asked if you want a cup of tea while standing in a queue in a shop? We were in the Shetlands!

DENMARK  
Week 3 The Journey Home

Today (1st June) we decided to try and reach Groningen in The Netherlands today. So, it was an early start. We were up and away by 8.30. The roads were empty and I think we saw about a dozen people in the 15 miles we travelled. I thought it might be a holiday, but the bakers and the garages were open, so obviously not. Within a very short while we were on the E45 motorway heading for Neumunster and then on to Hamburg. The sun was shining, there was still very little traffic and we made good time.

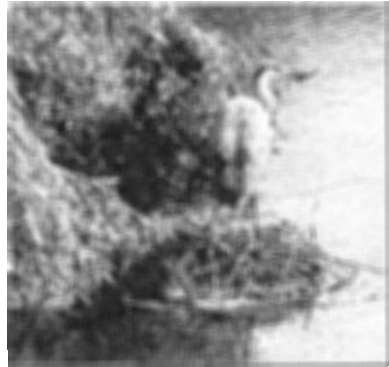
Leaving Hamburg we headed for the E22 to Bremen and there were a lot of roadworks with the outer lane coned off. It was here that we had our only driving scare of the whole holiday. We were going down the outside lane in a steady stream of traffic at between 45 and 50 mph when suddenly a large articulated lorry on our inside started to weave and pull into our lane for no obvious reason. I was forced to pull over hitting some cones on the way, and then the lorry just pulled back into his own lane again and drove on. The only explanation we can think of was that the driver momentarily went to sleep at the wheel. Fortunately the only damage were a few scratches on the wing mirror and the plastic side rubbing strip which I have subsequently polished out.

From Bremen we carried on to Oldenburg and on to Groningen, and found what looked like a good '*camping cheques*' site at Lauwersoog which was on one of the beaches at Lauwersmeer; not all that far away. Well, probably because we were tired, it took what seemed ages to reach the site. Eventually we arrived at about 5.30 and booked in with no trouble. After dinner we went to look at the beach and found a small boat marina, a café and a shop selling all the essentials.

Today we decided to move on to Edam for one night for a quick look around then go on to Delft for one night and then two nights in Brugge. The general idea being if we liked what we saw we could come back another time for more exploration. So, by 10am we were on our way into Leeuwarden, then got lost! but eventually found the E22 which crosses the IJsselmeer on the Afluitdijk. At Camping Strandbad, Edam, we were given a nice pitch on the edge of the IJsslemeer. Having pitched up we walked into Edam for a bit of shopping and a look around. The few buildings, canals and bridges we saw were all very pretty and we decided that this is definitely worth a return visit.

Just as we were leaving Edam the following morning, Maureen spotted a heron standing on it's nest on the bank of the canal by the road. On command I

stopped and she leapt out with camera poised, crept round the back of the van and managed to get the picture of the holiday.



Pressing on to Delft, we booked into the Camping Delftse Hout site and then walked into the town centre. Delft appeared to us to be much more of a 'tourist centre' with all that goes with it. So we walked around the back streets and side alleys to try and get a better idea of the town, it's inhabitants and history. We found the Vermeer Museum and spent a very pleasant hour there before returning to the centre to buy some little pieces of Delft pottery.

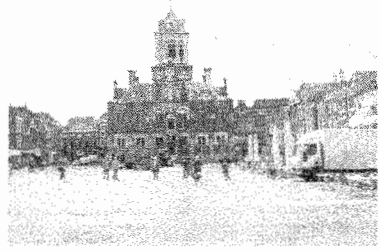
The restaurant on the site had a very interesting menu posted outside which said you could have a presumably vegetarian dish without " chuck, moo, oink or blub"!!! It transpired the chuck was chicken breasts, the moo was steak, the oink was pork tenderloin and the blub was a selection of various fish dishes. This was all too much for us so we succumbed to the advertising and had a very good and reasonably priced meal there.

Next morning we left Delft at 9.30, found our way back to the motorway and followed it all the way down to Bruges where we booked in to the Camping Memling site at 12.30. The site is set in a very nice area and we found a couple of supermarkets and other shops which kept us occupied for the afternoon. We had been advised by the site warden to buy bus tickets at the supermarket as they were cheaper there than on the bus. So, armed with our shopping and the bus tickets we returned to the van for a quiet evening in preparation for a busy day tomorrow.

This morning we took the bus into Bruges, which took about ten minutes straight into the town centre. We found the Tourist Office and got a map of the city and details of the canal tours and after a 30 minute trip around the canals we had an idea of the other places we would like to see as well as numerous photo opportunities.

On return we went to St Salvatores Cathedral and then to the central Markt to see the Belfrey and the 6 bell carillon. We then wandered around the side streets and found a nice little café for lunch. After lunch we walked up to the Concert Hall and on the way back just happened to stumble across a chocolate shop of one of the premiere chocolatiers in Bruges and were *forced* to purchase a

selection both to eat now and take home. We then saw the Chocolate Museum and on our way back to the bus stop were passed by numerous horse-drawn carriages taking tourists around.



When we got back to the bus stop I found that it was outside one of the Brussels Lace shops and managed to get a photo of two model lace makers in period costume sitting in the upstairs window.

The following day were away by 8.45. We went in towards Bruges on the N9 and saw the City Walls with the three City Gates together with two windmills that have been rebuilt there in the Park. The roads again were very easy and we crossed the Belgium/French border at about 10.30 which was much earlier than we had expected.

As my father was born in France we decided to visit his birthplace in Estaires. We had been there once before about 20 years ago to try and trace family. On that occasion we had not been able to get into the Church so thought that we would try again today. This time we were lucky so we had time to look around. We also found the cemetery and the family graves.

We spent our final night at the Chateau du Gandspette just outside Calais, and as the restaurant was open we dined out.

We left the site at 10.00 and drove gently along to Calais, and despite taking our time we still arrived at Calais by 11 am, but for an extra £10 managed to get on the 11.15 boat, arriving home by 5pm.

### *In Summary*

We were away for 3 weeks and stayed on 11 sites. We covered 2553 miles and averaged 37 mpg. The cost of diesel was either the same or a little cheaper than the UK at the time of our visit.

Would we do it again? YES definitely, in fact we are now planning to go to our original destination of Norway next year.

***Derek Moras***

## Windsor Motorhome

After owning Caravans and mainly Motorhomes for 50 years and having had 21 vans of all of different makes and sizes .We would just like to say a few words on how we are getting along with our New Van. It is a new Auto Sleeper Windsor 2 berth on a Ford Transit.

After driving it for 5,000 miles in all sorts of weather and up hill and down dale, this new Ford Transit is a dream to drive, even reversing uphill. Not like the previous van that we only kept for 9 months from new.

The new Ford Transit 2.4TD with an inline engine 140 BHP chain driven cam T350M instead of belt driven, 16" rear wheel drive, nice soft suspension. Tyre pressure 50 lb front and rear 65lb. The steering wheel is super with finger touch cruise control and air conditioning. Disc brakes all round, handbrake on the right, with its own separated drums, which I was told will never wear out. The spare wheel winds down from under the back on a cable.

The new transit has its own alarm system with dead locks on cab doors, and fob locks on all doors and nice little step to get in cab. It also has two air bags on dash. All these are standard.

The Auto Sleeper Windsor is plated 3500kg, so you do not need medicals when you are 70.

Four berth with 4 safety belts or two berth with gas fire instead of Eberspacher heating, we prefer 2 berth with gas/electric fire.

We had doors fitted to the luton, which houses - 2 fold up chairs, 2 sleeping bags, external silver screen and internal screen, with plenty of room left.



There are two large outside lockers on the rear side, one above the other. And the bathroom we find quite roomy with good shower.

Now for the Bonus - Ford give you Free Recovery Service in UK and EU for five years with AA and this could lower your insurance.

***Barbara and Stan Matthews***

# Technical Group & Website

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



## **Auto Sleeper Group (ASG) Incentives:**

ASG have kindly agreed to a series of incentives. You will, of course, need to show your current valid membership card to take advantage. Any queries come back to me:

- 10% off all fitted accessories at any Marquis Dealership
- 10% off all fitted accessories at Auto~Sleepers Willersey Service Centre
- 10% off all habitation checks at any Marquis Dealership; throughout the year
- 10% off all habitation checks at Auto~Sleepers Willersey Service Centre; throughout the year
- 10% off extended warranty purchased through any Marquis Dealership
- A free 1 year membership of the ASOC - for any person purchasing a new or used Auto~Sleeper model through a Marquis Dealership. (See 'enquiry letter' on the Club website for details of periodicity)
- 

## **London Low Emission Zone (LEZ):**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> tranche of the LEZ will now be implemented from January 2012 – (the original date of October 2010 had been suspended). Motorhomes over 3.5tonne, and registered before January 1<sup>st</sup> 2002, will have to be modified to be Euro 4 compliant or a charge of £100 per day to drive in London will be imposed. Full details are available on the website [www.tfl.gov.uk/lezlondon](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/lezlondon).

## **Mercedes & Spare wheels:**

You will remember that last December there was concern that Mercedes based models were being produced without a spare wheel. A~S have now advised that all Mercedes models over 3.5tonne (Surrey & Berkshire) will be fitted with a spare wheel (*A~S do listen!*). That only leaves the Devon & Suffolk!

## **Motorhome Re-calls:**

It would appear that some owners of A~S models may not be aware of re-calls for their vehicles and thus have not had them checked/corrected. With the assistance of Alan Curry and Mark Burdett, at Auto~Sleepers, I can report on the following recent re-calls. Fuller details can be found on the Club Website Technical page - where 'build numbers' are listed. Or alternatively contact your A~S dealer or ring Mark Burdett on 01386 853511.

### Recent re-calls:

- Zeta/Nuevo** (RSVP/2009/006):- Tyre may puncture by contact with the wheel arch
- Lancashire; Nuevo & ES; Inca EK & EL; Vivanti 4; Executive SE & GLS; Sussex; Symbol & ES; Dorset & Talisman** (RSVP/2009/003):- FASP seat may de-latch, and could lead to loss of control and cause seat belt to become ineffective
- Amethyst** (RSVP/2008/020):-Seatbelt may fail

Previous re-calls For previous re-calls see the Club website.

## **LPG & the Eurotunnel**

Eurotunnel now allow motorhomes with a fixed habitation LPG tank (up to 47KG (93ltrs) and less than 80% full) to travel on the Eurostar train providing the gas is switched off. I have checked with Eurotunnel whether this means at the tank and/or the gas locker; and they have replied as follows: - "Turning the tank off in the gas locker will suffice."

## **Sat-Navs:**

Coincidentally - just after a member asked whether there were Sat-Navs suitable for Motorhomes – the Caravan Club's January magazine printed

following information and may be of interest to other members:- . "We are aware of three manufacturers offering Sat-Navs that are said to be suitable for motor caravanning market. They are:

- Snooper Ventura Range: 0800 093 2550 or snooper.co.uk
- Naveo ProNav PNN200 0844 4994 554 or pronav.co.uk
- Garmin Nuvi 465 023 8052 4000 or garmin.co.uk "

**Website:**

Update No. 01/10 dated 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010

- Technical:- Vehicle re-calls - 3 recent re-calls
- Members deals:- 6 incentives being offered by Auto Sleepers Group
- Membership enquiry letter:- 'Description of the annual ASOC year' - added
- Rally list:- 2010 rally list and spreadsheet
- Regalia:- Update of prices
- Technical:- Model reviews – Dorset EL; Stratford & Hampshire - added

Update (Supplementary) No. 01a/10 dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010

Rally list:- Addition of Fishery Creek, Hants (22<sup>nd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> March)

**And finally:**

Last month's envelope included the list of Ideas Sheets and there was a lot of interest. This month includes a copy of the 'hints&tips'. Whereas the Ideas Sheets are formally approved Ideas - the 'hints&tips' are simple suggestions that have been published in the Club Newsletter over the last 5 or so years.

If you have any such simple suggestions perhaps you could send them to the Editor for other members to consider, please?

## Welcome to New Members



Barrie & Sylvia Townsend	Christchurch	Nuevo
George & Yvonne Easton	Grange-over-Sands	Trident
Fred & Sue Fox	Yeovil	Duetto
David Peck	Sidmouth	Hampshire
Alan Watts & Aleta Hopkinson	Sandown I o W	Duetto
Roger & Wendy Guyver	Leighton Buzzard	Ravenna
Tony & Christina Gittins	Sidmouth	Clubman
Jeff & Angie Stamatakis	Llanblethian	Trooper

### TO SWAP

Are you looking for a smaller van?

I have a 1994 VW 2.4 diesel Trophy hightop. 41,000 miles FSH from new. Original purchase invoice dated 1994. All belts changed in full service a couple of months ago. Previous MOT's available. Taxed and ready to go. Full Habitation check 2 months old. Excellent and very reliable van. Good clean condition inside and out, everything working. Non smoking and no pets. Vehicle Alarm and central locking. Bathroom/shower runs across rear of vehicle. 2 single, 1 large single (4ft) or very large double bed arrangement. Storage lockers above cab. Blown air heating. 2 propane gas cylinders, 2 leisure batteries. gas rings and gas oven. 3 way (12v 240v gas) fridge. Electric flush toilet. 3 x12v sockets, and 3 x 240 v sockets. Water heater. Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms fitted. 2 ceiling vents. All windows have flyscreens, blinds and original curtains. 6 x12v lights, 1 reading light, 1 x 240v light. Stand alone awning which can be attached to van, and left zipped up when you want to go off site.

I am now looking to swap for something a bit larger, like an executive, of a similar age, on a VW T4 diesel base, with seating arrangement at front of van, not rear lounge, with possible small cash adjustment. If you are interested, **Contact Due O'Meara** [Sues.email@virgin.net](mailto:Sues.email@virgin.net) or 01268 734113. Based near Dartford Bridge, Essex. Happy to answer any questions.



**35 unused 8" Screwpegs.** awning set for handstanding, as advertised in the Caravan Club magazines. (No drill adaptor socket driver) Cost

£43.45 in May 2006. See [www.screwpegs.com](http://www.screwpegs.com). **Offers? Contact celia.david@btinternet.com or 01970 871372**

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