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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



*The stuff of dreams -  
sun, sea and an Auto-Sleeper*

## **NEWSLETTER 269**

### **February 2011**

# From the Editor <sup>(S)</sup>

Isn't it nice to get back to normal, get sites booked, get the van fired up and be off? Castleton is our first outing again this year, we've normally been lucky with the weather and the area is great for walking. After that there is the Whitmead Rally to look forward to in February with others earmarked throughout the year. Speaking of which, for those planning on visiting Germany later in the year, information and free publications (such as a book listing campsites in Germany) can be obtained using links on the web page accessed from the following address <http://www.germany-tourism.co.uk/camping>.

We also thought it might be useful, for the benefit of our new members, to re-iterate the fact that these rallies are run by enthusiastic volunteers and fill up quickly on a '*first come first served*' basis. So, if there is a rally you want to go to you need to get your slip and cheque off as soon after you see the information in your Newsletter.

And finally on the subject of rallies we have received the following from Jan & Ken Redman

*"Hi to you all. Belated Christmas Greetings and a Very Happy New Year, with plenty of camping ahead (with no snow!!).*

*It is unfortunate that I must keep my travelling to the UK for 2011 as the NHS has taken control of me for the next year. Sorry Andy, you will miss me as you will not have to put up with me being 'first' on site!! Some of you lost their bets at Faversham, didn't they Mr & Mrs Chairpersons!?! We are planning to make as many of the local Club rallies as possible so that we do not lose touch with you all.*

*Hoping to meet you all on a field somewhere in 2011."*

As usual at this time of year copy is very sparse, but we've managed to fill it and closely avoid a 'post festivity diet'!

# The National Rally

## *Photo Competition 2011*

After some considerable time running the photo competition at the National Rally, Rita Tubb has decided to hand over the mantle. Therefore, this year's competition will be run by Jean Hollingsworth although the categories will remain the same and are as follows:

**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 2011**. 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:

Jean Hollingsworth  
24 Norton Grove  
Kingston-upon-Hull  
Yorkshire HU4 6HL

If you have any queries Jean can be contacted on:

Telephone: 07879 716576 or 01482 572682  
e-mail: [jaholly1@gmail.com](mailto:jaholly1@gmail.com).

## Royal Wedding (Just a thought)

It is nice to see that the Committee has arranged for those of us who wish to participate, all be it at a distance, in the wedding of William to Kate by the provision of two large screen TV's. These to be set up in the two halls most used by the Rally go-ers. I as one who really looks forward to the Technical Q&A rump session hope that it will not be sacrificed on the alter to Royal Adulation! I concur with the choice of the Cedric Ford Pavilion as it is commodious enough to accommodate all those who wish to enjoy this event, but will the inclusion of a TV in the hall where the hobbies, tea and photo competition display etc. are to be enjoyed not detract a little from these attractions.

For those who have little desire to be bombarded with the non-stop hype of this wedding there seems only one option, other than retiring to the sanctuary of ones van, that is to take up Brownhills offer of a cream tea on the Friday rather than the Sunday as per the norm.

Not everybody wants to watch the Royal Wedding and by using the two halls this means there is little alternative other than as I have said of removing oneself from the vicinity of the 'one eyed monster'! Though if the one in the Stuart Goodwin had the sound off then it might not be such an intrusion.

Hang on perhaps I should volunteer to do some marshalling duties at the appropriate time though knowing my luck it would be as one of the appointed 'hall exit' duty persons!

*Ricky Smith*

PS If there are is any one out there who has any tips, wrinkles or advise on the care & maintenance on the T4 VW base please contact me at [rathlarg@btinternet.com](mailto:rathlarg@btinternet.com)

## ***Leisure Battery Maintenance***

I have recently had an interesting time sorting out the Zig charger in our van. Perhaps the paragraphs below will be of interest?

Earlier this year I installed a new leisure battery in our Talisman, which was soon followed by a solar panel. This set-up worked well throughout the summer, no more flat batteries, I thought. Not so!

Back home with an electric hook-up and charger switched on I was very surprised to find the battery `flat` after being left unused for a few weeks. It transpired that the Zig charger was only giving out less than 5 volts and with dull winter days the solar panel didn't make up the short fall. I have now replaced the faulty X7 charger with an X70, the straight-swop replacement. (The green `charger on` light still showed on the control panel by the way)

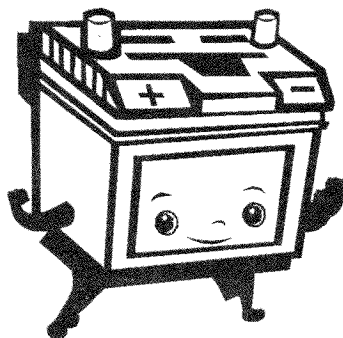
Talking with the very helpful technical staff at Zig Electronics I can offer the following advice to anyone with a charging arrangement similar to ours.

1. Zig chargers are not designed for continuous use, recommended to charge for a 24 hour period once a week?
2. There is an Auto Power Diode connection available on the Zig unit where secondary charging devices should be connected.
3. My solar panel had been connected directly to the battery for ease of installation purposes. This may have resulted in excess voltage appearing on the output side of the Zig unit and may have caused it to malfunction?
4. I shall now make regular checks with a multimeter to ensure all is working correctly. The output from the solar panel (as shown by its voltmeter) is often

significantly more than the max battery voltage of 13.8v, ie, upstream of the regulator. This is thus not a good check on battery condition.

*Harry Emblen*

I would like to elaborate on the subject of motorhome leisure battery condition and voltages. Firstly all voltages mentioned are for a temperature of 20°C and would be different at different temperatures. When a battery is completely disconnected from any circuitry it will, if fully charged have a voltage of 12.6v to 12.8v. Under the same circumstances it will be fully discharged if the voltage is 12.0v or less however if it was connected to a loaded circuit the equivalent voltage would be 10.5v. If your motorhome electrical control unit allows you to read battery voltage then it is the loaded voltage you are reading and hence the battery is not fully discharged until the reading drops to 10.5v.



If a charger is connected to the battery and energised then the voltage you will read is the charger output voltage. In theory, the higher the voltage you apply to a battery to charge it, the faster and more fully it will charge. However at a 14.4v the electrolyte inside the unit will begin to 'gas', giving off hydrogen that is potentially explosive. Vehicle alternators, solar panel regulators and 'boost' chargers therefore have a controlled maximum output of 14.5v. Leisure batteries also have a gas take off tube that vents the top of the cells to fresh air. When you replace your leisure battery, make sure that this is refitted.

If a solar panel is connected direct to the battery it must be via a compatible regulator. In that case the panel will deliver power in

proportion to the light it receives and the demand of the load up to its maximum (80W, 100W, etc.) irrespective of whether another charger is connected. It is usual in conditions of good light and low load for the voltage to increase to 14.5v. (I personally think it very unlikely that an extra volt on the output would damage an inbuilt motorhome charge and it certainly hasn't damaged mine in the last four years, however if your vehicle is under warranty ensure that any solar panel installation does not make that void).

A normal motorhome leisure battery charger is designed to preserve the charge of the battery. This is called float charging. The idea is that as load is demanded (eg TV switched on) the charger increases its output to supply that load and therefore the battery remains charged. Battery float voltages vary depending on manufacture but are typically 13.7/13.8v. This voltage will also slowly recharge a part discharged battery but not very quickly and never fully however, in contradiction, if the battery is [as] fully charged [as its going to get], the continuous application of this voltage will damage the battery!

When you are living in the van whether on hook up or not and with or without a solar panel, as long as the leisure battery is in good condition and you ensure you don't excessively discharge it then the situation is manageable.

When the vehicle is left unused for any period of time the leisure battery will discharge over time (that will vary considerably from vehicle to vehicle) as a result various small loads (eg. Alarm or control panel). The only way to stop this is to disconnect the battery. A solar panel is a good way of maintaining battery condition whilst leaving it connected – in the dark the battery discharges a little and in the light it is re-charged. The other way to do this is to do as Harry suggests; charge with the vehicle charger for 24hrs a week.

*Peter Brown*

## Towing a Car – Some Reflections.

Recent issues of our Newsletter have invited advice on towing a car using an A-bracket which, as Baz described in the January edition, is a "grey area". The debate rages within the MH forums as to the definition of a "trailer" and the legality of towing a car, particularly on the continent, and it would be worthwhile tapping in to these forums before deciding to tow.

As we travel around we observe towing to be gaining in popularity particularly with vans longer than about 24 ft. which, of course, is longer than most A-S vans, and it is unusual to come across the shorter vans opting to tow. Which is just as well as there are significant implications in addition to those mentioned above.

We all remember passing our driving test! Then we were proficient and justly proud at being able to reverse back down the road and around a corner, but try that with a car in tow on an A-bracket. Inevitably, there will be times when we have to reverse our motorhomes whilst en route and if we could only manage a yard or two are we really roadworthy?

However, there is one issue that is often overlooked and that is the legality of the car to be driven once modified to take an A-bracket which results in either a pullbar or large lugs being fitted in front of the bumper. To my mind this negates the safety features designed to minimise the injuries to pedestrians who may be hit by a car. So I wrote to the Vehicle Certification Agency who have now responded giving advice which is pertinent to those towing a modified car. My enquiry & their response follows :

*"To: <enquiries@vca.gov.uk>  
Subj: Car modification - Legality*

*I would welcome your advice on the following matter:*

*Many small cars are now being modified so that they can be towed by a motorhome using an A-bracket, which requires a*

*pullbar to be permanently attached to the front end of the car. When not being towed the car would continue to be driven as normal with the pullbar in situ.*

*Recognising that cars have to be designed to minimise injury to pedestrians in the event of a collision, and that stricter standards are being legislated, could you advise whether there are implications I should be aware of if having my car fitted with a pullbar?*

*In particular, implications as to whether or not - Type Approval is affected, insurance notification, and in meeting MOT requirements when these are due?*

*From VCA - If the pull-bars to which you refer are fitted to vehicles after they have been registered then they are outside the scope of Type Approval in the UK, but they do still need to meet the UK Construction & Use and Lighting Regulations.*

*Differently from the UK, Type Approval in other member states of the EU applies throughout the life of the vehicle, so this will need to be considered if taking the vehicle abroad.*

*I suggest that you request from the supplier of the bar on your vehicle, a statement that the vehicle with the bar fitted still complies with Construction and Use requirements, and enquire as to their advice regarding use outside the UK.*

*I cannot comment on the situation regarding future MOT inspection, or insurance status, but a compliance statement from the supplier may help with both of these potential issues.*

*MOT tests come under the supervision of VOSA (Vehicle and Operator Services Agency), who can be contacted at the following E-mail address, or telephone:*

*Tel. National Number 0300 123 9000*

Opening hours 7.30 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday and 8.30 am to 3.00 pm on Saturdays. Closed Sundays.

[Enquiries@vosa.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries@vosa.gov.uk)

*I hope this information helps, Regards, TSG. VCA"*

I hope Members find these reflections helpful and would advise anyone contemplating having a car so modified to formally consult their insurance company beforehand; to ask their supplier to demonstrate a reversing manoeuvre; to ask their local garage about MOT implications, and be aware of the likelihood that European legislation will be harmonised eventually.

*Brian Maddox*

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### *Who is the mystery man giving Mo the ride of her life?*

Clues might be in the camouflaged assistants??





## February 2011 Rally Supplement.

Please carry your ASOC membership cards when attending rallies.

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

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

Please inform the Rally Marshal beforehand if you wish to bring a car, trailer or tent to a rally.

Marshals please note that the rate of VAT rose to 20% in January 2011. This will mean a rise in rally fees by 2.5%. This would make a rally fee of £2.35 into £2.40.

Change of rally details: -23<sup>rd</sup> -27<sup>th</sup>. May Hurley Riverside Park, Maidenhead, Berks.

**Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> June to Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2011. (7 nights)**

**Camping Rudesheim am Rhein, Rudesheim, Germany.**

**Rally Marshals:** Liz Irvin and Jeanne Hall: assisted by Peter Brown and Chris Mawdsley.

Emergency Tel. No. 00 44 (0) 7711271568.

Rally fee £17.50 inc VAT (non refundable if successful) to be sent with rally slip and SAE or email address for reply, to Mrs. E Irvin, 43 School Lane, Kirk Ella, Hull, East Yorkshire, HU10 7NP.

Cheques payable to E. Irvin. Tel. No. 01482 658345.

E-mail [irvin@irvin.karoo.co.uk](mailto:irvin@irvin.karoo.co.uk)

Site Fees payable direct by members to site owner, expected to be similar in 2011. Fees in 2010 were € 27.30 per night for 2 adults, € 22.00 for 1 person, inclusive of electricity 10 amps.

Dogs €3.00 per night.

Showers € 1.00 for 5 minutes. English credit cards are not accepted.

The site is a short walk along the riverside to Rudesheim.

For local attractions please see the November newsletter.

The Campsite website is: <http://www.campingplatz-ruedesheim.de/index-en.htm>

I plan to organise an evening Rhine in Flames cruise on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, including a 2 course dinner (traditional German main course with meat, supplements and dessert) €50.50 per person in 2009. I will need to know numbers for the cruise on the rally slip.

You will be expected to make your own arrangements for ferries and insurance.

**Limit of 25 vans Please do not arrive before 12 noon.**

**14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>.February ( 4 nights) Whitemead Forest Park,  
Parkend,Lydney,Gloucs.**

Emergency 07799591550. ( Marshal's mobile).Up to 2 days before rally  
01484 604133.

Site reception. 0845 345 3425.

Rally Marshals: Yvonne & Stuart

**This rally is now fully booked.**

**7<sup>th</sup> –April 10th 2011- (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: £5.00 per night, all hardstanding, Rally Fee: £2.40. 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 send SAE for acceptance and further directions.**

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

**Cost £6.50p 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.

Dogs are allowed.

Rally starts at 12 noon Thursday. NOT BEFORE PLEASE.

**14<sup>th</sup>. – 17<sup>th</sup> .April National Motorhome Show,East of England Showground,Peterborough.PE2 6XE.**

Emergency Tel.No. 07922049714

Rally Marshals:Pauline & Neil Rogers, & Yvonne & Stuart Wood.

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:£41,arrive Friday £38, arrive Saturday £35.***

***All bookings for the Saturday evening entertainment must be made with Warners when returning the application form to the organisers, by Friday 25<sup>th</sup>.March 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 £2.50 couples,£1.70 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 on site until 12 noon Monday.

**28<sup>th</sup>.April – 2<sup>nd</sup>. May National Rally & AGM. Nottingham Showground,Newark.**

Application forms in January 2011 Newsletter.  
Completed forms & cheques for camping & meals to be returned by 2<sup>nd</sup>.April 2011

**19<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> May (4 nights).Bentley Wild Fowl & Motor Museum. Nr. Halland, E Sussex.**

**Rally marshals:**Dorothy & Baz Wellard; assisted by Mo & Mike Valentine.

**Fees:** - Site fees £6.50 per night (*inc. VAT*), plus rally fee of £2.50 (*inc. VAT*). Rally slips and cheque payable to Mrs D. Wellard and send to 18 Greenwood Close, Fareham, Hants, PO16 7UF. Contact: -01329 231259 or Mob. 07879 473434 or baz.wellard@virgin.net

Bentley entry fee: -One-off fee of £7.00 (*inc. VAT*) for the duration of the rally - payable direct to site staff.

**Attractions:** -Set in the middle of East Sussex countryside Bentley has a wild fowl reserve covering 27 acres with around 125 species of wild fowl. The motor museum houses a wide collection of Veteran; Edwardian; Vintage & Classic cars. Glyndebourne woods have a wonderful variety of trees, wild life and reconstructed ancient buildings. Bentley house is also open to visitors. For further details you can visit [www.bentley.org.uk](http://www.bentley.org.uk)

A simple evening meal is available on Saturday, in Bentley's tea room, at £7.50 (*payable direct to caterers on site*) – but is limited to the first 50 meals booked. We do need to order meals in advance so please select from: - Chicken & Mushroom or Steak & Kidney pies, with chips & vegetables; or Jacket potato with selection of cheese & baked beans; prawns; tuna or coleslaw, with salad; vegetarian can be arranged. Please advise your choice(s) on your rally slip. Sweets and a licensed bar are available. Also a 10% discount is offered on cream teas.

Nice grass field with toilets - however there are no electrics.

Maximum number of units - 35.

**Directions:** - Bentley (BN8 5AF) is located 7 miles north east of Lewes, Nr. Halland, East Sussex. It is signposted from the A26, A22 & B2192.

**A Guide for new ralliers and a reminder to all ralliers.**

All members of the Club may rally but there is a procedure to follow. If you see a rally you wish to attend advertised in the Rally Supplement in the Newsletter, then complete a rally slip which you will find in the Rally Supplement.

Complete ALL sections on both sides of the rally slip. Ensure that ALL family members attending a rally are listed on the slip, this number is subject to the sleeping capacity of your Auto-Sleeper.

Calculate the amount of money to be sent to the Rally Marshal named in the rally information. This includes site fees for the number of nights of the rally and the Rally Fee. The Rally Fee is a one off payment for a rally, NOT a per night fee.

Return the RALLY SLIP and a CHEQUE for the total amount of the cost of the rally to the Marshal, whose address is given in the rally information. If you wish to have confirmation that you have been accepted on the rally **please enclose a SAE.**

Return the rally slip and cheque as soon as possible to the named marshal as rallies are very popular.

If you find that you cannot attend the rally then please inform the Marshal as soon as possible as they may have others waiting to attend. We always try to give a telephone number for the site or the Marshal's mobile. If you are delayed en route please telephone the Marshal on site, if possible.

The only rallies that this system does not apply to are the Club National & A.G.M. & the large show rallies. THE APPLICATION FORM FOR THE National & AGM RALLY IS SENT OUT WITH THE NEWSLETTER. All relevant information is given on the Form /Rally Supplement including closing dates.

For large Show Rallies ie. Peterborough, Northern Motorhome, Lincoln & Shepton Mallet the bookings are made through the Show organisers and payment should be sent to them, using the appropriate forms to be found in Motorhome magazines, before the closing date. Forms for Peterborough, Northern Motorhome Show & Lincoln Shows are now being issued with the Club Newsletter. Special Club site fees are sometimes available and these are advertised in the Rally Supplement in the Newsletter.

When you have sent your application form and fee to the Show organisers then send a completed rally slip to the Club's Marshal with the appropriate rally fee. You **cannot** book with the Organisers at the special Club site fee and then rally elsewhere on the site.

REFUNDS. The rally fee will have already been spent so there will normally be no refund. Site fees may only be refunded when and if it is possible to fill the vacant pitch. This will be subject to the terms agreed with the site owner by the rally marshal.

Please remember that rallies start and close at 12 noon, unless otherwise stated. Failure to keep to these times can cause the Club problems with the Exemption Certificate used on green field sites.

Early arrivals can also cause the marshal problems. To avoid causing embarrassment please arrive at a rally *after* the given start time.

Extra items such as trailers, cars (with vans) tents etc. may only be accepted on site with the *prior* agreement of the marshal.

**Membership cards should be available for inspection at all rallies.**

Finally if you have any problems with booking for a rally then please contact the Rally Co-ordinator. The address, telephone number & e-mail are to be found at the end of the Rally Supplement. If the Rally Co-ordinator is not available please leave a message on the answering machine or send a fax or an e-mail and your enquiry will be dealt with as soon as possible.

*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.*

*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?

Name ..... Phone No. ....

**Please complete both sides of this form.**

*f* .....

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.

## **In response to the query from Terry Finch about skylights which rattle when it's windy.**

We have a two year old Symbol which has suffered from this problem since new and I was also told by Auto Sleeper that nothing can be done.

I was able to obtain from work a thin tubular strip of polystyrene (used by builders to fill large gaps) and, on windy nights, I tuck this along the opening edge of the blind as a draught excluder. This has solved the problem and enables us to sleep peacefully. Prior to obtaining the polystyrene I tightly rolled up a tea towel which also prevented the blind from flapping - not very technical but it works.

Hope this helps

*Michael Hogan*

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## **Of any use?**

A few years back I was the owner of an AS Gatcombe. It was one of the last Gatcombes made and was registered on a 55 plate. During the first year of ownership we had to have the washroom door replaced under warranty as there was a small amount of warping at the base of the door. The new door was sent to me and fitted by myself. The supplying dealer did not want the original door back and asked me to dispose of it. Five years down the line I still have the door although the van has now gone.

It seems a shame to just throw the door in a skip and I was wondering whether anyone within your membership could make use of it, possibly to replace a more badly damaged door. If anyone can make use of it they would be welcome to it, I'm not looking for any payment, just collection from Bridgend in South Wales, or possibly we could take it with us on one of our many jaunts if we were headed in the right direction.

*Phil Chamberlain*

*Email: phil\_oaks@hotmail.com*

# Technical Group & Website

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



## **Q&A Session at the 2011 National Rally:**

As a result of the changing circumstances affecting the plans for the National Rally I have reviewed the situation regarding the Q&A session with Auto-Sleepers. I regret to say, that for various reasons, I consider it is not feasible to run the 'formal' session this year. This is an agreed pragmatic decision by both the Club & A~S.

One of the main reasons is that the 5 A~S senior managers, who have now attended for 7 years, will no doubt wish to spend the 'Bank Holiday' with their family & friends. Which I hope you agree is understandable.

I consider, with past experience of the subjects that regularly arise, and with the Club's closer relationship to A~S on policy, design and production – many questions can now be answered by 'in-house' knowledge.

Therefore, and for this year only, it is intended that any questions will be addressed at the 'Technical Desk'. Those questions that cannot be answered will be put to the respective managers later and the answers reported back. Thus a single gap year can be contained.

I know this may be disappointing to some members – but I can confirm that the Q&A session will be re-instated in 2012.

### **Automatic Gearboxes:**

I am aware that a few members have been disappointed that not all A~S models can be supplied with the option of an automatic gearbox.

However, a member has kindly sent me brief details of a firm that can offer an alternative method – an 'AutoClutch'. The firm is Vehvac and their contact details are [www.vehvac.com](http://www.vehvac.com) tel. 01732, 868080.

I have no knowledge of this device - so it is up to anyone interested to make sure that they are satisfied with the performance offered, and after sales, before committing themselves. Should anyone decide to install this option I would appreciate any feedback, please.

### **Driving Licences:**

Another subject that is regularly raised is the mandatory renewal of the driving licence at the age of 70; and the extra requirements if driving vehicles over 3,500kg. DVLA will always give advice in advance of renewal date; but I also have a guide, if anyone would like a copy.

### **Website Updates**

- **No 15/10:** 24<sup>th</sup> December 2010
  - Answer to the Xmas cracker puzzle
  - Sussex Duo review available
  
- **No. 01/11:** 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011
  - 2011 rally list
  - 2011 rally spreadsheet
  
- **No. 02/11** 10<sup>th</sup> January 2011
  - Regalia prices updated - to inc VAT
  - Rally marshals guide updated - to inc VAT
  - Ralliers guide - new

## German Low Emission Zones

In April 2009 I mentioned in the Newsletter that Germany was in the process of introducing Low Emission Zones. A couple of months later a club member advised of a web site where more information could be obtained. As I quite happily omit driving through city centres from our holiday itineraries I thought no more.

During our 2011 trip to Europe we plan to spend a couple of days in the German Black Forest town of Freiburg. I was astounded to find that both of the towns campsites are (since January 2010) in a low emission zone. To enter the zone without displaying an emission compliance sticker on your windscreen invites a 40€ fine and licence penalty points.

The link from the campsite website on this subject took me to the same site as we mentioned in the Newsletter in July 2009. On that site a commercial company offered to supply a sticker (for an eligible vehicle) for 30€.

On investigating further via the germany-tourism web site I found that (on presentation of vehicle registration document) stickers are available from a wide range of garages, MOT (Tuv) stations and licensing offices at a cost of 5€ to 10€. The Tuv SUD organisation can supply the stickers at a delivered to the UK cost of 15€ (an image of the vehicle licence document is e-mailed to them) paid by credit card.

I expect most club members will be happy to avoid the zones but as I know our vehicle is compliant and the sticker is valid for the life of the vehicle and we expect to visit Germany regularly I've decided to procure a sticker and have one less road sign to worry about. If you are interested use the web address below.

[http://www.tuev-sued.de/auto\\_fahrzeuge/feinstaub-plakette/feinstaubplakette\\_ausland/england](http://www.tuev-sued.de/auto_fahrzeuge/feinstaub-plakette/feinstaubplakette_ausland/england)

*Peter Brown*

## ECN Emergency contact numbers

Whilst of course we all hope it will never happen to us, accidents and illness do happen from time to time and the need may arise to contact family or relatives of the person or persons in distress, particularly if they are unable to verbally communicate for what ever reason.

Most of us carry mobile phone now, and if you have not done so, why not put ECN numbers in the contact list such as, ECN 1234 567890. by doing so you can help the marshals or others trying to help find the right numbers without going through the many numbers you probably have in your contact list in order to find relatives etc.

As a further back up and even easier and faster to find, put all your ECN numbers on the inside door of the wardrobe, along side all the Auto Sleeper warning notices. If this became standard practice with all club members, they would at least know that the ECN numbers they have provided would ensure the right people could be contacted in the event of an emergency.

**Mac McArthur**

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### A reluctant farewell

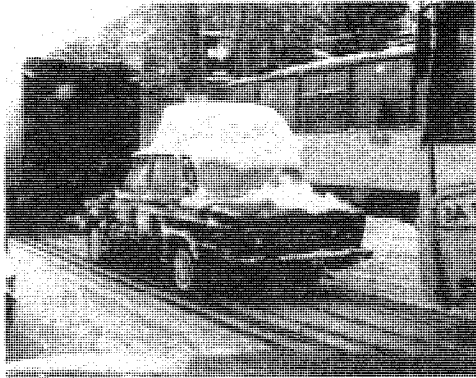
*After so many years as members of ASOC, following the death of my husband, Kenneth, in November, I have very reluctantly had to give up motorhoming, due to mobility problems.*

*We thoroughly enjoyed meeting members at Rallies and I thank everyone for their kindness, particularly in the early days.*

**Beryl Douglas**

## On the subject of Snow.....

To enlarge on Mike Valentine's letter in the last magazine, the presence of snow on the roof of a car is a possible danger in that under the influence of braking, the driver may easily find the whole lot move forward, down over his windscreen, thus rendering his forward vision impossible. The weight of the snow would also effectively prevent his wipers from working, so he would be 'blind'.



Further, if turning with the snow in place, it could slide off sideways onto pedestrians, passing cyclists or motorcyclists, with equally disastrous results.

Snow is a very heavy phenomenon, as we all know from having shovelled it up off our drives.

In response to June & Dave Everton's comment on draughts in an executive Boxer, we have a 1995 Executive with similar draughts. Check the effectiveness of the rubber door seals; in our van the driver's door does not make a 100% seal, despite good condition seals; in fact daylight can be seen down at footwell level, although water never gets into the cab.

The same happens low down on the rear access door! However we have been fortunate not to notice any draughts whilst parked.

**Sean Hollands**  
**Retired Kent Police Traffic Division officer**

# Regalia Update

There is a Regalia Order Form enclosed with this Newsletter and the up to date price list below.

There are no new items to report at this moment. Unfortunately there has had to be a slight increase in prices due to the VAT going up.

Well that's all for now except to wish you all a very Happy (Motorhoming) New Year.

*John Jones*  
*Regalia Officer*

## Regalia Price List—2011

This list cancels and supersedes all previous lists. Prices, whilst correct at the time of printing (January 2011), are subject to change at any time. Orders over £12.00 post free. Otherwise please add £1.35 for P&P (except shirts and vests, see below for price)

### Pitch Reservation Boards

Board only	£3.10
Board with Reg. No.	£5.64

### Badges

New Grille Badge	£7.65
Lapel Badge	£2.80
Windscreen	£0.70
A.S.O.C. name badges Metal	£5.65

(State either Christian only or both, one name 4mm lettering, two names 3mm lettering)

A.S.O.C. 3 inch/75mm circular printed badge	£1.50
Van names per letter	£0.60

Range of colours, script and size, all sorts of permutations, prices and availability on request (**must be legal**)

Baseball caps Red trim £7.20 Ski/Bronx knitted hats £6.10

**Little Man stickers**, choice of colours

4" .....	£2.75
6" .....	£3.50
8" .....	£4.50



**A.S.O.C. Shirts & Vests**

T-Shirts	£ 8.20
Polo Shirts	£11.00
Sweatshirts	£12.00
Reflective Vests	£ 6.25

Carriage on the above Shirts & Vests:- £2.35 per item  
Available in S, M, L, XL & XXL

A.S.O.C. 20cm Teddy Bear with T-shirt	£ 6.15
A.S.O.C. Pennant	£ 4.35
Talbot Express Talisman GL 1/92nd scale model	£ 6.40
Newsletter Binders	£ 4.45

Cheques should be made payable to 'Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club'  
Please send orders to:-

**John Jones (Regalia Officer), 31 Abbott Lea, Mansfield  
Nottinghamshire NG19 6NF**

**Welcome to New Members**



David & Madleine Bennett	Yeovil	Lancashire
Carole Gibbs	Worcester	Clubman
David Lewis	Twickenham	Symbol
Michael Cooney & Eleanor Cousins	Cleckheaton	Nuevo
David & Pam Soanes	Newmarket	Trident
Brian & Diana Dunk	Bromley	Dorset
Heather Flint	Isleworth	Duetto
Roger & Peg Gray	Oxted	Nuevo
Mike & Janet Smith	Amesbury	Gatcombe
Brian & Carole Steed	Toddington	Dorset

Mike & Barbara Surridge  
 Ronald Workman  
 George & Pat Gooden  
 Bernard & Carol Goodwin  
 Linda Luckin & Dave Dore  
 Klaus & Jean Zebrowski  
 Iain & Sue Munro  
 Bill & Delma Hutchings  
 Roland & Joyce Johnson  
 Trevor Mann & Ami Culshaw  
 Keith & Cis Newis  
 Jim & Sue Shaw  
 Peter & Christine Weaver  
 Ken & Lesley Eldret  
 Bill & Val Hardiman  
 Larry & Pam Fraser  
 Roy & Ann Bailey-Wood  
 John & Christine Farmer  
 Rod & Ann Ireland  
 Barry & Jo Holdnall-Bate

Haverhill  
 Dudley  
 Woodbridge  
 Crawley  
 Loxwood  
 Teignmouth  
 Broadstone  
 Exeter  
 Cokermonth  
 Crowborough  
 Yeovil  
 Romsey  
 Radstock  
 Bognor Regis  
 Nr Wolverhampton  
 Paignton  
 Cardiff  
 Southampton  
 Carnforth  
 West Looe

Duetto  
 Lancashire  
 Northants  
 Gloucester  
 Lancashire  
 Northants  
 Surrey  
 Nuevo  
 Lancashire  
 Dorset  
 Duetto  
 Broadway  
 Executive  
 Lancashire  
 Inca  
 Sussex  
 Trident  
 Broadway  
 Sussex  
 Medallion



*Thank you for your donations.*

**VWT4 2lt petrol servicing parts s/**  
 plugs, oil filter, fuel filter, air filter **£15**

**Fiamma Top Box**

ultra 320 280 ltrs. 1080 x 780 x 420 10kg  
 with 2 keys fixing brackets gas struts **£100**

**Waecco B&W reversing camera, perfect view ctr 245 consisting RB19 camera RV45 monitor and wiring harness £100.**

**Contact Mr & Mrs Russell 01392 257759**

NR "Motor Villa" motorhome awning, drive-away type, grey-green with steel frame. This free-standing motorhome annexe features a zip-out front panel, two side doorways and a roll-up rear

panel connecting to the motorhome gutter or j-rail. Dimensions 10' 7" wide, 6'9" deep, 6'2" high at front and 7' high at rear.

**£100 o.n.o. Contact Peter on 01932 864769 (Surrey)**

### WANTED

Marquis are looking for is a Auto-Sleeper Clubman or Gatcombe 2003 onwards, turbo diesel, reasonable mileage and in good condition but I'm sure that is standard for AVS owners! We will look to either buy the vehicle or offer a favourable part exchange price.

**Contact Richard Morse on 01635 248888 or email**  
**rm1@marquismotorhomes.co.uk**

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Items for the Newsletter **MUST** reach your Editor by the **TENTH** of the month. You may post them to 5 Kenilworth Walk, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 1WA or e-mail to [petercb1952-asocnews@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:petercb1952-asocnews@yahoo.co.uk). Or when notified to, send to Deputy Editor **Dudley Woodhams** at 83 Langdale Place, Newton Aycliffe, Co. Durham DL5 7DY or e-mail to [snowgoose1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:snowgoose1@hotmail.co.uk). Jill Bertlin The Rockeries, Sunny Terrace, Lindale, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria, LA11 6 LQ e-mail [jbertlin@aol.com](mailto:jbertlin@aol.com). Baz Wellard 18 Greenwood Close, Fareham, Hants PO16 7UF E-mail [baz.wellard@virgin.net](mailto:baz.wellard@virgin.net).

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