

ASOC

# News

OCTOBER 2017 | 349



## Your committee

**President:**

Charles Trevelyan

**Chairman:**

Peter Brown 07771 827711  
chairman@asoc.uk.com

**Vice-Chairman:**

Keith Ross 07794 243935  
ross17@john-lewis.com

**Secretary:**

John Osland-Jones 01217 448065  
oslandjones@aol.com

**Treasurer:**

John Geeson 01491 641776  
john.geeson@outlook.com

**Rally Coordinator:**

Neil Rogers 01325 374540  
ncr@mypostoffice.co.uk

**Webmaster & Chair, Tech Group:**

Baz Wellard 01329 231259  
webmaster@asoc.uk.com  
technical@asoc.uk.com

**Regalia Officer:**

Stuart Wood 07799 591550  
stuwd@yahoo.co.uk

**Newsletter Editor:**

John Morris 07545 078905  
editor@asoc.uk.com

**Membership Secretary:**

David Crabbe 01744 884437  
membershipsec@asoc.uk.com

**Chair, National Rally Sub Committee:**

Keith Ross 07794 243935  
nationalrally@asoc.uk.com

**Minutes Secretary:**

Gill Hopkins 01244 675180

**Charities & Exhibitions Officer:**

Mike Valentine 02392 482818  
mikemo.valentine@talktalk.net

**Member:**

vacant

**Our website:**

www.asoc.uk.com

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## Important note

Contributions from members are published in good faith and in the hope that they will prove interesting and useful. All reasonable care has been taken to ensure accuracy but no modification or suggestion has been tested by the Company, the Club or your editor.

Therefore, no warranties are expressed or implied nor indemnities given. You try them out at your own risk.

Advertisements for members items for sale or wanted are published free of charge, but small donations to club funds are appreciated. No guarantee can be given that any item will be published in any issue of the magazine. Cheques should be made payable to "Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club" and should be sent to the editor.

## Rally information

**Points to remember**

Marshals should let the rally coordinator know when their rallies are fully booked.

Always carry your ASOC membership card when attending rallies.

Inform the marshal if you plan to bring a car, tent or trailer to a rally.

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

**Running a rally**

If you would like to run a rally, contact the rally coordinator for "Guide for Rally Marshals". When a date and venue is chosen you will receive the "Rules for Rally Marshals" and asked to sign a marshal's declaration which should be returned to the rally coordinator. Assistance and advice is available from the rally coordinator or a committee member.

If you would like to assist a rally marshal to see what is involved in running a rally, or interested in the details of possible rally sites we have, contact the rally coordinator.

**Important**

All potential rally dates and venues must be checked with the rally coordinator, who will check that the club will be able to comply with regulatory and insurance requirements.

## Items for publication

The editor reserves the right to edit or omit any item for whatever reason. The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the contributors to ASOC News do not necessarily reflect those of the editor. Your items should reach the editor by the tenth of the month. Please remember to add your membership number and name to your item. Any item appearing in any magazine issue may be freely used by other publications, but please acknowledge both the author and source.

Send your items by post to

17 Newbridge Gardens  
Bath BA1 3LT

or email

asocnews@asoc.uk.com

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front cover picture: Chris Mawdsley  
chapel at the palace of Versailles

# editor's note

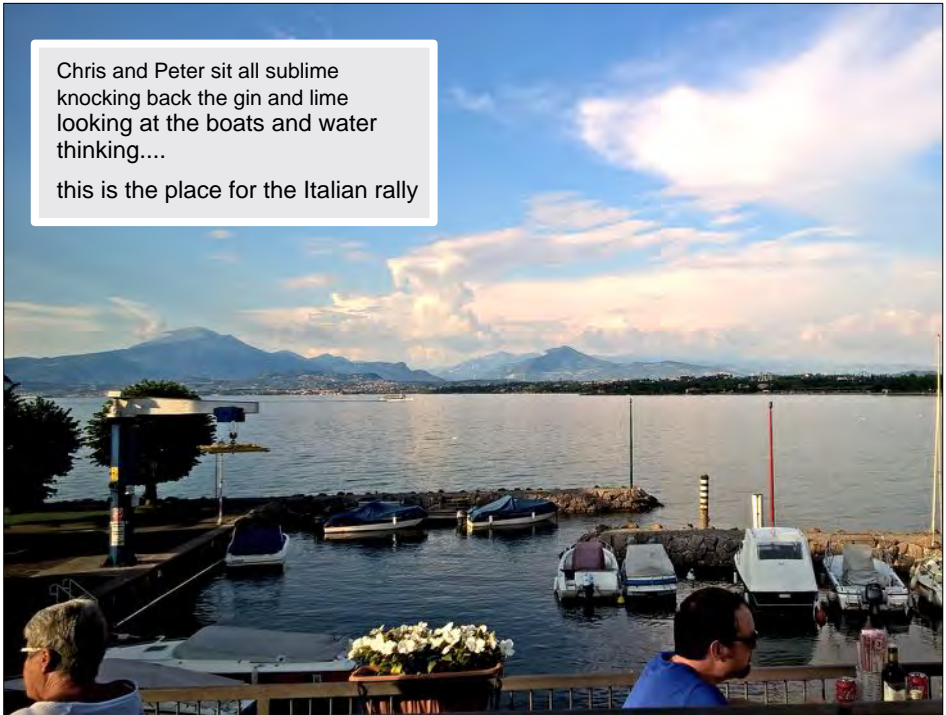
I can't believe we are into the October issue of News. I am now beginning to settle into the editor's role, and with a few issues now under the belt, the experimental stages now begin. This means things may change and move around a bit.

It seems 'more rallies with full facilities' has caused a bit of interest. Some for and some against, the question is, would more members rally with the club if they had full facilities? Whilst we are talking about rallies, the important information regarding rallies has moved to the inside front cover. Please take time to read them again to refresh your memory.

The subscriber list for access to the electronic version is growing, and more information will be available shortly, and how we intend to provide this. So let us have your email by sending to [asocnews@asoc.uk.com](mailto:asocnews@asoc.uk.com) if you are interested. Don't forget, most if not all the pics are in colour. Although some members have indicated they only want the electronic version, the club policy is that we will still deliver the paper copy to every member.

Don't forget, ASOC News is your magazine, and relies on the membership sending in articles on their travels and places of interest.

Chris and Peter sit all sublime  
knocking back the gin and lime  
looking at the boats and water  
thinking....  
this is the place for the Italian rally



# AGM and National Rally

Following the weekend of last year's National Rally, we have been in discussion with the senior management team at Newark Showground on how we may prevent a reoccurrence of the disruption some of our members experienced last year.

The senior management team at Newark met with leaders of Trent Vineyard Christian Youth who offered sincere apologies and a pledge that our experiences would not be repeated in the forthcoming year.

It was unfortunate before anyone arrived we took a decision to use the main arena in front of the Cedric Ford Pavilion. We were allocated the arena behind the Stuart Goodwin Hall but thought members would like to be closer to the facilities so asked if we could swap, which we were allowed to do. We knew that we would be sharing the site with Trent Vineyard Christian Youth but didn't realise what impact on our members this would be.

As this organisation is due to share the site with Auto-Sleeper again next May we have agreed with the Newark Showground management that the following should be implemented:

1. The duty manager stays on site until 23.00 hours over the weekend so in the event of excessive noise/music they are able to deal with Trent Vineyard Christian Youth directly.
2. We will park member's vehicles to the arena behind the Stuart Goodwin Hall. Also the parking behind Cedric Ford Pavilion will be restricted to the confines of the building and the buildings should provide a barrier.
3. Members are to report any problems to any member of the Auto-Sleeper committee so we maintain one channel of communication with the Newark Showground management team. We are also talking to them about further controls we can practically implement to ensure a pleasant weekend for all concerned.

As chairman of the National Rally Sub Committee, let me assure you we work very hard behind the scenes to make sure this is an enjoyable weekend and would really be disappointed if this was to deter anyone from attending. The management team of Newark Showground would be very sorry to lose our business, however we are a small club and can't possibly afford to have exclusive use of the showground over the bank holiday weekend. Let me say, we are not complacent and continually keep a look out for alternative venues. Should any member have any suggestions of what they feel would be a good venue for the National Rally, please do not hesitate to contact me as we are always willing to investigate.

Keith Ross, Chairman National Rally Sub-Committee

# your letters

## More rallies with full facilities

More rallies with full facilities was a letter from member 8759 in August ASOC News. I don't suppose for one minute they are the only ones who would like 'full facilities' on a rally, but then why buy a motor home that already has these. We use our toilet/shower facilities to the full because we go on club sites without them and also use CLs and CSs. But to get back to rallies; quite a number of these are in areas where there are no sites and, unless you take your vehicle off site, you cannot get to these areas. We don't like leaving our vehicle in public car parks so a rally taking place in an area we'd like to visit is just the job. I say a big thank you to the marshals who run such rallies. A lot of time and thought has gone into running rallies and when one crops up in an area without official parks, it's usually because there is something of interest to see or do.

Of course there's one other thing to bear in mind and that is the cost. Paying the fees for staying on a commercial or club site are far more than we pay for a 'green field' site.

Jean Shaftoe 4546

As rally marshals we have just run a rally at Winchester Cricket Club on a greenfield site with water and CDP facilities and the use of the Club Pavilion in the evenings for our get togethers. The cost of this was £10 per night. The cost of rallying on the Caravan & Motorhome Club in the same area is in excess of £20 per night for full facilities.

As we and other marshals don't have much trouble in filling rallies of this type and many have waiting lists, many members must enjoy them. We have received many thank you letters from satisfied ralliers

If the members requiring full facilities sites have not tried a green field site I suggest they try one as the rallies are friendly and you are

with like minded members.

Why do we need to pay twice the price for electric and hardstanding that we don't require?

Rita & John Tubb 4910

I have just read the letters asking for rallies on sites with full facilities and I totally disagree.

We have spent a lot of money on a motorhome because it is just that, a home from home. If you want full facilities and be restricted to commercial sites then why do you need a rally, or, in fact, why not just stay at a hotel.

The idea of rallies, and we have run many as part of a small club which we are members of, is to be able to get away with a group of like minded people in a location that is not normally available. An ideal site for motorhome is one that has great views and easy access to walks or transport.

We have just spent the Bank Holiday on a rally held at a village hall next door to a pub. Walks from site, functions in the hall and although you could use toilets in the hall we had no other facilities.

The only exception would be during the winter months when an EHU would be useful. So please, keep away from commercial sites with vans lined up in a row and your only view is the van next door. Steve Haywood 9760

We have committee members, rally organisers and rally marshals plus an army of volunteers as rallies commence, and for whose help and response we are all grateful. It is this club spirit that makes rallies available and enjoyable regardless of conditions or facilities. Many of the green field sites or limited facility rallies are chosen not for cost but for where they are or what they give easy access to.

Lichfield is a good example. Camping right on the edge of the city to walk in and out at our leisure while the nearest full facility site is miles away. Whitby is another, to coincide with the regatta. There is St. Ives Fort Paul and many more. I could justify each and all and would thank the volunteers who run them.

We have often heard members question why rallies are not run here or there or longer,

shorter, mid week or weekends, with hard standing or better facilities. Yet when we point out that any club member, as are we all, can make the enquiries, negotiate the dates, register with the rally coordinator, then be able to organise and run a rally, they seem to lose enthusiasm. It is often easier than it sounds. Perhaps more members will consider giving it a try, maybe team up with other like minded members to select sites, organise and co-marshall. We can then all look forward to a larger selection of rallies locations and venues with or without full facilities.

Brian Ellis 2360

I thought the reason for the motorhome was to allow freedom to travel without the need for full facilities. For many motorhomers, all they require is a source for potable water and somewhere to empty the loo. For those of you who only use full facilities please try a rally on a green field site or a CL, much more friendly no regimentation and much cheaper. This is one of the main reasons members of the C&MH Club and the C&CC meet on green field sites.

John Geeson

The reason that there are a sizeable number of rallies on green field sites is because the site chosen by the rally marshals is the one best suited to the desired aim of the rally. As ASOC members who organised rallies on twenty sites over 15 years, can I explain what criteria we used when selecting a rally site? After identifying either an event which we thought members would enjoy, or an outstanding area which had a lot to offer in the way of sightseeing, culture, walking/ cycling (even shopping) we would then consider where to stay. Sometimes we used knowledge gained by noticing where other motorhome/ caravan clubs held their rallies. If a commercial site that accepts rallies is close by, all well and good, this means a lot less work for the marshals as pitches are marked out, signage is already done and lists of emergency contacts are provided, as well as local tourist information. But often such events are held in small towns, they and the chosen outstanding area may not have commercial sites close by and if there are,

then not all will accept rallies. During school holidays the commercial sites can be quite noisy and the cost is usually a lot higher than a green field site.

However, in towns and outstanding areas, there are often underused hard-up sports clubs, village halls and organisations which may be prepared, even welcome you to rally on their site. So after getting consent from ASOC and the planning authorities rallies can go ahead. A village location may mean that there are public transport links and shops which are always appreciated by ralliers as it may mean not having to move the motorhome for the duration of the rally. Also, for an added fee a room can sometimes be hired for an evening get together, something not always available on commercial sites.

This means that we can be rallying in a convenient location where the cost is considerably less than a commercial site and where we have sole occupancy. However there is a compromise, using your own facilities, collecting more water, emptying cassette toilets more frequently and not having electric hook-up. Some, though not all, temporary sites do allow rallies to use their shower/toilet facilities and this is usually reflected in the cost.

Ultimately the decision about what is most important about motorhoming is a personal one. We often use commercial sites in early Spring, late Autumn and Winter but we enjoy the freedom of rallies on green field sites in better weather. The most memorable rallies we have attended in beautiful locations have been green field sites and were arranged by members who knew of these hidden gems and shared them with other Club members.

Liz & Bryn Morgan 2990

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### **New Euro VI 160bhp engine with AdBlue**

On collecting our new Fairford at the end of February 2017, and having driven around Spain and Portugal for the whole of March into April, in mid July we set off for St Emilion near Bordeaux France, for our summer trip.

On our way to St Emilion we stopped off at Angers for two nights. Much to my surprise a warning message came on stating 'AdBlue ⇨

level low'. We had only completed just short of 5,000 miles and as far as I was concerned the AdBlue should last for at least 10,000. The warning message appears every time you start the engine, and no gauge or indicator to tell you how much is in the tank.

Consulting the owner's handbook, I discovered that the tank has a capacity of 15 litres; the warnings get more regular until the tank is empty after which the engine will not start. The manual also states that AdBlue freezes at minus 11 degrees.

As we were in a city a quick scan on our phones revealed three Peugeot dealers and visiting one on our bikes, we found that they had AdBlue and could refill the tank for us. The next day, on our way out of Angers, we called at the garage. One of the engineers came out with a 10 litre plastic container, we showed him where the AdBlue cap was, (under the diesel filler cap) he proceeded to unscrew the blue cap, insert a plastic pipe into the tank, screw the top end onto the top of the AdBlue tube and put nearly all the whole contents into the tank by balancing the 10 litre plastic container on his shoulder to gravity feed the liquid into the tank.

I thought this to be a rather antiquated procedure for such a sophisticated engine and exhaust system. Was it possible the tank was not full in the first place? New vehicles do not come with a full tank of diesel or petrol unless previously arranged with the selling dealer, so why should it come with a full tank of AdBlue? We had no trouble getting topped up and once the engine was running it cleared the warning message and we continued on our way.

I have resisted the temptation to purchase a 1.8 litre bottle of AdBlue so I can top the tank up myself as the manual also states that the liquid should be in date and as I now have a full tank feel I should have another 10,000 miles before the Fairford needs more AdBlue.

Roger Watts 8549

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### Thank you

I am certain that in my absence, all those who participated in the Lichfield Rally had a most enjoyable time in the shadow of the three spires and the neighbouring spectacular grounds of Beacon Park.

Sadly it was a missed opportunity for me; it was not for want of trying but I found myself with a 'pressing engagement' – another event took precedence!

Will those who so kindly signed the card which was sent to me, please accept my most grateful thanks – yes, it certainly made me feel much brighter. Thank you so much. Special thanks and appreciation go to Baz and Chris for taking so much time out, with no doubt, inconvenience caring for the patient; also to Peter who gave substantial support. The net result was that I was able to travel home by train and enjoy the comfort of home, although the Symbol amongst friends would have been preferable.

The future? A replacement Autosleeper Symbol is, dare I say, booked for a return to the fold and will be travelling up the M6 when Fiat determine a delivery date.

James Bertlin 2770

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### Running day lights change

Recently one of the day running lights on my 2012 Peugeot based Lancashire failed. Sadly, these DRL's are already obsolete and so replacements are very unlikely to be available. After a lot of research I found that the best solution for me was to remove the DRL's from their GRP housings and to substitute some Osram PX-5 units. This is not a job for the faint-hearted since the Osram units are a snug fit in the housings and need careful fitting, including changes to their standard fitment.

Furthermore the wiring also needs to be modified which, unless you are competent, is a job for an auto-electrician. I am pleased with the final result which is visually similar to the original and cost far less than the £175 for a replacement Lumo part, were it even available. It was not a job that I sought but when needs must. I would be happy to share more detail with any member who may experience a similar issue with their van.

Ron Goldby (7925)

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### Specialist groups

How many members are also in other specialist caravan and motorhome groups? We are new to Auto-Sleeper having moved from a caravan after about 38 years of towing.

We wanted the freedom to tour as we reach retirement and our first year in our campervan has been great.

We have been members of a small club formed 36 years ago called ARCC, Amateur radio caravan and camping club. We have several rallies each year and they are a chance for the radio amateurs to play at radio, but the social side has become much more important, and even my wife who dislikes amateur radio loves the rallies.

I think it would be nice if ASOC could try and do an article each month advising members of other groups that they may be interested in. We could feature one group each month.

Steve Haywood 9760

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### **Thank you dash cam**

We too have recently fitted a dash cam in our Bourton van and it proved invaluable recently when some idiot smashed into us near the Luton junction of the M1 one very wet day in May. He hit several other vehicles and then proceeded to drive off. We managed to get his number and phoned the Police who were unable to catch him. Nevertheless, the footage we had on our dash cam was enough to get him prosecuted for failing to stop, failing to report an accident and driving without due care and attention. He was fined £700 and received 9 penalty points on his licence. The footage is also being used by our insurance company as he has failed to provide them with any information about the accident. Our dash cam, which plugs into the 12 volt socket in the cab, cost £16 from an online company and worth every penny. We have now bought another one and have it fixed to look out over the offside. We do not use the screen provided whilst driving, just for replaying footage. The damage to our vehicle was £2,600 and thanks go to the Auto-Sleeper Service Centre at Willersey for their excellent service and repair.

Brenda & Clive Treacher 8623

*Brenda tells me they bought it from Easylifegroup.com. You have to buy a sim card to go with it, you will need to check to see if still available on the website [editor]*

### **Still want to use a map?**

When visiting France I use the spiral bound, A4 French "Atlas Routier et Touristique". I purchase one each year and although they are not cheap they are easy to handle and extremely informative. Over the past few years, in my opinion, the quality of the paper and the construction of the atlas has somewhat deteriorated. The 2017 edition I purchased, just before leaving for France, had a spine that was too short and a number of the pages were not attached to the spine.

Upon our return from France, I contacted Michelin in Watford, who were most apologetic and offered to replace the map without question. The replacement they sent has plastic covered pages with a wipe clean surface that can be overwritten with water based pens. It appears almost indestructible.

Waterstones inform me that they can order them but do not stock them. Priced at 24.50 euros, expensive but value for money.

I have a tatty 2017 Michelin map if anybody wants it, let me know. I will be at the Burnham Sedgemoor carnival rally.

John Geeson 01491 641776

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### **GOING BACK TO MY ROOTS - 70 years later**

It really began in 1933 when an English lady aged 27 decided to leave home to get away from two much older sisters (12 and 14 years older). She took up a position in an Adult Language School in Germany, to teach English. She must have been pretty fluent in German in order to embark on this venture. So off she went to Magdeburg just as Adolf Hitler was gaining power. In her old age she used to joke that she went to see what Hitler was doing! The story goes that one day the Head of the School had two spare concert tickets and suggested that Miss Higgs and Herr Geiger should go to this concert together. This was the beginning of a romance.

Her family in Hertfordshire had cut her off, so the wedding took place in South Germany where all the Geigers came from. It took place at Christmas 1934 - they went to the Registry Office in Herr Geiger's dinner break, and the ⇐

main ceremony was on Christmas Eve at the parish church in Goppingen, (about an hour's drive east of Stuttgart). (A church wedding in Germany is not recognised as official.) Her Mother and a 14 year old nephew were the only family members from England.

They set up home, first in a flat, in Magdeburg and twin boys were born prematurely in 1936, but didn't survive. I came along almost a year before the war began. They soon moved into their own new house - the end one of a block of four, so there was a garden at the side of the house as well as back and front. All German houses were built with cellars, so this is where we went every time there was an air-raid during the war.

My Father worked at a large Engineering Firm called Krupps, making armaments, so he did not have to do military service during the war. Two more boys were born after me and I can remember normal family life going on. I can also remember the day/night Magdeburg was severely bombed - January 24th 1944, when the night sky was lit up red from all the fires burning in the city centre. The sound of the Lancaster bombers is still in my head.

After the war Germany was divided into four sectors and Magdeburg ended up in the Russian (Eastern) Zone. I went to school for two years and remember Russians on the trams. My parents realised what was developing, so the two sisters in England (and I believe their M.P.) now came in useful to get us out of East Germany before it became more difficult there.

So it was that in June 1947 my English Mother and we three children left Magdeburg in the back of a lorry to go to Berlin where my Mother had a friend. We flew from Berlin Tempelhof Airport, made a change in Hamburg, and landed at Northolt on 8th June 1947. This is still an RAF Base which has always puzzled me that we arrived there. I have found out recently that Northolt was used as a civil airport while London/Heathrow Airport was being in the 1940s after the war.

I decided 70 years on I wanted to go back to Magdeburg and see the "old" house again. (I had been there in 1990 after the "Wall" between East and West came down.) My intention was to leave England on 8th June, which of course became Election Day. Also I found the ferry fare (Harwich - Hook of Holland) was slightly cheaper on 9th June! So we were able to vote and then went as far as Harwich to camp overnight at the port, ready to get the ferry at 9.00 a.m. on 9th June. (It is permissible to camp overnight on the edge of the area where one queues for the first check-in. It's free and there are toilets available 24 hours.)

We spent the week-end at Delft, and had another stop at Arnhem. Here we were within walking distance of the Airborne Museum and Memorials. We also used a bus to get into the town centre.

In Magdeburg there is a large hard standing area by the side of the river Elbe which is a "Stellplatz". One can stay there for up to three nights with a one off parking ticket. We made a brief visit to the house I had left in 1947, but it was a like a building site with a section added onto the side, and the front altered with a new roof all over. No one was in residence during these alterations.

Just to complete the tale - my Father was granted two weeks holiday by the Russian Authorities to come to England, in May 1951, to see his wife and children. He never went back while he was of working age and died ten years before the "Wall" came down.

Elizabeth Grimsley 2080

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### **Sad news**

Andrew Nesbitt 9657

I am sorry to notify you that my father, Andrew Nesbitt, died suddenly  
Natalie Nesbitt (daughter)

## SNIPPETS

### Checking spare wheel tyre pressures

For those who still have a spare wheel strapped to the underside of their motorhome and find it a nuisance to check the pressure, might want to consider spareline. This is a metre long hose, one end fits on the tyre valve and the other can be secured to a convenient place for easy access. [www.spairline.co.uk](http://www.spairline.co.uk)

### Too many motorhome shows?

Are we now overrun with these shows, and are they just huge rallies with a few trade stands. I have to admit to going to the odd one, only because friends wanted a day out. You find items you did not know you needed until you saw them, only to get it home and realise you did not need them after all. [editor]

### toilet talk

Many motorhomers have abandoned the traditional chemicals for the flush and cassette, and have gone for bio washing. Liquid for the flush and tablets for the cassette. Lidl Fromil Bio seems to be the favourite, but I understand any brand will do, and these are much cheaper than the blue or green chemical option. Many sites are demanding a greener option. But does it suit everyone to use it?

### Belgium speed limits

Just a reminder that speed limits have been reduced in the Flemish region. check out links below

<http://etsc.eu/flanders-reduces-out-of-town-speed-limits/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speed\\_limits\\_in\\_Belgium](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speed_limits_in_Belgium)

### PDF update

icamping car has an updated PDF of aires in France to download, it is about 80 megs, 742 pages and in colour, so printing to a hard copy will drain your ink cartridges [www.icampingcar.fr](http://www.icampingcar.fr)

### veteran discount

It may be of benefit to some members to know that if you belong to The Camping and Caravanning Club, are 65 years of age and have continuously been a club member for 25 years, you are entitled to veteran membership.

I qualified for this some years ago but have only just found out about it. It seems to be a secret. Friends I have spoken to were not aware either. Chris Sturgeon 2897

*They did tell me when I phoned to change my DA to another and pay my subscription. The saving is fifty per cent. But the renewal form was showing the full price, so not automatic.*  
[editor]

### FOR SALE

Auto-Sleeper Excutive 2003  
2.8 diesel, 29,000 miles with new MOT fitted with microwave, solar panel with regulator, Heiki rooflight, awning, roof special top box, twin leisure batteries, bike rack, storage cupboard for television and booster for television system

**£22,000**

Rhona Bamber 3518

Hertfordshire

01992 468351

07715 392299

thank you for the donation

### FOR SALE

Whale Wastemaster (about 50 litres) £25  
Wastemaster cover (Navy, yellow piping) £10  
(both of the above are nearly new)  
20 metres food quality hose on reel (rolls flat & dry) Blue. VGC. £10 ono  
Whale Premium submersible pump - 12v cable & drinking water hose £5  
Piers Brereton 9663  
07879 428 397  
[piersbrereton@gmail.com](mailto:piersbrereton@gmail.com)

## useful links

[www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/low-emission-zone](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/low-emission-zone)  
[www.arrivalguides.com](http://www.arrivalguides.com)  
[www.drive-france.com](http://www.drive-france.com)  
[www.certificat-air.gouv.fr](http://www.certificat-air.gouv.fr)  
[www.bipa.be](http://www.bipa.be)  
[www.motorhomingfrance.co.uk](http://www.motorhomingfrance.co.uk)  
[www.airetoday.co.uk](http://www.airetoday.co.uk)  
[www.campercontact.com](http://www.campercontact.com)  
[www.icampingcar.fr](http://www.icampingcar.fr)  
[www.searchforsites.co.uk](http://www.searchforsites.co.uk)  
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[www.viamichelin.fr](http://www.viamichelin.fr)  
[www.viamichelin.co.uk](http://www.viamichelin.co.uk)  
<https://vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk/>

if you know of any links other members would find useful, let the editor know

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### European SOS 112

Pan-European emergency number: calls to 112 are free from any telephone (mobile, cellular or fixed-line). The number 112 can be dialled to reach emergency services including medical, fire and police from anywhere in Europe.

This Pan-European emergency number 112 can be called from any telephone (landline, pay phone or mobile cellular phone). Calls are free.

It can be used for any life-threatening situation, including:

Serious medical problems (accident, unconscious person, severe injuries, chest pain, seizure)

Any type of fire (house, car)

Life-threatening situations (crimes)

Information on the 112 number can be found on the website

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/112>

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### France

<https://www.angloinfo.com/how-to/france/healthcare/emergencies>  
<http://parisjourney.com/emergency-telephone-numbers-in-france-you-should-learn>

### Italy

<https://www.angloinfo.com/how-to/italy/healthcare/emergencies>

### Netherlands

<https://www.angloinfo.com/how-to/netherlands/healthcare/emergencies>

### Germany

<https://www.angloinfo.com/how-to/germany/healthcare/emergencies>

## Another one crossed off the list

Chris Mawdsley

After the rally at Turckheim – thank you to everyone who e-mailed us saying what a great time they had and to Rob, Elizabeth and Lilly for the excellent piece in the Newsletter – Peter and I made our way to Versailles.

We went via a couple of Aires; the first one in Toul. They've recently moved the Aire to the Rue de Cimetiere, but don't be put off by the address, there wasn't a grave stone in sight! It's new, well set up and only 7 euros a night with electricity. The town itself is fortified with ramparts and a moat and easily accessed down a short path and through an underpass (under the old walls). It has an impressive church, the Hotel de Ville is an attractive 18thC (I think) building, there are some interesting building facades and a museum. Of course being Monday everything was closed although we did manage to find a very good Italian restaurant for dinner.

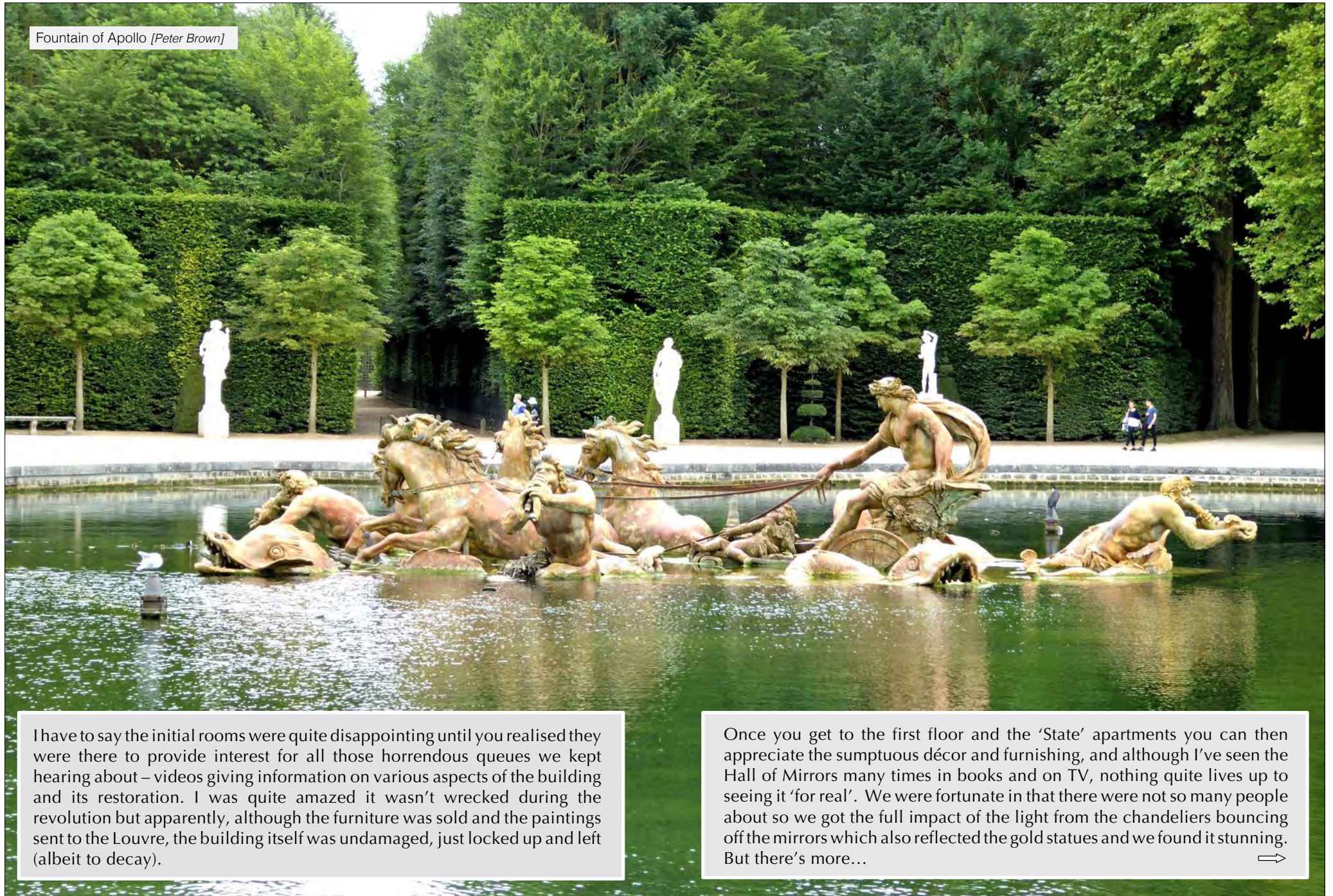
The next stop was Mareil sur Ay. The Aire is by the canal which has a fair sized Marina, but there is one restaurant which has one choice on the menu, and not much else. There are more interesting places to stay.

And then – VERSAILLES. After booking in the campsite at 2pm (and there's another story!), we headed off on foot – about 2 miles across town. The Avenue de Paris is a wide boulevard flanked with some beautiful buildings, but the first sight of the Chateau is impressive. We arrived about 3.30pm and got through security quite easily, then walked up to what I thought was quite a long queue for the Chateau. However, they dealt with access very quickly and we were soon inside and the queue did give us the opportunity of studying the façade with all its gilding.



Coronation coach from the stables [Peter Brown]

Fountain of Apollo (Peter Brown)



I have to say the initial rooms were quite disappointing until you realised they were there to provide interest for all those horrendous queues we kept hearing about – videos giving information on various aspects of the building and its restoration. I was quite amazed it wasn't wrecked during the revolution but apparently, although the furniture was sold and the paintings sent to the Louvre, the building itself was undamaged, just locked up and left (albeit to decay).

Once you get to the first floor and the 'State' apartments you can then appreciate the sumptuous décor and furnishing, and although I've seen the Hall of Mirrors many times in books and on TV, nothing quite lives up to seeing it 'for real'. We were fortunate in that there were not so many people about so we got the full impact of the light from the chandeliers bouncing off the mirrors which also reflected the gold statues and we found it stunning. But there's more... ➡



Having bought a 2 day passport on line before we left the UK, we returned on Thursday morning to be confronted by queues – miles long..... But while we were waiting to get through security, the lady who had checked our bags the afternoon before came over and asked to see our tickets and sent us around the side of the Chateau to the Chapel entrance and we were straight in! Wasn't that nice of her?

So, Thursday was to explore the Mesdames Apartments, the gardens with their parterres, fountains; Apollos fountain is wonderful with the horses coming out of the water, the canal and groves. There's even an outside Ballroom. Then on to the Trianons (Grand et Petit) and Marie Antoinette's Estate. Most girls make do with a dolls house – she had a whole estate, life sized! It was about 3.30pm when we came out of the gardens and the queues were even longer than they had been in the morning, so all the horror stories we'd heard about the queues are true. So, if you're planning a trip to Versailles – try a Wednesday and use the side gate.

*top: Hall of Mirrors below: State Room*  
[Peter Brown]



Julie Walsh, just magic, levitation of the boule  
*photo: Rob Corcoran*





## Technical group & website

Webmaster and Chairman Technical Group, Baz Wellard, can be contacted at 18 Greenwood Close, Fareham, Hampshire PO16 7UF or by email [technical@asoc.uk.com](mailto:technical@asoc.uk.com)

### **Automatic Payment on French P age Motorways (part 2)**

*Update:* In my article last month (part 1) I gave details and background for the differing options to pay the French p age charges automatically. We finally selected the SANEF option. <https://www.sanefolling.co.uk>

*Application:* The application process was extremely simple, and as the 'Tag' is transferable, you are not even asked for the number plate, height or weight! We received our 'Tag' two days later, with details of our personal account. Don't forget there is a free application charge through the 'Caravan & Motorhome' club; saving  10 + VAT. Applications direct to [camc.com/sanef](http://camc.com/sanef)

*Payment:* The payment is set up through the bank via direct debit and Sanef send invoices monthly via e-mail itemising the tolls and any fees due. The amount due will be collected on the last day of the month automatically in   (GDP).

*'Tag':* The 'Tag' has to be activated as soon as received. This is simply done through 'Your Account', which will have been already set up. Instructions are again very clear.

The 'Tag', is only 4cm x 6cm, and is fitted to windscreen by clipping it into the small self adhesive 'bracket' supplied & position as shown in a diagram. An extra 'bracket' is available should you wish to use the 'Tag' on any other vehicle. The 'Tag' itself is black on the internal side and quite unobtrusive.

*Battery Life:* The battery in the tag is designed to last between 5 and 7 years depending on how often it is used. Your account will identify when your battery is starting to run out by showing "Near Expiry" or "Expired, display. It can then be replaced by contacting Sanef through 'Your Account'.

*Personal Experience:* By the time this October issue of the ASOC News comes out Dorothy and I will have 'field' tested the system and will be able to report back on our experiences.

### **Membership Number**

If you could add your membership number to all correspondence with the Committee, it would be very much appreciated, please? It is much easier and saves delays; particularly when away from access to the Club database.

Baz Wellard  
Chairman Technical Group & Webmaster

PITCH  
STOP

SHARE  
THE  
AIRE

Le Treport

<https://goo.gl/maps/LUz6AeFBvtv>

50°03'29.5"N 1°21'45.7"E

50.058184, 1.362685

A very pleasant location to overnight located on the northern tip of the Normandy coast. The large aire with a charge of €6 per night is on the top of the cliffs adjacent to a free Funiculaire down to the town level where there are many good restaurants on the Quai François 1er.



# Travelling with Pablo

## *The beginning*

Carol & Robin Tannahill

In 2013, my wife Carol and myself purchased a rather venerable 1997 Auto-Sleeper Executive, henceforth referred to as "Pablo". To say we experienced some problems with Pablo initially is an understatement, but overall we have had some really great times and hopefully these will continue. This series of articles is all about travelling with Pablo.

In 2014, we decided to join our friends in a trip down the spine of France to the Mediterranean, near the Spanish border. John and Jill are Francophiles and have taken their caravan and, more recently their motorhome, to that country every year they can. They always go in May and/or June to take advantage of the outstanding savings offered by the "Camping Card ACSI" which is an off-season discount card, suffice to say it offers outstanding value and we consider it a "must" for our trips to France.



The main reason for the trip was to score something off my bucket list. This was to see the fabulous Millau viaduct and drive across it on our way south. It was an impressive bridge to cross, but in actual fact the windshield panels at each side prevent you from seeing how high you are, which is probably just as well! It's better to view it from a distance, either from the very extensive aire nearby, or even better still from below at the visitor centre situated underneath the bridge. The actual bridge deck is as high above the ground as the Eiffel Tower and from the visitor centre the traffic crossing the bridge sounds like some kind of humming insect up in the

sky. The campsite we stayed at in Millau, "Les Rivages" ACSI number 2353 has large shady pitches with great facilities, and the river Dourbie alongside. The site is a walkable distance from Millau. Another highlight was the Gorge du Tarn and the actual trip down the A75 itself heading south across the Massif Central, with climbs and steep descents, and high bridges and viaducts.

Our destination was Argelès-sur-Mer, on the Mediterranean coast close to the Spanish border. There are many ACSI sites to choose from in the area. It was HOT,



Collioure near Argelès-sur-Mer



Brantôme

too hot for our springer spaniel Jess, and another downside was that dogs were not allowed on any of the extensive beaches. Also, make sure you have a fan or air conditioning! In hot weather, our fridge in the van had to work so hard that the outside becomes like a radiator, creating a vicious circle! If you go there, make sure you visit the picturesque town of Collioure, just a few miles away. But take the bus, as parking is difficult in this popular tourist spot. If you have time on your return journey, visit the restored walled medieval town of Carcassonne, well worth a visit, although we bypassed it on this trip

There were many attractive little towns including Brantôme and Châteaudun, which we visited on the way back home. The campsite in Brantôme, “Brantôme Peyrelevade” ACSI Number 1714, plenty of space and only a short walk to the town, which is very pretty. The site had a good swimming pool and facilities. The site in Châteaudun, “Mun du Moulin à Tan” was I think a municipal, just a short drive from the town, where the main attraction is the fabulous Château itself and many fine medieval buildings in the town. Our friends returned towards the Paris area, but we spent a couple of days, in truth pretty emotional ones, in Normandy, visiting Omaha Beach and the nearby Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial and also the Bayeux War Cemetery which contains 4,144 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War.

However, one thing we had planned, but didn't do, was to visit a vineyard. We kept on saying we would do it the next day and suddenly we were north of the vineyard country. This now becomes a priority for any forthcoming trip to France.



Châteaudun

More about "travels with Pablo" to follow

### **Great Western Motorhome Show**

We had 37 units attending of which 6 were first time ralliers. A popular show, weather was mostly kind to us. Thanks to all who attended especially to Mo and Mike for all their help.

Gary and Pat Wanklin 1747

### **Fort Paull rally**

Ivy and I really appreciated our rally at Fort Paull in August. Not only did we meet up with a lot of old friends, but enjoyed making some good new ones at the same time. Thanks to our four stalwart marshals, all ran very smoothly and they provided us with a great base to explore the City of Culture along with the military history of the fort.

One of our high spots was on Sunday evening, at sunset, when Pete and Janet Murphy joined us for a trip to West Park to watch an incredible team of 'French flyers', performing on twin 70-foot diameter metal wheels, which supported trapezes, ropes and platforms, on which they performed the most amazing feats of daring and timing, to the accompaniment of very modern music, for a whole hour! We all agreed that it was one of the greatest acts ever and, what's more, it was free and gratis! Thanks to all of you for making our rally a great success.

Richard and Ivy Birch. 7248

### **Our Three rallies**

*Blue Lias:* The rally field was cut as good as a lawn and the Blue Lias pub was a mass of flowers everywhere, this must be one of the most lovely locations on the canal network with a lovely walk in both direction. The fish and chips collected by Bernie were excellent and we had a nice evening in the function room with a good meal. Thanks to Sandra and Bernie for a great rally.

*Fort Paull:* This was our first rally at Fort Paull and was a great rally, the fort was very interesting and the walks along the side of the Humber gave great views. We went into Hull two days of our stay and it is a lovely city with plenty to see and excellent museums which are all free. We had a cheese and wine night in an old rail dining car in the fort with many different cheeses and lots of wine. Thanks to Jean and Dave and Shelagh and Phil for their hard work and all who helped with the cheese and wine.

*Whitby:* Another great rally which we followed on from Fort Paull, the school is in a good location with Sainsburys and a Marsden Pub close by. We walked from the school to a pretty village Ruswarp where we had to queue outside the butchers shop and then walked along the path beside the river back to Whitby. On another day, we along the coast path with wonderful views to Robin Hoods bay and returned by the old railway track path back to the school, a total of 11 miles. Being gala week there was lots going on in Whitby so we had a jolly good time. Many thanks to Liz, Chris and Peter for their hard work and also to Lis for her great efforts to get the showers working.

Angela and Ronnie Smith 5333

### **Fort Paull and Whitby Rallies**

We missed the start of the Fort Paull rally arriving two days late due to a hospital appointment but were warmly greeted by the marshals who quickly had us pitched and sitting in the sun with cups of tea. Fort Paull lies on the estuary east of Hull, City of Culture 2017. Public transport made it possible to visit Hull though it was a limited service. We enjoyed the sunshine and catching up with friends. The fort itself is interesting and with our magic badges we could keep popping in. Much use was made of the fort buildings and the east German rail carriage in the evenings. Elizabeth

gave us an interesting talk about her early years in Germany, we had a cheese and wine event and finally an end of rally raffle. We had another gathering of men in our Symbol, this time the marshals Dave and Phil, who replaced leaky tap connections, so we now have fully operational hot and cold running water, hurrah and many thanks

On to Whitby and a rally held in school grounds. At our first night get together the marshals welcomed us with hot drinks, wine and information. It was regatta weekend and folk week so the town was very busy, but with lots to see and do. Buses stopped outside the school gates making it easy to get into town and further afield to Scarborough, Robin Hoods Bay and Staithes. We went on a tour around the Yorkshire Moors courtesy of Barbara and John and the scenery was magnificent with the heather in full bloom. I can assure people that Suki was quickly returned to being a white dog on our return home (she had rolled in cinder dust and became a very very grey dog). Martin "wiped the board" in the raffle, (was it 7 winning tickets?) at the end of the rally get together and how quickly that came around. No gathering of men in the Symbol this time to fix plumbing but the marshals certainly worked hard to ensure that we all had access to hot showers with numerous faults developing and the need to get them sorted. So thanks again to both sets of rally marshals for making them so enjoyable.

Irene and Mervyn Kitchin 5698

### **Eskdale School, Whitby rally**

Many thanks to Liz, Peter and Chris for organising a very enjoyable rally. Whitby never fails to live up to expectations.

Our thanks also go to Brian and Linda Ellis for keeping us supplied with frozen bottles of water and ice packs when our fridge gave up the ghost. They did the trick and kept us ticking over. The fridge is now in working order after a visit to Derby Motorhomes, hopefully under warranty.

We have been on five other rallies this year, Pontefract, Harrogate, Litchfield, St Ives, Blue Lias and the AGM, and thoughtfully enjoyed them all thanks to the rally organisers, and despite some awful weather at times.

Pete & Heather Martin 3145

Blue Lias



## WINCHESTER RALLY

The St. Cross Cricket Club is a green field site situated on the outskirts of Winchester. There is an excellent bus service just outside the main gates into Winchester, or further afield into Southampton. We were fortunate to have the use of the clubs facilities (showers and toilet) for a limited time during the morning, thank you to the marshals and assistants for spending time to keep them clean and tidy. We were also lucky to have use of the clubhouse for our evening gatherings, together with tea/coffee and biscuits, and on our BBQ evening we had a choice of delicious desserts, which went down well. We finished off each evening with a short quiz and once again competitiveness and rivalry became apparent, nothing malicious, just PHF (Pensioners Having Fun).

There is a pleasant walk along the river into Winchester which took about 45 minutes where we tackled John's picture trail quiz, which, I must admit, we found a little testing this year (or is it us getting old) The local Air Ambulance also benefitted from the sale of second hand books and Shirley's jewellery which she had made. Our thanks again to Rita and John and their assistants, Jean and John, for another excellent rally.

Jackie Moss 5639

The rally went very well, as did our book sale. Many ralliers went to many places including the Isle of Wight, Gosport (to see the new aircraft carrier Queen Elizabeth) Portsmouth and Alresford.

We walked to Winchester by the river and up St. Catherine's Hill, this is where you get a lovely view of Winchester.

When we added up the money for the Air Ambulance, we had £80 and this was achieved by donations from the ralliers.

Rita and John Tubbs 4910



## RALLY FLASHBACK



Eden Camp Rally 2004, a themed WW2 evening meal. Eden Camp is an actual WW2 Prisoner of War Camp; rescued & themed. Sited Nr. Malton North Yorks. Rally Marshals Jan & Vic Hicklin.

**Note:** Rally information has moved to the inside front cover

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rally supplement October 2017

Neil C. Rogers, Rally Coordinator  
3 Appleby Close, Aldbrough St. John,  
Richmond, North Yorks, DL11 7TT  
Tel/Fax 01325 374 540 email ncr@mypostoffice.co.uk



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please read the important rally information on the inside front cover

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4 October (1200 hrs) to 9 October 2017 (5 nights)  
Stafford County Showground Weston Road Stafford ST18 0BD

Marshals Peter Brown and Chris Mawdsley tel 07771 827711.

This rally is part of the ACCEO annual National Rally. Toilets and showers are available as is a large hall in which social activities and/or entertainment is planned for each evening. There will be professional entertainment from singer Letitia George on Friday evening and on Saturday evening a multiple tribute artist, Wayne Swift. The ACCEO AGM is on Saturday afternoon and can be attended by any interested rallier. There are no electric hook-ups. On Friday and Saturday there will be a bus service between the Showground and Stafford provided by the Potteries Omnibus Preservation Society. There is no rally fee. The cost of the rally for Friday and Saturday nights is £30, tickets valid for both nights entertainment are £10 per adult. Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday are optional nights at £10 each. As caravans attend this rally we are asked to advise if you wish a permanent tent awning to be erected and also the length of your vehicle, please include this information on your rally slip. ASOC has to present a collated booking form on 25 September so please ensure your rally slip and cheque are received before 21 September; Peter Brown, 5 Kenilworth Walk, Cheadle, Stoke on Trent, ST10 1WA. If you have any queries, telephone 07771 827711 or e-mail pcb71y@btinternet.com. Cheques payable to Peter Brown. If you wish confirmation of booking please include an e-mail address or SAE.

3 – 7 November ( 4 nights) Sedgemoor Carnival,  
Burnham on Sea, Somerset. TA8 1NQ

Emergency only mobile. 07711375323.

Rally Marshalls:Linda & Brian Ellis.

Site Fee : £62.00, Rally Fee: £2.50 Total. £64.50. before 21<sup>st</sup> October please. Send rally slip & cheque, payable to B.Ellis, together with a **Stamped Addressed Envelope** or clearly written e-mail address for confirmation to Brian Ellis,52 Golf Links Road, Burnham on Sea,Somerset. TA8 2PP.Tel.No 01278 784524

E-mail [ell.ba82@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ell.ba82@yahoo.co.uk) The site is a full facilities Haven site. We are limited to 46 pitches all are hardstanding level pitches with electric hook up and are accessed by tarmac roads .Disabled or special needs please indicate on slip for convenient siting. Attractions:-Fireworks display Sunday and the Carnival on Monday evening. Burnham town is a 10 minute walk up the prom. from the site with a range of shops and eating places plus supermarkets and a long beach (7 miles).. Tesco has a large car park and is on the way in to Burnham from the M5 Edithmead Island straight across A38 or ASDA if you follow site directions. There is a Lidl within walking distance from the site. There are buses to Highbridge,Bridgwater, Taunton & Weston Super Mare.Monday is not your average town carnival,as many will testify. There are floats decked with thousands of lights,some moving displays,some tapestry and many walking entrants.The whole parade can take about 2 hours.(wrap up warm).If you have never seen this spectacular event visit [highbridgeandburnhamcarnival.org.uk](http://highbridgeandburnhamcarnival.org.uk) ( all lower case).

Directions: Sat Nav. Use TA8 1NQ and look for Holiday Village signs. M5 junction 22 Burnham on Sea exit to the large island ( Edithmead A 38) and turn left and follow signs for Burnham Holiday Village. ( Taunton A 38).Approx. one mile straight over island (A38) and continue past caravan sales,over railway bridge then turn right at the Asda island signposted Burnham Holiday Village.At Mini island by petrol station bear left onto Marine Drive towards Burnham town centre.Holiday Village is in about a quarter of a mile on the left.

NO DOGS ALLOWED SITE RULES.

Rally starts at 10.00a.m. Friday 3 November. No early arrivals please

Friday 16th – Monday 20 November (4 nights) Victoria Park Southport

Emergency Tel.No 07763773877 Marshal's mobile.

Rally Marshals: Dave & Wyn Crabbe.

Site Fee: £13:00 per night including Electric hook up, Rally Fee: £3:75 couples. £2:50 singles.

This is a public park and green field site. Dogs welcome on a lead on site at all times.

A fish & chip super may be arranged for the Friday evening (cost TBA). Please indicate on the slip if you wish to partake.

Booking slip & cheques payable to D C & W Crabbe 27 Crawford Road, Crawford Village, Up Holland, Skelmersdale, West Lancashire. WN8 9QR. Tel. No. 01744 884437.

Please send SAE for conformation and directions or e-mail address clearly written (BLOCK CAPITALS please).

If you would like to arrive and stay before or stay on after the rally there is a Caravan Club site adjacent to the park.

Please book your extra nights with the CC site directly. This is not part of the rally and incurs an extra charge.

Attractions; Victorian coastal town of Southport and its shops, parks and beaches, also the second longest Pier with tram in the country. Saturday evening switch on of Christmas lights. Liverpool with its wealth of attractions, architecture, waterfront, Albert dock, and Liverpool One shopping centre. Martin Mere Wild Fowl centre. Ormskirk market town, Crosby Beach with the Antony Gormley statues, Red squirrel sanctuary at Formby and a lot more around the district and further afield.

There is a Morrison's supermarket within 5 minutes' walk from the site.

Rally starts at 1200hrs. Please do not arrive before.

Limit of 30 vans

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**PROVISIONAL RALLY LIST**

If you wish to run a rally in 2018, and you want the rally included in the "Provisional Rally List" which is included in the January 2018 Newsletter, then I require dates confirmed by me by the end of November. Neil Rogers

Rally .....Date sent.....

Number of people in your van. Adults.....Children.....Dogs.....

Names (incl. forenames) and address (Please PRINT) .....

.....

.....

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

Childrens names( incl. ages).....

Phone No. .... Membership No .....

Mobile No .....Van Reg .....

e-mail.....

Model/Length.....Arrival.Day/ .....a.m.p.m. evening

Please complete both sides of this form. P.T.O.



Rally .....Date sent.....

Number of people in your van. Adults.....Children.....Dogs.....

Names (incl. forenames) and address (Please PRINT) .....

.....

.....

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

Childrens names( incl. ages).....

Phone No. .... Membership No .....

Mobile No .....Van Reg .....

e-mail.....

Model/Length.....Arrival.Day/ .....a.m.p.m. evening.

Please complete both sides of this form. P.T.O.



Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes  No

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:-

.....

cheque enclosed for £..... for.....nights incl. rally fee.

In the event of an emergency at the rally whom should we contact?

Name.....

Phone ..... Mobile .....

Full payment MUST accompany this slip-cheques payable to the marshal.  
POST FORM TO REACH MARSHAL 14 DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT, if possible.  
Enclose a S.A.E if confirmation is required.

Is this your first ASOC rally? Please tick box. Yes  No

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:-

.....

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