



NEWS

375 DECEMBER 2019



SEASONS GREETINGS TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

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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 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. Publication of any item cannot be guaranteed.

SUPPLIER DISCOUNTS

The list is available on the website. We have companies who offer members a discount on goods and services they supply.

To claim your discount, you must present your ASOC membership card at the time of order or arrival.

You will not qualify for the discount by presenting your membership card after work has commenced.

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. Please add your name and membership number to your item.

Any item appearing in any issue may freely be used by other publications, but acknowledge both the author and source.

Your items should reach the editor by the tenth of the month.

By post or email

17 Newbridge Gardens
Bath
BA1 3LT

CLUB EVENTS**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.

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 information.

Applications for rallies

We would like to remind all rallying Club members that you may only apply for rallies by post using the Club rally slip. Under no circumstances will rally marshals accept bookings by telephone.

Running a rally

If you would like to run a rally, contact the rally coordinator for a "Guide for Rally Marshals". When a date and venue is chosen you will receive the "Rules for Rally Marshals" and will be 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, please contact the rally coordinator.

News is the magazine of the
AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB
A Company Limited by Guarantee

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Welcome to December News.

All the team at ASOC would like to wish all members a super festive season.

One event we have been telling you about is the National, this includes the AGM, and afterwards the open forum, where you can express your views.

The National has unlimited places, so you can be sure of a pitch.

Membership renewal has been made easier for 2020, no form to fill in, just send your cheque or pay by bank transfer. All the details can be found on page 2.

Just a reminder, we have suppliers and dealers who offer members a discount on the services they offer, but you must present your membership card before any work is commenced.

WE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO RUN THIS RALLY

National Motorhome Show
East of England Showground, Peterborough
15 – 20 April 2020

A show rally is quite easy to run as I complete the paperwork with Warners, leaving the marshals with complimentary entry to the show accepting rally slips, marking out the rally field and marshalling the rally.

ASOC have been represented at this show for many years. If you are interested, all the paperwork on running a rally is available on the Club website and I will be only too pleased to answer any questions.

Neil Rogers. Rally Coordinator

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

STILL ONLY £20 FOR 2020

Membership of ASOC becomes due on the 1 January 2020 except for those joining after September 2019 as their membership is valid until the end of December 2020.

Any renewals not received before 10 January 2020 will no longer have ASOC News posted to them and will no longer have access to the member area.

The Club is streamlining the process of membership renewal to make it easier for both you and for the club volunteers who process your renewals.

There is now no need to fill in and post a renewal form each year.

We already have your details and provided you inform the membership secretary of any changes during the year, there is no longer any need to re-submit your details each year.

OUR PREFERRED METHOD OF PAYMENT IS BY BACS

For members new to BACS or who do not use internet or on-line banking, BACS payments are simple. You can either make BACS payments online through your internet banking system or go to your bank and ask over the counter to make a BACS payment.

The information the Teller will need is your bank account number and sort code (printed on your cheques) and the Bank name, account number and sort code of our club Bank, together with a payment reference.

When submitting your BACS payment at a Bank, please use as the payment reference your ASOC membership number first followed by your family name (surname).

Any other inclusions in the reference box may delay you receiving your new membership card. This is how the treasurer and membership secretary will identify you from your payment (eg. 1234 Smith).

The ASOC bank account details are:

NatWest Bank

Sort Code 01-01-78

Account Number 19654375

PAYMENT BY CHEQUE

You can still pay by cheque if you prefer, and if you do, you must put your membership number on the back of the cheque. That is all we need as your name will be printed on the front of the cheque.

Cheques should be made payable to Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club and posted to:

Membership Secretary ASOC

Orchard Works,

Willersey,

Worcestershire,

WR12 7QF

Your new membership cards will be sent out as soon as your payment is received.

As a result of a decision made by Members during the 2019 Annual General Meeting, members who have been in the club for 30 years or more become "Gold Members".

If you fall into that category you will be issued with a gold membership card and will no longer need pay an annual subscription. This card will be valid as long as you own an Auto-Sleeper. Your membership number and entitlements remain the same.

Jean Downie Membership Secretary

FROM THE TREASURER

There have been a number of cheques paid into the club bank and being returned to me unpaid. Some of the reasons offered by the bank being:- account closed, cheque book stolen or lost etc. The main reason is that the cheques being written are out of date, very few people are aware of this.

To save any embarrassment would those members, paying by cheque, please ensure that their cheque books are current.

It is necessary, when paying by bank transfer that only your membership number and surname are displayed in the reference box. any other details may cause delay in receiving your membership card.

Thank you, your help is appreciated.

John Geeson Treasurer

YOUR LETTERS

Thank you

We would like to thank everyone from The Autosleepers Club for the Get Well cards, phone calls and texts that Bobbie received before and after his recent heart surgery. They were much appreciated. Not forgetting the FaceTime when I was in my hospital bed. We did miss meeting up with friends this year but God willing we look forward to 2020 when hopefully we will be back on our travels in the Motorhome.

Bobbie and Beatrice Gordon 4396

Bridge Villas rally

These days I only write to Companies, organizations or clubs to complain. However, this time I would like to tell you how much my wife and I enjoyed the Rally at Bridge Villas. We have only been to about 4 or 5 rallies over the last 5 years and after each one we said that's the last. However, our friends said they were going to Bridge Villas and so we said we would go as well.

I forgot to put on the form that we had a dog, also that my wife has a disable scooter, The rally officers quickly sorted that out when we arrived. It was a nice clean campsite with the town just over the bridge, we had a lovely meal in The Dolphin.

The evening entertainment was very well organized and very enjoyable. The rally officers had also arranged for us to be towed off the soaking wet field on the Monday morning.

Thank you to the Rally Officers for a very enjoyable and pleasant long weekend.

Bob and Treshia 8467

Thetford fridge fly screens

We have a 2019 plate Nuevo and read something on the internet that Thetford fridge vents are no longer being supplied with a flyscreen and these need to be purchased as an additional accessory.

So we thought we would take a look at ours, certainly our previous Nuevo had these screens when purchased new, but surprisingly low and behold our new van didn't have them. You would have thought Auto-Sleeper vehicles would have these fitted as standard or perhaps they were just missed in our case.

We have now purchased these and are easily fitted, just slot behind the fridge vent.

Nigel and Julie Malcolm 8967

Sedgemoor Rally

Once again, this years Carnival rally was a great success. Despite a wet trip to the campsite, most of us enjoyed a dry gathering for the 'meet and greet' and Brian's introduction to the rally. His extensive local knowledge allowed him to advise on local attractions, bus routes and timetables, and arranged events at the campsite. For the second year in a row, we were sharing the site with other visitors enjoying the local half term holiday, so most of the campsite facilities were available for our use.

Some of us took the option of using our free Saturday to visit neighbouring Bridgwater, where they had street vendors and entertainers performing all day until their illuminated Carnival in the evening, followed by 'Squibbing' in the main street. Due to the disruption to local traffic caused by the Carnival procession, this meant a rather late return to the site afterwards.

On Sunday, there was a walk to the local Highbridge Caravans, in un-seasonally pleasant sunny weather. They had dutifully laid out tea, coffee and biscuits for any of our group. They also have an excellent range of accessories and essentials for camping. Brian had arranged extra discount for all members producing their ASOC membership cards. The fine weather continued into the afternoon, inspiring many to take advantage of a stroll along the esplanade. In the evening there was the Burnham-on-Sea firework display on the sea front, which was quite a spectacle, although rather damp. This was followed by a get together and Brian's legendary 'Dingbats' quiz in the campsite 'Mash and Barrel' pub, where we had exclusive use of the mezzanine area.

On Monday we again met in the mezzanine area of the 'Mash and Barrel' for tea and biscuits. We then did the answers to our quick (celebrating 20 years of Carnival rallies) quiz, and drawing the ginormous raffle, and further instructions for the evening Carnival. Once again Brian's local knowledge assisted in finding the optimum observation position, near to the campsite. He had also suggested one of the local hosteries just opposite from the main entrance to the campsite, that did a very reasonable carvery for lunch. The fine weather continued into the afternoon, but it started to cloud over and damp as the evening drew on.

The Carnival itself was as spectacular as ever, with an abundance of colourfully costumed and cleverly illuminated walking entries interspersed with the enormous colourful illuminated and (musically) noisy carts, which took over an hour to pass by. These Carnivals are the largest in Europe, and possibly in the whole World. Definitely a spectacle not to be missed.

It only remains to thank Brian and all of his hardworking helpers without whom this rally would not be half as enjoyable.'

Mike & Sandra Basham 8483



Due to advancing years and after almost 18 years ASOC membership, Susan and I have decided to pass on our beloved Auto-Sleeper Medallion to our son and his wife. We now have a Bailey Unicorn Caravan which will be sited for a season at a time. The photographs are of our nostalgic farewell on our last stay. near Welshpool.

Although we have not participated in many events, we have always been proud to belong to ASOC. We will miss the Club, but we want to wish the Club continuing success and for all members many happy motorhoming times.

Brian & Susan Felgate 5282



Powis Castle Gardens

A weight off our minds

(and the error of our weighs)

Many thanks to Robert (8845) for pointing out a couple of errors in my original posting.

Indeed, the road tax for the new HGV class for our Corinium is £165 for one year and not £100 as I stated, which is for six months. Still a saving of £100 per year. Also, as Robert points out the requirement is for a medical every three years to retain C1 status on your licence after 70. Quotes I have seen for this medical seem to vary from GP to GP with the low end at £50 and the high at £175. I haven't had to test this out yet so won't know definitely for a year or so yet.

However, Robert's third point contains no errors on my part. It was never my intention to provide an in-depth technical guide to motorhome loading. I am fully aware of the axle loading limits as stated on the VIN plate and as discussed at length with SvTech, individual axle loadings apply to all motorhomes regardless of PLGV or HGV classification. My reason for writing was to make owners, and potential owners of vehicles such as ours, aware that the 3500kg weight limit can be easily exceeded therefor making it difficult or impossible even to operate legally. This is something that neither the manufacturer or dealers make buyers aware of it seems.

Anyone who follows the route of up plating will I am sure become aware of axle loading limits if they weren't before. I understand that adding air suspension to the rear axle alone will go some way to improving the rear axle loading if needs be.

Graham Hutchins -10227

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Fitted with A frame and electronic braking

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thank you for the donation

Sorry to be leaving

After nearly 30 years as members of The Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club, we are sorry to say that we will not be renewing our membership. After three Auto-Sleeper conversions we have purchased a German motorhome which better suits our lifestyle and our needs.

A little history, we first purchased our Auto-Sleeper Rambler back in August 1989 when our children were only 4 and 2. After four years and many adventures travelling around the UK on holiday and at weekends and with two growing children we decided to trade in the Rambler and purchased a Talisman in 1994.

The Talisman took us on more adventures including trips to the Outer Hebrides, Ireland and mainland Europe. After sixteen years and with the children grown up and no longer at home we purchased a Nuevo in 2010. This too has taken us all over the UK and a recent extended stay in France now we are retired.

Regrettably, over the years we only managed to attend a handful of rallies and AGM's due to work commitments, the children's activities and ageing parents. We do, however, have happy memories of attending the early Club and Company rallies in Malvern with the children.

We have very much enjoyed reading the ASOC News over the years and have found it both useful and entertaining. We have joined the owners club for our new vehicle, but will miss the ASOC News as it is far superior to the new one, but don't tell anyone we said that.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all members safe and happy travelling and best wishes for 2020!

Pam and John McCarthy 0456



PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

submit up to four photographs

WIN £25

ANY SUBJECT

photograph entry size can be
6 x 4 inches or 7 x 5 inches unmounted
All members per motorhome can enter

Closing date for entries 31 March 2020

Send your entries to:
Rita Tubb
70 Charnwood Crescent
Chandlers Ford
Hampshire
SO53 5QL

The winning entry will be kept for any publicity by ASOC and may be displayed on the club website

The judging takes place at the National rally by an independent person

In Praise of Caravaggio, the countryside & clean campsites

a wander through Northern Italy
with Helen and Rachel

This trip was meant to happen in 2017 but a hip operation delayed it, with another operation on the other side, this meant a swansong for us and Drusilla (the van). We set off in our beloved 2006 Duetto in early September 2019.

We took a month, without rushing and aiming for Tuscany Italy and managed as far south as Siena before heading back north.

Our first night was at Densole to be near the shuttle to travel next day through the tunnel, as did many others, but they were sensible enough to pre-book a table at the local pub.



Our first night in France was at a basic but delightful small municipal site in the middle of a hamlet near Langres. Quiet and bordered by a little stream.

Trip Advisor's and others comments on the length of time, and of alternative routes, meant that we used toll roads (with the Telepage gadget bought from the C&MC).

The second night was at Ivrea in Northern Italy. Our route took us via Geneva. Mont Blanc was a magical sight, passing through tunnels right underneath it at vast expense. The campsite was really a parking lot for 6 vans, very basic but a wonderful location next to a large grassy recreation area bordering a roaring river where the Olympic Canoeing Slalom championships were held in 2018. After a very short walk, a glass or two of good local wine with tapas (provided gratis) were sampled before a stroll through the lovely old town.

Setting off next day, we left the mountains and the many tunnels and headed for Genoa. The interesting but hectic drive through Genoa seemed to take ages. I think we got off the toll road and to the shore road by mistake, judging by the cars parked any which way along the route. We travelled through more tunnels down the coast, past white marble cut mountains and reached our wonderful camp site 'La Valle' in between Lucca and Pisa at about 4pm. This site was recommended by an article in a recent C&MC magazine. We celebrated with a BBQ and a good bottle of red wine.

We stayed for 6 nights, enjoyed the views, swimming and a two kilometre walk to the station got us to Lucca in 15mins or Pisa in 30. Both well worth visiting.

We left for Florence via the main road. The receptionist at La Valle had said 'whatever you do, do not drive in Florence, they are mad, worse than Rome.' We programmed the satnav to take us via a toll road just to bypass Florence to our next site 'Il Poggetto' in Troghi, SW of Florence. We were most unexpectedly taken right through the middle (it felt to us) of the city. However, shocked and exhausted we survived. Il Poggetto was a huge camp site with a large swimming pool and a bar and restaurant that local people came for miles to enjoy. I had to have the seafood linguini twice.

It poured all night with showers the next day, the first rain of the trip. We caught the bus into Florence, 50 metres from the site, This was a 50 minute journey through the hilly vistas, a journey we did on three of our seven days stay. We learnt that it is necessary to book in advance for the main sites and buildings. For example, the Duomo, Uffizi and Pitti Palace. We spent about 4 hours at each including a refreshment/snack break. We would leave at nine in the morning and get an evening bus back. These were wonderful but exhausting days so days in between relaxing at the site worked for us.

Next it was to Siena via a main road, then up, up and up through glorious scenery to Radda in the middle of Chianti country. A stroll and lunch in this very pretty but touristy little centre took a couple of hours. We continued to Colleverde camp site, just 25 minutes walk from the heart of the city, or a 15 minute bus ride.

This site was quite big, shady, with a pool (closed for the season). It had a pleasant little bar and a very good restaurant, but you did need to book. The wild-boar stew was definitely worth waiting for. What surprised us the most was that it was so quiet, we could never hear any traffic.

We spent a day starting with coffee in the Palio, then visiting the Museo Civica followed by lunch and walking to the Duomo, where our ticket entitled us to visit the Cathedral, crypt, museum and Baptistry. It was a long day but well worth it and we were very glad that we had used the bus. The following day we drove to San Gimignano, a Medieval

Tuscan hilltop town. It was a leisurely one hour drive from Siena and enjoyed a couple of hours strolling around and to enjoy a light lunch.

We thoroughly enjoyed the three days in Siena and surrounding area, but it was now time to start heading back north. We were aiming for somewhere near to Genoa within a day, but were charmed by recommendations/reviews of a site in Pegli, a suburb west of the city. We booked for three nights. This was a wonderful surprise especially after our previous experience through Genoa on our way south. The site was so quiet, full of trees, and many birds, we felt we were in the middle of countryside and only fifteen-minutes walk, mainly through a park to the sea. We were amazed seeing people sunbathing and swimming.

A day was spent locally, wandering around this genteel area, enjoying lunching and observing all on the seafront. The next day we walked ten minutes to the station and took a forty-minute train ride to the most eastern suburb of Genoa some thirty kilometres away called Nervi. A beautiful area full of parks and a pretty promenade to walk right along the very edge of the sea for a few kilometres. We returned by train and metro back into the old centre of the city for lunch and afterwards a short walk to the Funicular to the top where we were greeted with good views. Another bus ride to the nearby train station for our return to Pegli. We obtained a twenty-four hour transport ticket which covered everything at only a cost of 4.50 Euros, which we thought was excellent value.

We left Genoa intending to miss the dreadful weather forecast for the Grenoble area. We followed the sun aiming for the Garlaban campsite in Aubagne which was close to Marseille. This site was in a National Park (no BBQs allowed) with many pitches and really quiet. It had many trees and views, it also has a delightful small pool by the reception and small bar. The first night it rained hard (not forecast) but became sunny and warm afterwards. We enjoyed the relaxing days and stayed an extra third night.

We left at 9.30am and set off for the Macon Municipal Campsite intending to arrive around three in the afternoon. Due to a bit of dirt in the diesel (so we were told) we had trouble starting the van, first at our coffee stop and then again at an Aire lunch stop, so didn't arrive until five. Thank you to the helpful French truck drivers. Filling the tank helped the engine behave and on arrival a glass of wine eased our anxiety. We had an excellent meal in the restaurant and booked for the following night as it would be a Sunday. Sunday morning we made a cafe search and supermarket shop (this would be our last before home). The site had many pitches well laid out and were very quiet furthest away from reception. It overlooked green fields and woodland and was very pleasant. It was mostly empty in the day and only half full at night. The pool was closed as it was the end of season. We had light rain for most of the day.

We left Macon and headed for a campsite St. Louis in Autingues, for our last night, it was in a hamlet thirty minutes from the tunnel. This was a nice little site and again was very quiet and also convenient for the last night of our holiday (and very sadly our last ever sojourn in Drusilla).

We caught the mid-morning shuttle and looked forward to going home. What a trip and what an adventure we had. Such a privilege.

Observations in hindsight

We made spontaneous overnight stops on the way, booked a few days in advance for the longer stays in Tuscany and the day before for campsites on the return journey.

All was done by phone using internet sites and their reviews on Trip Advisor and PitchUp (www.pitchup.com). At this time of the year, PitchUp sometimes carries special offers on site fees.

We found that even if we had gone the intended route, we always added on a further two hours at least to estimated satnav arrival times.

Lucca, Pisa, Florence and Siena involved a lot of walking, which was possible as the most interesting parts were in a central area but where there was little or no public transport.

Before the trip we researched all the intended routes, but decided the toll roads suited the amount of driving and the time it would take, even though the French tolls are very expensive (the Italian toll charges were much more reasonable).

Everyone we met were helpful throughout our trip, especially all the campsite staff and general public wherever we were. The campsite restaurants in France and Italy were an eye opener. Affordable and delicious.



IN THE STUART GOODWIN PAVILION

FRIDAY
10am - 12.30pm
1.30pm - 4pm

SATURDAY
1.30pm - 4pm

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE CHOSEN CHARITY
WHICH WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN FEBRUARY NEWS
AFTER THE NOMINATIONS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED BY
31 DECEMBER 2019

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MOTORHOME ODDS AND ENDS TABLE

NATIONAL RALLY

Thursday 30 April to Monday 4 May 2020

NEWARK SHOWGROUND

ANOTHER NATIONAL NEWSFLASH FROM MARTIN, OZZIE AND THE TEAM NEXT MONTH

THE SOUNDATIONS

NATIONAL RALLY

Thursday 30 April to Monday 4 May 2020

NEWARK SHOWGROUND

ENTERTAINMENT
SATURDAY NIGHT



© Trevor Owen Photography

**NEWS
FLASH**

TIME TO PARTY

GREECE 2019

ON THE ROAD AGAIN



Part two with Andrew Brown



The beach at Elafonisi

1st May and huge festivities in the town of Gythio for the Bank Holiday. Flags, banners, marching bands and packed restaurants indicated just how popular this early summer break is. We picked up our ferry tickets at the travel agency and went down to the quayside to await the ferry to Crete. The ferry was basic (no cabins or café) and called in on two other islands on the way; the skill of the captain and crew docking in the dark at Antikythera was something to witness. We arrived at the port of Kissamos in Crete at around midnight and along with several other campers parked up just outside the harbour for the night.

Crete (along with the rest of Greece) had suffered badly from winter storms and our first foray to the south coast was hit by road closures where the roads had simply washed away down the mountainside. Detours were not well signposted but we had all day and were not worried by the delay. We headed for the beach at Elafonisi where we found good parking for overnight. It was clearly popular with tourists and we were surprised at the number of coaches dropping people off there. By 4.00pm the coaches had departed and we had a quiet evening overlooking the blue seas and golden sands. Next day we took a long walk along the beach out to a church on a peninsula (there are lots of them) and past a memorial in a cave to 600 locals massacred by Ottoman soldiers in the 1800s.

After a second night we drove back to the north of the island and found a campsite at Chania for two nights. Not the best of sites but we had friendly help from a German campervan to repair damaged wiring which meant that we had no electric service in the van. Hans had spent a lot of time in England designing large cranes and was happy to practice his English with us. We took our bikes into Chania and explored the market and the Turkish and Venetian harbours packed with stylish restaurants.

What a difference in the traffic between the north and south of the island! From getting off the ferry to here we had come across almost no traffic but the north side of the island is very busy! After failing to find the aire in Heraklion, where we ended up driving through a pedestrian zone and getting a lot of funny looks, we moved on to Govves where we stayed overnight to allow us to take a day to visit Knossos, the site of a Minoan

palace. Culturally very interesting, much of the site was actually re-constructed in the early twentieth century, by the archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans, in order to visualise what it would have looked like in its heyday rather than just a crumbling pile of stones. From here East to Sisi and a pleasant campsite overlooking the sea. The weather was definitely warming up and we could sit outside well into the evening. We made a trip to Spinalonga which was a leper colony until its closure in 1957 and brought to fame by Victoria Hislop in her book "The Island". This was originally another 13th-century Frankish castle which had subsequently been used by later occupying forces – Ottoman Turks and German paratroopers.

After a couple of days, we headed inland and upwards to the Lasithi Plateau which is covered in small windmills operating water pumps for irrigation. We stopped on the way and had a hike down the Rosa Gorge where we watched eagles and vultures soaring on the thermals. Once again the effects of the winter weather meant that much of the path had been washed away and we had to take a lot of care on the steep descent where we saw lots of impressive dragon lilies with their deep purple stems and flowers. After we finished our hike, we carried on to Tzermunde which was a very quiet little town but bursting with tourist shops: apparently the coaches call there on Wednesdays and Saturdays. A local restaurant (Zarios and his french wife Catherine) pointed us in the direction of a large, but virtually unused, carpark where we could stay overnight. We repaid this advice by eating at their restaurant for the next two evenings in the company of some very interesting travellers some of whom were crossing Crete on foot East to West using the long distance E4 footpath. The next day, following their advice, we hiked up to the Karfi Minoan settlement from where we had magnificent views along the Cretan mountains and down to the north coast. A steep haul but well worth the effort.

Moving down to the south coast for a couple of days and got tangled up in a local market at Agia Varvara. Just for once the temporary road sign was only in Greek (the one telling us to divert to avoid the road closure for the market) and we had to reverse about a kilometre back along the road to find a parking space. The street market was huge and went on for about 1 km along the main road through the town. Fresh produce was everywhere, including the first water melons and at ridiculously low prices so we filled the storage areas in the van before we continued on our way.

We found a campsite at Agia Galini from where there was a short walk to the beach and the resort. Like all the campsites, so far, the pool was still empty but they would be filling it the next day. How many times did we hear that one? However there are always plenty of sun loungers on the beach, so we spent a pleasant day, topping up the tan and relaxing. We met some more adventurous travellers who were camped at the back of us; a couple of spry 70-year old Frenchmen who were kayaking the length of the southern coast of Crete.

From here we were in need of more exercise so set off to find the trail up Mt Idi to the Amares Caves. Another case of lack of maps and the Satnav trying to take us over 4x4 tracks meant that we never got there and had to make do with driving round the south side of the Amari valley which was full of stunning scenery and no other traffic. A stop in Gerakari allowed us to sample some of the local cherry produce including a homemade cherry brandy liqueur sold in old water bottles. The site at Meronas had a difficult access and after a 500m drive along a narrow track avoiding the overhanging trees, we came to a locked gate with a "closed for Winter" sign on it. Thankfully, on closer scrutiny and a check in the diary, it was opening on that very day. We opened

Amari valley



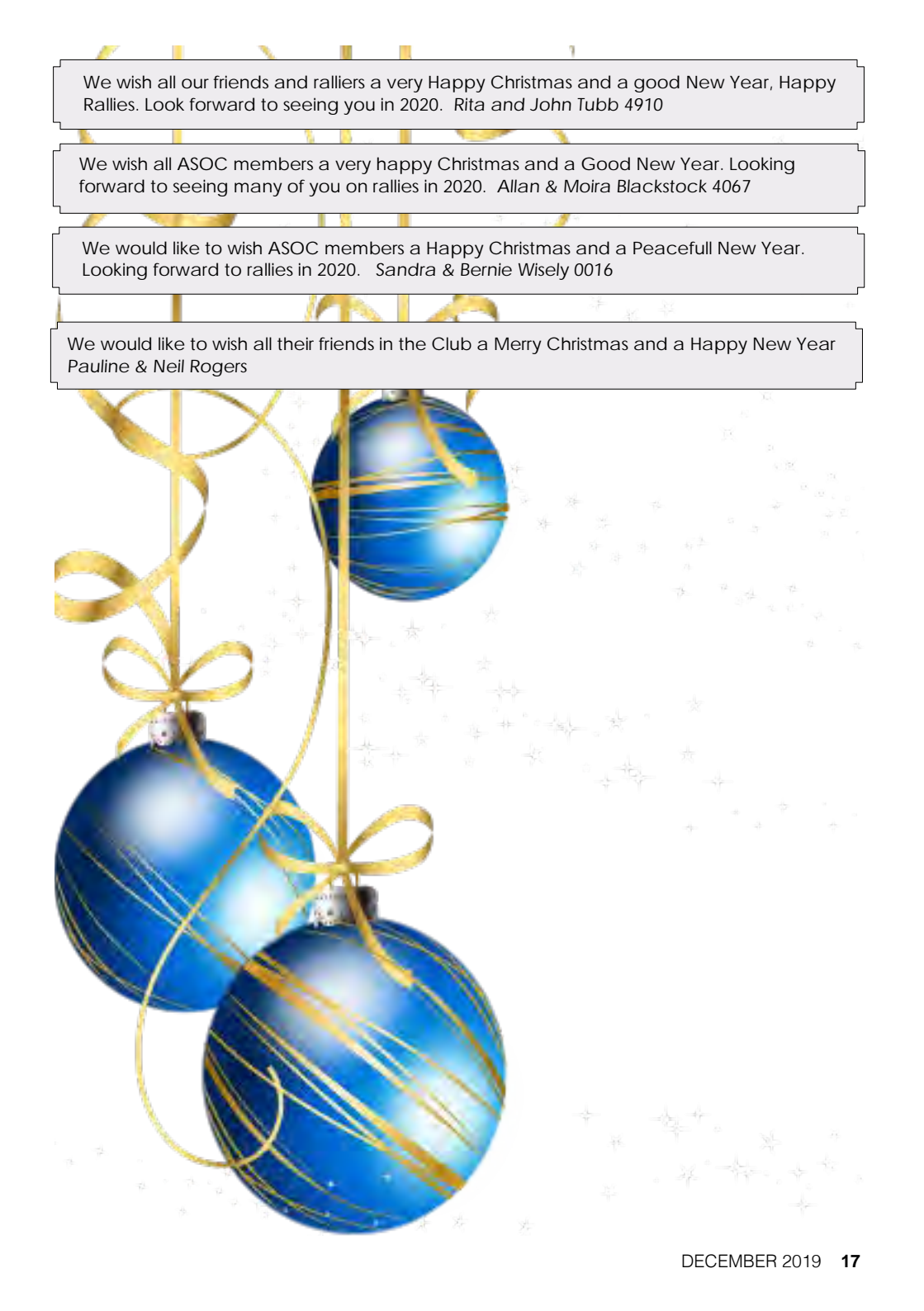
the gate and continued to a beautifully quiet and idyllic site which we had to ourselves. The owners were welcoming and we had a very peaceful night.

We could have stayed there for a while but had to leave the next day for Sisi to meet up with our daughter and grandson who happened to be in Crete for four days to meet her in-laws, arriving on the day we were booked to return to the mainland. The travel agents at Gythio were really helpful and altered our tickets to delay our return to the mainland. We also found Ken and Lynne (English but had lived and worked in Germany for 40 years) at the site and spent some very pleasant evenings with them, sampling local Ouzo, Raki and fizzy wine. The pool had been filled with sea water and the weather had become very warm so outdoor swimming became a daily pastime.

Four days later we drove along the coast to Kissamos where we stayed overnight behind the coastguard house before catching the ferry to Athens the next morning to continue our Greece trip on the Peloponnese.



waiting for the ferry at Gythio

The background of the page is decorated with three large, glossy blue Christmas ornaments hanging from gold ribbons. The ribbons are twisted and looped around the ornaments. The background is white with scattered, faint, light blue star-like sparkles.

We wish all our friends and ralliers a very Happy Christmas and a good New Year, Happy Rallies. Look forward to seeing you in 2020. Rita and John Tubb 4910

We wish all ASOC members a very happy Christmas and a Good New Year. Looking forward to seeing many of you on rallies in 2020. Allan & Moira Blackstock 4067

We would like to wish ASOC members a Happy Christmas and a Peacefull New Year. Looking forward to rallies in 2020. Sandra & Bernie Wisely 0016

We would like to wish all their friends in the Club a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
Pauline & Neil Rogers

Winterising

Incidental to the excellent advice in the magazine last month on winterising, I was in the motorhome preparing it for its annual habitation check (thank you Derby Motorhomes for a great price with the ASOC discount), when I recalled that I had not yet drained the Truma Combi boiler to protect it from the frost. After telling you all about the damaged boiler tank from my brother-in-law's frozen Truma boiler which I am using in my test rig, it occurred to me that it would be more than expensive and embarrassing if I let mine freeze this winter .

I went under the seat on the offside of the Stanton and operated the automatic dump valve and let it drain. I would advise doing this if you are not going to use your m/h continuously over the winter just to be on the safe side. I like to think the automatic dump feature as something of a backup in case I forget to do it as a matter of routine.

To operate the dump, first turn off the pump on the control panel and open all your taps with the mixers in the mid position of the tap. Locate the valve and turn the blue operating lever/handle counter-clockwise. It will take a bit of force and will make a loud click. The water will begin to drain under the van. Leave the dump valve like this until you are confident all the water has drained or are ready to use your van again. If like me you have fitted a trigger action shower head to save water, remember to operate the trigger to allow all the water to drain from the shower hose.

If you choose to reset the dump valve before you are ready to use your van again, you may find it has tripped open automatically anyway if the temperature is detected below approx. 4 degrees Celsius and you will lose water when filling if you forget to reset it. The reset procedure is twofold. Turn the blue handle clockwise then press the blue button in at the bottom of the valve body to reset the automatic trip. This button should be flush with the valve body and not sticking out.

Level Sensors

Here is an update picture from Ray Pearson. His dealer replaced his sensors and he took a picture for us. The sensor on the left is from the waste tank and the right from the fresh tank (thank goodness!)

These were giving the anomalous results Ray described. These are the "New" style sensors. I am currently testing these, together with the older style sensors and, for myself, some float style magnetically operated level switches.

With the degree of fouling showing on the waste tank sensor, I am not hopeful for the reliability of the float switches. If the floats gum up, they will not operate to show the water level in the tank. I think it is advisable to drain the tanks as you leave site and leave the drain cocks open to allow the tanks to "Breathe". Not saying this is the complete answer, but in two years it has not been a problem with my tank sensors yet (old style).



Here is the test rig build so far and the level sensors for testing (L-R, float switches, old style and new style sensors).



And finally (for now) ...

Since losing my C1 licence to glaucoma, I have been wondering about the loophole that would allow me to tow a trailer (or Caravan, or 5th wheeler) on my car licence. (B+E).

According to the DVLA There is no max limit for towing a trailer on a B+E licence. Of course, to be legal the towing vehicle (car) must be up to the job. Then I saw this...

And wouldn't you know it, I sold my welder recently!

Have a great Christmas, we are away in the Stanton over New Year.





I hope you find this article, written by Pam Davies in 2000, very informative, interesting and detailed.

Pam was our Public Relations Officer in 1999 & then Club Secretary in the years 2000 & 2001, and is in the Committee Meeting photograph taken on 11th December 1999. Pam left the Club, quite a while ago now, when she sold her motorhome.



Rear row from the left:

John Cox (Observer, Founder Vice-President); Ray Whiley (Vice Chairman & Secretary); Ben Mansfield (Chief Rally Marshal); Pam Davies (Public Relations Officer); Janet Sutterby (Minutes Secretary); Ian day (Observer , Editor designate 2000); John Tidbury (Treasurer); Baz Wellard (Chairman Club & Company Rally)

Front row from the left:

Harry Henthorne (Editor); Nora Venables (Chairman AGM Sub-Committee); Neil Rogers (Rally Coordinator); Charles Trevelyan (President); Andrew Entwistle (Chairman); Ian Ross (Membership Secretary & Regalia Officer).

Roles confirmed, courtesy of Ozzie Jones (Secretary)

HISTORY OF THE CLUB 1988 – 2000

By Pam Davies – Club Secretary

John Cox started it all with a letter published in “Motorcaravan & Motorhome Monthly” in June 1988 suggesting that a club for owners of motor caravans converted by Auto-Sleepers Limited of Willersey, near Broadway, might be popular. He had earlier spoken to Auto-Sleepers on the subject and their answer in favour of the proposal, together with a letter from the Managing Director, Mr. Anthony Trevelyan, which was also published in MMM, set things moving. Initial response was about a dozen letters.

Mrs. Rita Daley and the late Frank Stinchcombe wrote direct to John offering help so they were both recruited. A meeting was held at Willersey in July attended by John and Frank, together with Charles Trevelyan and Neville Jelfs (both of Auto-Sleepers Limited) when the decision was taken to go ahead and a suggested Constitution and Rules were roughed out to set some objectives. The late Phil Daley and his wife Rita weren't there, they were touring in Norway -but at a meeting in September they joined in and jobs were allocated. Charles became Acting Chairman, Frank Acting Treasurer, John Acting Rally Secretary, with Neville to represent the Works (when time permitted!) and Rita as Acting Secretary. This was all very tentative because nobody knew if anyone else wanted the Club only time would tell! Dilys Stinchcombe was not at this meeting, having had an appendectomy at short notice, but she became very active afterwards, handling all the Regalia matters.

It was felt that members, if any, would need to be kept abreast of developments and for this a Newsletter was required. Everyone else had enough to do, so Phil Daley became Acting Editor. (Only one every two months to start with, they said.) The agreed target was to build the foundations of a worthwhile Club to present to members at an inaugural meeting in the Spring of 1989. There was a lot to do, and undue haste could wreck everything. The Acting Committee was immensely encouraged by the help, both practical and financial, given by Auto-Sleepers Limited, and just hoped that there was sufficient interest to make it all worthwhile.

The Inaugural General Meeting and First National Rally, in April 1989, was attended by over 230 vans (around 500 people) and membership then totalled about 650 people. In 1990 attendance at the Annual General Meeting was over 330 vans with a membership of about 1100 people. 1991 saw the second Annual General Meeting with around 300 vans. At each AGM Rally, until 1991, Auto-Sleepers had presented a complete range of new vehicles and provided a sales section; some of their dealers had attended with both new and used vehicles and some accessory suppliers had brought their stalls.

1992 brought about 130 vans to a green field site for the AGM, and a separate “Club and Company Rally” was arranged with representation from the Company, dealers and accessory suppliers. This has become the standard. Each year the Annual Dinner and AGM Rally attract an average of 130 vans. Regular bookings are now made each year and efforts are being made to select different venues. Similarly, the Club and Company Rally is now booked at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern, for a few years ahead, and this now attracts about 600 motorhomes together with day visitors. Membership now totals about 1500 motorhomes, , or over 3000 members, and the Club continues to grow. It is now the biggest one-make motorhome club in the United Kingdom. It was

agreed from the start that it would be the kind of club that the members wanted; comments are always passed on to the Committee and have proved valuable in the progress of the Club.

The main wishes have been to:

- Meet other owners to exchange experiences, problems, solutions, and modifications and just have a good old talk. But not to have BIG meetings, except perhaps once or twice a year.
- Enjoy special treatment from suitable organisations and from Auto-Sleepers Limited, which now includes membership, of the Association of Caravan and Camping Exempted Organisations (ACCEO). (Members of the Club may, if they wish become individual members of ACCEO.) Other offers are mentioned in the Newsletter from time to time and, of course, service from Willersey has seldom left anything to be desired.
- Arrange group travel abroad, especially for first-timers, and to help with arrangements for small groups wishing to go it alone. Rallies have been held abroad in most years.
- Avoid trying to compete with established clubs who, through their sheer size, can do things this Club cannot do, but to concentrate on things exclusively “Auto-Sleeper”. To avoid too much organisation and too many rules or regulations.
- Try to organise small weekend and midweek rallies as Marshals become available because many Members are lucky enough to be retired and have time to enjoy themselves other than at weekends.

Since the Club had proved so popular with an average of 50 enquiries each month, a Membership Secretary was appointed in December 1989 to ease the secretarial load. All enquiries, new members and renewals now go to the Membership Secretary. In 1994, with the benefit of experience, the two posts were again merged and a separate Minutes Secretary was appointed. In 1999 the growth of work resulted in a reversion to separate Membership Secretary and Club Secretary.

At the AGM in 1990 the Club Constitution and Rules were adopted, which were only slightly varied from the draft ideas presented the previous year and, and minor revisions were made in 1993. At that AGM, Rita Daley and John Cox became Honorary Vice-Presidents. Philip Daley joined them in 1994. The Club has not lost the services of the Vice-Presidents. They became ex-officio members of the Committee and continue to help and guide wherever their services are needed. The Club constitution is regularly reviewed to ensure that it still meets the requirements of the members and current legislation.

Rallies have been very enjoyable. Many have included a meal locally on the Saturday evening and a couple of coffee mornings to get everyone together. Nothing energetic or noisy has been organised which would interfere with the relaxed atmosphere sought by Members.

The newsletter had gradually expanded to 20 pages and the third editor is now in post. Articles of general interest are included whenever members provide them and when they can be fitted in. Contributions and opinions (whether for or against anything), travel experiences briefly expressed, and other items of interest are always welcome.

Photographs cannot (yet) be included but there is always a drawing on the cover. Auto-Sleepers Limited provides short items when possible on subjects of current interest. The newsletter also includes requests for information; rally reports, and suggestions, together with sales/wants (including vehicles) from Members.

The newsletter will continue along these lines, and, hopefully, in a popular “amateurish” way. From time to time approaches have been made for the Newsletter to accept paid (and unpaid!) advertising from non-members. This has always been refused, except where a potential member is seeking an A-S van!

“Regalia” items for a “Club Shop” were originally organised by Dilys and Frank Stinchcombe. Subsequently this task has passed through a number of other hands. Various items have been tried over the years; some have proved less successful and have been discontinued. New items are always being investigated for Members to enjoy, but we try not to have too many items, particularly those that are costly for the Club to hold or are too bulky for convenient transport to rallies.

The Membership, by a great majority, decided at the 1991 AGM that it did not want to be sub-divided into regions, areas or whatever, nor was the idea of Area Contacts approved. So if any Member wants to get in touch for any reasons, they are invited to telephone or write to any Committee Member. Obviously, as all Committee Members are volunteers, they will not always be available, but one or other can usually be reached. Official comments should always be in writing and addressed to the Secretary. In 1998, Sheila Henthorne, who had been for many years the Club Secretary and Membership Secretary, retired from the Committee and Members thanked her for her services to the Club by appointing her a Vice-President at the 1999 AGM. At the same meeting, John Cox and Rita and Philip Daley were given the new title of Founder Vice-Presidents, in recognition of their unique status as founder members of the Club. The opportunity was also taken in 1999 to amend the Constitution to comply with the Exemption Certificate (which permits the Club to hold short rallies without planning permission) by recognizing family membership.

Naturally, over the years there have been many changes to the Committee, and the current Committee is shown in the Newsletter.

Year 2000 brought the Club into the ‘dot.com’ age!

Any queries contact your Committee Member – Pam Davies



Inaugural General Meeting and First National Rally, April 1989

ARE YOU COMING TO THE NATIONAL?

Thursday 30 April to Monday 4 May 2020



Ozzie is waiting to enlist you
BOOKING OPENS IN JANUARY 2020

pay by cheque or bank transfer



Neil C. Rogers, Rally Coordinator
5 Emerson Court, Carmel Road, North, Darlington, Co. Durham DL3 8JB
Telephone or Fax 01325 954508 email ncr@mypostoffice.co.uk

Marshals should let the Rally Coordinator know when their rallies are fully booked.



DECEMBER 2019 RALLY INFORMATION

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL MEMBERS



URGENT REQUEST MARSHALS REQUIRED

National Motorhome Show
East of England Showground, Peterborough
15 – 20 April 2020

A show rally is quite easy to run as I complete the paperwork with Warners, leaving the marshals with complimentary entry to the show accepting rally slips, marking out the rally field and marshalling the rally.

Neil Rogers. Rally Coordinator

1 June – 11 June 2020 (10 nights)
Camping Les Deux Vallées, Vézac, Dordogne, France
<https://www.campingles2vallees.com/en/>

Rally Marshals: Chris and Peter Brown, Liz Irvin.

Emergency telephone: 07771 827711.

Rally Fee: £25.00 this is not refundable if offered a place,

if you want to pay this by BACS say so on the rally slip and you will be sent account details.

Rally slips and cheques to Chris Brown, 5 Kenilworth Walk, Cheadle, Stoke on Trent, ST10 1WA.
Enquiries to pcb7ty@btinternet.com or 07771 827711.

Please print a legible email address on your application that can be used for communication about the rally.

Site and Fees: The site has large grass pitches, swimming pool, restaurant/bar and is a 15 min walk from Beynac with its Chateau and restaurants and 7 miles from the town of Sarlat. For the ten nights, the fee will be €16.00 per night for the pitch that includes 2 people, 1 dog and electricity and there is (at 2019 rates) a Tourist tax (surcharge): 0.61 € / day / person + Eco participation of 0.36 € / day / person.

Limit: 25 vans

IF YOU CAN'T MAKE YOUR BOOKED RALLY

If you are unable to attend your booked rally, then please inform the marshal as soon as possible as there may be a waiting list and other members wanting to to apply.

**AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB RALLY APPLICATION FORM**

Rally application form should reach the marshal 14 days before the event if possible
Enclose a SAE if confirmation by post is required of your booking

Date sent:	Rally name:		
MEMBER DETAILS			
First name:	Surname:	Membership No:	
First name:	Surname:		
Address:			
Address:			
Town/City:		Postcode:	
Telephone:		Mobile:	
Email:			
We require these details below of the person to contact in the event of an emergency			
Name:			
Telephone:		Mobile:	
Members guests (include children and their age)			
Name:			
Name:			
Name:			
Name:			Number of dogs:
MOTORHOME DETAILS			
Registration:	Length:	Model:	
ARRIVAL DETAILS			
Day:	am	pm	Evening
OTHER DETAILS			
Is this your first ASOC rally:	Electricity if available:	Evening meal if available:	
Do you intend to bring an additional car, trailer or tent:			
Any special requirements:			

PAYMENT

Including rally fee £

Number of nights

Full payment should be by cheque and made payable to the Rally Marshal
Details can be found on the event details