

ASOCNEWS

The magazine of Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club

NOVEMBER 2022

It's Time



To Renew

TRAVEL KESWICK AND DERWENTWATER

Janis and Mike Wood 4201



Having looked at the forecast, it appeared the weather looked promising and, most importantly, dry, for a visit to the Lake District. We booked the CCC Site at Keswick. (We were fortunate to get a cancellation as this Site is always busy).

It was with great sadness that we heard the Queen had died, and as the site instructions had said poor TV reception, we considered cancelling our trip. But to our relief when we arrived, we found that BBC 1 reception was very good, and we were glued to the pictures of the amazing State Funeral for seven hours. It made us proud to be British!

Arriving on Saturday on a gravel pitch, we attempted to get level, but one of our blocks cracked, so we remained nearly level, not daring to attempt it again.

In the afternoon we explored Keswick and the site, which goes right down to the lake edge with fantastic views of the majestic mountains all around.

On Sunday we cycled into town, passing the bus station (very handy) then familiarised ourselves with the town, and sampled the local cakes and coffee.



Monday was the funeral, so afterwards we decided an evening stroll and fresh air were necessary to view the marvellous sunset.

Tuesday was again beautiful, so we caught the bus to Ambleside village and after a look around, proceeded to Waterhead to catch the Ferry to Bowness and Lakeside, which passed a castle and remote, but inhabited islands with lots of wildlife and birds. A steam train from Haverthwaite had just arrived when we disembarked at Lakeside making the ferry much busier on the way back. The mountain views were spectacular, and the three hour boat ride was very enjoyable. Alighting from the bus in Keswick, we were near the Thai restaurant we'd fancied, so after an excellent meal, we strolled back to the van.

Wednesday was another glorious day, so we took the bus for a circular tour. It involved going through Borrowdale, over the Honister Pass (a bit hairy in places) Buttermere Lake and Crummock Water. The single decker bus was packed, but most got off to walk around Buttermere and the village. Arriving back in Keswick some 2 hrs later, we both agreed it had been the best free ride we'd ever had. Thank goodness for bus passes!

We knew Thursday was going to rain all day, and when it rains in the Lakes the clouds descend and obliterate the views. We planned to have bacon butties and lots of games of Canasta in between catching up on all the reading material we'd brought. Then at 3 o'clock the clouds lifted and hey ho we were able to go down to the Lake and take pictures again.

Friday we headed home, calling at Catterick Caravans to replace our broken ramps and a welcome coffee, before continuing our journey home.

A thoroughly enjoyable six-day break.



Editor's view The views expressed by the editor may not be the views of the committee or ASOC

Welcome to this issue of News

The rally season for 2022 has now come to an end, but the Club should have news of provisional rallies scheduled for 2023. They should appear in the December issue of the magazine. We hope to have them appear on the "events" page of the website shortly. If you want to run a rally, or as I like to call them events, let the Rally Coordinator know.

ASOC Charity 2023

Each year ASOC members select a charity to benefit from the fund-raising events at the National Rally in Newark in April/May.

TOFS (Tracheo-Osophageal-Fistula Support) was the charity chosen for 2020, but because of Covid, no fundraising events took place, so TOFS was the charity for 2022. £1454.24 was raised this year.

To nominate a charity, it should be a lesser-known national charity. Nominations will be anonymous to the committee until a charity is selected.

Members wishing to nominate a charity for 2023 should write to me at.

43 School Lane, Kirk Ella, Hull, East Yorkshire, HU10 7NP.

Please send full details of the charity and your reason for the nomination. Include your membership number and enclose twelve leaflets of the charity for the committee members. I will anonymise and copy your letter for the committee members.

The closing date for nominations is 31st December 2022.

Liz Irvin 4636, Charity and Exhibitions Officer

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Chairman's chat

The 2022 Rally Season has drawn to a close, I hope you all have enjoyed being out and about in your motorhomes this year.

My thanks once again go to all the rally marshals and their helpers who have put a lot of time and effort into organising their events for your benefit.

My thanks also go to the few members who took the trouble to put pen to paper (ok, maybe email), to put their thoughts to me regarding the direction of the club following the Apathy Rules article. It's great for the team and myself to receive feedback both positive and negative from members to see how we are currently managing the club, and help inform us on how to shape the club and keep it relevant for the future. Hopefully, more people will come forward with their views over the winter months. The primary reason for the Apathy Rules article and previous call for committee posts members was to try and get some more volunteers to help out with the work load of the committee members either as a committee member or as a co opted member. Sadly no one has come forward to date. Many of the existing committee members are currently managing two posts which is not sustainable in the long term.

We would all be very sorry to see this club fail in the long term, even if you felt you could not spare the time to be a full committee member, perhaps you could spare a little time to assist in the running of the club for which the committee members would be most grateful.

To allay any fears, the hard copy of the magazine will still be monthly by post but the news in the magazine is always a month out of date due to publication deadlines.

Until next month, stay safe

Steve

Stop Press

Change in Rally Coordinator for 2023 programme

From 9 October 22, Martin Ross has taken on the additional role of Rally Coordinator temporarily for the club's 2023 Rally Programme.

Can I ask all Marshalls and prospective Rally Organisers to contact Martin and not Neil for anything to do with the 2023 programme. Martin's contact details are in the front of the magazine

As noted at the 2022 AGM, Neil wished to stand down at the end of the 2022 Rally Season which has now come successfully to a close.

My thanks once again go to Neil for his long (25 years) and dedicated service to the club in this role, ably supported by his wife Pauline, who managed the purchasing of the Rally Plaques, and wish them both a long and happy retirement from committee work.

Steve

Special message from the Membership Secretary

As renewals time rolls around this is a very busy period for my role. It is now 8th October and I am already making preparations to get your new membership cards out to you and I wanted to give you an insight into what is involved. Already, I have ordered the card stock and printer ink for the production of your individual cards. In times past, membership cards were printed in bulk and the individual member details were handwritten on each card. Sounds simple, but the sheer number of cards required nowadays (upwards of 1,600 – 2,000 cards) and all the envelopes to address makes this impractical. We have applied a degree of automation to this using the power of Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel to merge member names, membership numbers, year joined, along with the printed design, onto a sheet of 10 pre-cut membership cards per sheet. This is 200 sheets that are hand fed into the inkjet printer (the printer will not handle card stock unless it is hand fed). This takes just 4 to 5 hours to complete. These are then separated and filed. Address labels are printed and filed at this time also.

Now comes the hard part!

Every day I check the Club bank statement to see if any BACs payments have been received. I identify the payment against the membership number, cross referenced with the name supplied by the member to their bank when making the transfer. If this all checks out, I amend the membership list to reflect the fact you have renewed. I retrieve the filed membership card(s) pop them in an envelope, stick a stamp and an address label and send Dennis out to post them. The same sequence occurs when I get a cheque, but additionally, I record the cheque details, wait until I have a bunch to deposit and take them to the post office for banking. Of course, this goes on year-round for new memberships as they arrive.

Why is this the hard part?

Well, you would be surprised how many BACs payments come in to the bank without the membership number, the wrong membership number or no member name, which then leads to all sorts of detective work to find the member renewing. I received one BACS payment with the reference “2020 renewal”! This member did not get in touch to ask where their magazine was - missing because I could not update the membership list to include them in the circulation list. Whoever it was lost their membership that year. Just as difficult are cheques that are not dated, or where the PAYEE is not made out to **Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club**. The bank will not accept any other payee and will return these to me. I filter all these out and have to get in touch with the member concerned for a replacement cheque. You are all very good at putting your membership number on the reverse of the cheque (which is all I need).

I do largely enjoy serving you as Membership Secretary but appeal to everyone to take care when making payment that you try to follow the instructions given on the pages titled “Time to renew your membership” in this month’s magazine. It could save me lots of time and effort – thank you.

Jean

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP
STILL ONLY **£20** FOR 2023



Membership of ASOC becomes due on first January 2023 except for those joining after September 2022 as their membership is valid until the end of December 2023.

Members who do not renew: Any renewals not received before 10 January 2023 will no longer have the ASOC News posted to them and will no longer have access to the member area, benefit from the various discount schemes or be able to take part in the rally programme.

Please take this opportunity to advise of any changes to your details during the year. by emailing on memberships@asoc.uk.com. For those members who do not have email my address is below.

OUR PREFERRED METHOD OF PAYMENT IS BY BACS

For members new to BACS or who do not use internet or online 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.

IMPORTANT: When submitting your BACS payment please use as the payment reference - your ASOC membership number first followed by your surname.

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

Our bank account details are:

The Auto Sleeper Owners' Club

National Westminster 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. To speed up the process please do not send your payment to Willersey.

Cheques should be posted to:

Jean Downie

ASOC Membership Secretary

88 Portreath Drive

Allestree

Derby DE22 2SD

This summer, Jean and I have had a busy season away in the Bourton – I hope you have all been able to enjoy this season. As a result, I have not had much time to research and write so this month I offer a carefully selected article I presented some time ago regarding the law and speed limits for our vehicles in the UK in August 2021 News.

I would also like to remind everyone that all the News back issues, right back to issue No.1 are available on the website for reading and / or downloading. Our Editor, John, has done a fine job making these available – they make good reading on your laptop or iPad or similar device.

Motorhomes and Speed Limits in the UK (a long read)

Here is the nub of the problem: There are two different speed limit restrictions for motorhomes. The higher limits are exactly the same as for normal cars. The lower limits reduce the maximum speeds and are shown in this extract from the government website...

National speed limits

A speed limit of 30 miles per hour (48km/h) applies to all single and dual carriageways with street lights, unless there are signs showing otherwise.

	Built-up areas mph (km/h)	Single carriageways mph (km/h)	Dual carriageways mph (km/h)	Motorways mph (km/h)
Cars, motorcycles, car-derived vans and dual-purpose vehicles	30 (48)	60 (96)	70 (112)	70 (112)
Cars, motorcycles, car-derived vans and dual-purpose vehicles when towing caravans or trailers	30 (48)	50 (80)	60 (96)	60 (96)
Motorhomes or motor caravans (not more than 3.05 tonnes maximum unladen weight)	30 (48)	60 (96)	70 (112)	70 (112)
Motorhomes or motor caravans (more than 3.05 tonnes maximum unladen weight)	30 (48)	50 (80)	60 (96)	70 (112)

TECH TALK with Dennis

See the problem yet? There is a threshold of 3.05 tonnes (3050Kg) Unladen Weight, above which you must abide by 50 in a 60-limit area, and 60 in a 70-limit area. Simple.

Not so. What is the Unladen Weight of your vehicle? I defy you to find out or calculate it with confidence. It does not form part of the specifications from the manufacturer. We are left with a bewildering range of options for attempting to calculate it. It is not the Mass in Running Order (MIRO), it is not the Maximum Technically Permissible Laden Mass (MTPLM) or any of the other acronyms littered about the spec sheets.

I contacted an Expert. Gareth Marsh is sales and engineering manager of SvTech. Please visit their website - <http://www.svtech.co.uk> This is who they are...

"SvTech offers a range of technical support services to vehicle manufacturers, converters, bodybuilders, dealers and end-users across Europe. Our services are all DVSA-recognised and backed by leading vehicle manufacturers, so if you are looking to modify your vehicle, look no further!"

This is the very surprising advice we are given by Gareth.

GM: For the purpose of motorhome speeds in the UK, these can ONLY work to the figure shown on the logbook/V5c under little letter 'g' Mass in Service.

A couple of things to explain here;

- 1 – The figure shown may not be the same as that shown in the brochure.*
- 2 – This field may be blank.*

Since a motorhome's unladen weight can change depending upon the options requested through the dealer, the actual unladen weight may be much higher (or even lower) than that shown in a brochure.

In my 25 years of covering vehicle approval, I am only aware of one instance of a motorhome being pulled up for a speed issue on an A road where the unladen weight was brought into question.

This turned out to be a vehicle that was incorrectly recorded on the DVLA records as a two-axle rigid truck at 3500kg, when in fact the vehicle was a tag axle motorhome at 5t and it was only due to these errors along with the weight of the vehicle that flagged it up for a check.

Had this been on the V5c as a motorhome and 5t – 3axle, it is highly likely it wouldn't have flagged up a problem, so another recommendation is to check your V5c/logbook details are correct.

So what happens next and what about enforcement?

If there is a figure shown and this figure is over 3050kg, then you are subject to 10mph less than car speed limits on A-roads. - i.e 50mph not 60 mph on a single

TECH TALK with Dennis

carriageway and 60mph not 70 on a dual carriage way. Still 70 mph on a motorway.

If the field (g) is blank or less than 3050kg then, within reason, you are the same as car speed limits, regardless of details shown in a brochure.

** This doesn't rule out the bigger MH's say a tag axle or American RV where, without doubt, the unladen weight would be over 3050kg, however the WIMS* enforcement and roadside enforcement would only weigh/see the loaded weight of the vehicle and the details recorded with the DVLA/DVSA, so the unladen weight wouldn't be known. An officer is unlikely to start searching for a brochure to find the "claimed" motorhome unladen weight, nor strip the vehicle back to barebones to find this.

* WIMS – Weigh-in-motion sensors.

In-built weighing system in the road. – useful read - <https://keepontrucking.uk/weigh-in-motion-sensors-wims-explained/>

Please be aware that the speeds listed against unladen weight for motorhomes only applies to the UK and not to Europe, where vehicle speed limits are based upon design weight, not unladen weight.

DD: WOW! was my reaction. I had previously gone round in circles trying to calculate my unladen weight from all the figures from Auto-Sleepers' brochures. Now, all I need to do is look at my V5 at item g. Mine, a 2020 Bourton, says 1879. This figure bears no resemblance to any of the numbers I had arrived at which began with a Mass in Running Order of 3043 (A-S supplied data) and with as much calculated weight from all the definitions of what is not "essential habitation equipment" and driver and fuel, the lowest figure I could get to, adding on all the so-called options was 2985. I have no idea where 1879 comes from.

However, Gareth says with his expert certainty that it can only be the Mass in service figure recorded on the V5 which would flag up and count. Having discussed this with him on the 'phone, he agrees with me that the government definitions are muddled and he definitely asserts the Mass in service figure recorded on your V5 is what is on their computer and is the only figure that can be used to determine the threshold. No calculations or guessing needed. Gareth adds,

*"although the MTPLM and MIRO may be recorded in a brochure, this cannot reasonably be used to calculate unladen weight for enforcement, as this MIRO figure may include a driver of 75kg, 90% fuel and other non-essential or added items, that were not on the vehicle at time of production – This is not the unladen weight as defined in C&U**. As mentioned, this doesn't rule out the bigger tag axle MH and American RV's, as the unladen weight would of course be over 3050kg, but your typical two axle Auto-Sleepers style motorhome - yes."*

** Road Vehicles Construction & Use regulation 1986

TECH TALK with Dennis

Please re-read his comment item one again, I will have more to say about this next month.

Also, please re-read his comment item two. I can attest to this. I visited Derby Motorhomes as part of this research and Tim Lemon and I took a look at the V5 of a Mercedes based Malvern to see what the Mass in Service (g) was recorded as. NO FIGURE RECORDED. So, this van, coming in with a MTPLM of 4100Kg can legally operate up to the same speed limit as for cars. Please draw your own conclusions from this about the way the regulations are written and implemented.

Gareth has more to say about payload which I will report next month in instalment two. I bet you can't wait!

Enforcement

I wondered about the enforcement side of these regulations. We are very fortunate to have the experience of Police Sergeant, Phil Lee, who is a fellow member (11109). I contacted Phil for a view from the sharp end.

Phil kindly wrote back and I copy his comments (in part) here for us all to benefit from. He qualifies his comments as "informed" as distinct from "Expert" opinion.

PL: The numerous laws applicable to this area would include The Road Traffic Act 1988, Construction & Use Regs 1980, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and probably many others. Each refer to different weights; unladen, kerb, Mass in Running Order – it really is a minefield!

A speed limit is exactly that – a limit – not a target. What is the "weight"? How long is a piece of string?

The unladen weight of any vehicle is the weight of the vehicle when it's not carrying any passengers, goods or other items. It includes the body and all parts normally used with the vehicle or trailer when it's used on a road, but doesn't include the weight of fuel or batteries in an electric vehicle - unless it's a mobility scooter or powered wheelchair (who really thought it necessary to specify the exemption of a 3-tonne mobility scooter / powered wheelchair?) <https://www.gov.uk/vehicle-weights-explained>. How can you use a vehicle on a road with no fuel?

To complicate things further, some also refer to Kerb weight: This is the total mass of a vehicle with standard equipment and all necessary operating consumables such as motor oil, transmission oil, brake fluid, coolant, air conditioning refrigerant, and sometimes a full tank of fuel, while not loaded with either passengers or cargo.

MIRO = is the basic weight straight from the factory, so no water, gas bottles etc. but does this include the weight of any specified option packs?

The state of Policing today is such that there would be exceptionally few officers with training, skill, knowledge and time, to be able to successfully prosecute a

TECH TALK with Dennis

speeding offence, except where there is a significant transgression of speed.

The Association of Chief Police Officers ('ACPO') publish their guidance on speed limit enforcement ranges:

For 'manned' speed detection equipment, the operator must form an opinion that any particular vehicle is travelling in excess of the prescribed speed limit, and only then can this opinion be corroborated by use of an authorised device (laser speed meter / VASCAR computer). For speed cameras, ('unmanned equipment'), the 2 images produced are the opinion and corroboration of the speed. VASCAR

Limit	Device tolerance	Fixed Penalty when education is not appropriate	Speed Awareness if appropriate		Summons in all other cases and above
			From	To	
20 mph	22mph	24 mph	24 mph	31 mph	35 mph
30 mph	32 mph	35 mph	35 mph	42 mph	50 mph
40 mph	42 mph	46 mph	46 mph	53 mph	66 mph
50 mph	52 mph	57 mph	57 mph	64 mph	76 mph
60 mph	62 mph	68 mph	68 mph	75 mph	86 mph
70 mph	73 mph	79 mph	79 mph	86 mph	96 mph

All speeds identified above are those shown on the speed device, speedometer or other detection devices

operators must maintain and provide their 'assessment' sheet in the event of any anticipated 'not guilty' plea, indicating their record of accurately recording a range of speeds, which adds further variance to the speed ranges. In addition, the officer must conduct a dynamic risk assessment on where and how to stop the vehicle safely, and you will quickly see where enforcing relatively minor infringements becomes onerous.

As can be seen above, we are not talking about a couple of MPH here – you would have to be recorded at an actual velocity of 57mph or above to fall foul of any speed offence, by which your speedometer would probably be reading closer to 60mph anyway, (so quite a way over the speed limit).

Ultimately, was that speed unreasonable in those circumstances? If a driver could evidence that the MTPLM minus the Payload took it under 3050Kg, and therefore out of that legislation, in my opinion prosecution would be unlikely unless there were other attendant circumstances.

My advice would be to subtract the 'user payload' from the MTPLM, as both of these are shown on the specification sheet, (see the example of an Auto Sleeper Malvern opposite).

TECH TALK with Dennis

Dimensions

Overall Length	7330mm / 24'1"
Overall Width (mirrors folded)	2350mm / 7'9"
Overall Width (mirrors extended)	2780mm / 9'1"
Overall Height	2860mm / 9'5"
Internal Height	1960mm / 6'5"

Weights

MTPLM	4100kg
MIRO*	3218kg
Maximum User Payload	882kg
Essential Habitation Equipment	17kg

In the example above, $MTPLM$ of 4100 Kg – 882 Kg = 3218 Kg, so this is well over the 3050 Kg limit, so the lower speed limits do apply.

This legislation also applies to Ford Transits and other vans of similar size, ('light goods vehicles'), and when have you ever seen a Ford Transit abiding by a 50 mph single carriageway national speed limit for that class of vehicle?

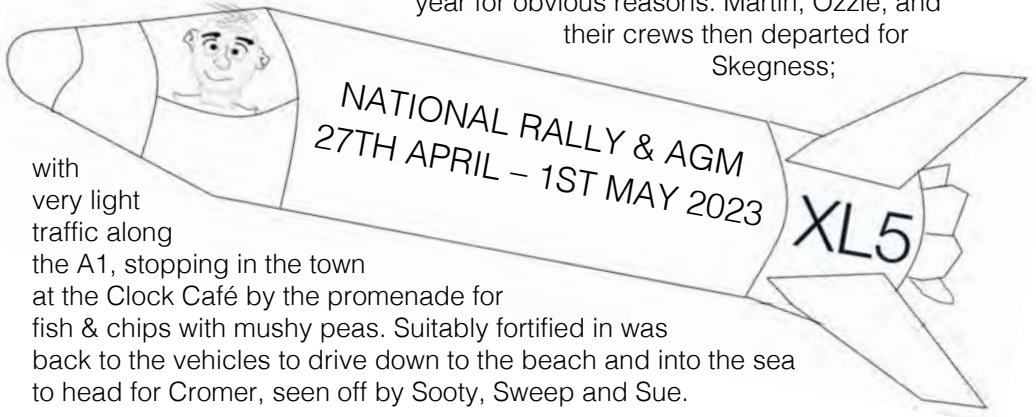
Let us not forget that any speed can be considered inappropriate in certain circumstances, and you must always "drive at a speed that you can stop in the distance you can see is clear".

These large vehicles are our valued possessions. Drive with courtesy, care and consideration for the safety and comfort of yourselves, your vehicle, and everyone else on the roads. Reading the road ahead and anticipating the conditions ahead can save huge amounts of money in fuel and maintenance costs.

DD: So, in the words of Bugs Bunny, for this month "That's All Folks!" - hope you are all still awake – let me know.

THE INTREPID ADVENTURES CONTINUE

At the showground, negotiations went well regarding the 2023 National planning. Prices and menus were agreed though costs were higher than last year for obvious reasons. Martin, Ozzie, and their crews then departed for Skegness;



with very light traffic along the A1, stopping in the town at the Clock Café by the promenade for fish & chips with mushy peas. Suitably fortified in was back to the vehicles to drive down to the beach and into the sea to head for Cromer, seen off by Sooty, Sweep and Sue.

Marvin, the paranoid android wanted to have a go at crabbing from Cromer Pier. On reaching Cromer, crabbing gear was purchased and by the end of the day the android was ecstatic, as he had won a trophy and a medallion for the number of crabs caught. Marvin released them back into the sea to be caught again. While Marvin was crabbing, Martin and Ozzie went off and had a crab salad at the Crabpot Café.

Off sailing again, Marvin started to listen in on the sub-space radio, there was rejoicing that Ming's spacecraft had been destroyed. Then came the news that two rocket powered asteroids were heading towards Earth, their trajectory being controlled from Mongo. The captains, fearing, that they were the targets, turned the dilithium crystal engines to full power and headed to Bexhill on Sea, for the Herstmoncux Observatory. In doing so they obtained an unofficial water speed record of 405 mph for amphibious motorhomes.

At the observatory Martin and Ozzie were told that when their crafts came down the North Sea into the Dover Straits, which for some reason was free from shipping! The asteroids changed course. Calculations were made, the impact would be in two hours then over the sub-space radio came the voice of Colonel Steve Zodiac in Fireball XL5, who was on an intercept course as the minutes passed by there was radio silence, then the news came that the asteroids had been destroyed. Fireball XL5 was able to dodge space debris and resumed its patrol of the galaxy, with Colonel Steve Zodiac spreading the word about the 2023 National Rally.

All this by Emperor Ming to get revenge on Martin and Ozzie and to stop them planning the 2023 National Rally and AGM for members to enjoy.

More next month from the intrepid adventurers.

THREE SITES SCOTTISH TOUR

As marshals of the three sites Scottish Rally, we thank all who made up a truly great group and we hope you enjoyed the trip as much as we did.

The weather was quite kind at the beginning and we enjoyed our trip on the Falkirk Wheel, a truly magnificent invention. It was nice to see Stuart and Yvonne on the canal side waving and taking photos. Some of our number enjoyed a trip in a horse drawn trap around what the owner called 'The Magic Circle', taking in the UFO landing site..

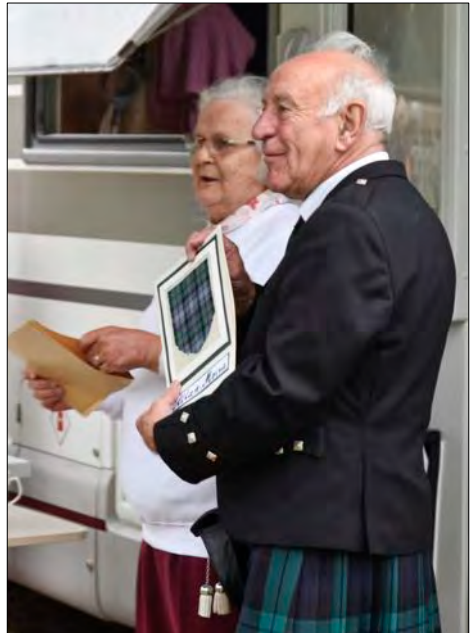
The weather changed a bit by the time we arrived at site number two, it was a bit disappointing that on the morning of the Highland Games we woke to an absolute downpour, however, some of us braved the elements and eventually the weather improved enabling us to watch tossing the caber, hammer throw, the hill race and a tug of war using the longest rope in Britain (a length of 150 yards), just a few of the activities unfortunately for safety reasons - the wet surface being unsafe - the highland dancing was moved to a hall in the town. The pipers put on a good show and the traders had some interesting articles for sale. We did manage a couple of games of 'malky' a Norwegian version of skittles which caused much cheering, groaning and hilarity.

Onward to Ballater. The weather really took a turn for the worse, when we arrived there was a puddle on our pitch and by the time the rest of the ralliers arrived it was like a swimming pool. I (Moira) really felt sorry for Allan as he headed out to welcome everyone and show them their pitch, he had on rubber shoes and the water actually came over the top of them.

We did, however, get our evening meetings with tea/coffee and biscuits at every site, sometimes having to run for cover.

Ballater is a very small town but quite pleasant and of course very proud of their connection with the Royal Family. It was on the final evening nearing the end of the closing formalities that the church bell began to toll announcing the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It was quite fitting that we were all together at that time when we were able to observe a minutes silence.

Once again thank you to all who attended making a jolly, memorable rally.



Three Sites Scottish Tour

Unfortunately, the event that makes this Rally totally memorable was the last evening when we were all outside Moira and Allan's Motorhome at about 6.30 and the church bell in Ballater started tolling! We had heard all the Royal Family were travelling to Balmoral Castle (about 8 miles from Ballater) so Allan led us in a minutes silence ending with 'God Save the King'. Moira then gave us her hand-crafted poker-work commemorative coasters in their tartan presentation bags, farewells were exchanged and we all started preparing for the morning's departure.



Thanks to Allan and Moira's superb organisation, this Rally was both interesting and fun. A Norwegian version of skittles was enjoyed on sunny afternoons, and with their local knowledge, we were able to enjoy things we would probably have otherwise missed. The pride of the people of Falkirk and their delight in showing visitors their massive Kelpies statues, and the unique Falkirk Wheel was refreshing. We were able to experience the amazing technology of the Falkirk Wheel first hand as Moira had arranged a trip on one of the leisure boats for those who wished to participate. She and Allan had also arranged taxis to transport those of us who didn't feel up to the half mile walk from the camp site.

Moira and Allan had timed their Tour so that we had the opportunity to attend the Blairgowrie & Rattray Highland Games which were exactly the right size for a first experience. The games are large enough that their piping competition is recognised



and supported by The Competing Pipers Association attracting international, national and local participants. Watching Tossing the Caber in the centre of the field, while a pipe band marched around the running track was astounding. But the games were small enough not to be overwhelming, and the friendliness and helpfulness of the caterers and locals was quite amazing.

Our camp site was within easy walking distance of the lovely ancient village of Alyth. There were explanatory plaques telling the history of one of the oldest bridges in Scotland, the reason behind the name of Toutie Street (a herdsman tooting his horn to ask folk to bring out their cattle for him to take up to the grazing on Alyth Hill for the day), and The Arches, ruins of the former parish church. Amongst other interesting shops there was a 'proper' butcher, and a café serving 'Scottish Breakfasts' ~ at only £ 6.45. This value was incredible, as eating the meal saved one having another for a full 36 hours afterwards!

By the time we reached our third site at Ballater the weather had decided it was time to fill the reservoirs, but kindly gave us breaks when we could see the glorious countryside of the Cairngorms, and enjoy browsing the shops in the town and fascinating to see so many 'By Royal Appointment' notices around. The old station has been nicely converted into a combined Public Library, Information Centre, Souvenir Shop and Museum, with the Royal railway carriage that Queen Victoria used on display beside the platform.

Moira and Allan had spent a lot of time sorting out a set of three quizzes, one for each camp site, the first was Dingbats, the second Spot the Difference, and the final one at Ballater a word search looking for Vintage cars. After the raffle at the final evening meeting, they awarded gold, silver and bronze 'medals' to those with the best cumulative scores, having given small prizes to the winners at each site.

Lastly, we would like to thank Moira and Allan for arranging such a wonderful Tour which we hope everybody else enjoyed as much as we did.

Sandra & Mike Basham 8483

The three stage rally organised by Moira and Allen Blackstock has come to an end. We stayed near to the Falkirk Wheel, then Blairgowrie and finally Ballater. Shirley and I spent one day visiting the Kelpies, they were very impressive, by their sheer size and shape. The next day Allen had arranged a trip on a boat up and down the Falkirk Wheel, so quiet, and using the power equivalent of only eight kettles being boiled!

Moving on to Blairgowrie, the weather worsened, some ralliers made it to the Highland Games, we made it to the nearest village! We did however manage to play a game of skittles, and a trip to Blairgowrie town and, of course, Wetherspoons!! Whilst travelling to Ballater, the weather was very poor but the visibility was excellent and the scenery going up through Glen Shee was spectacular. As we passed Balmoral Castle, Boris was bowing out and Liz Truss was being asked to form a government. There was nothing to see however.

Three nights at Ballater were unfortunately rather wet, but we all managed to get out and about.

On the last day, just up the road, history was unfolding as the Queens family was summoned. As we all gathered for our final tea and biscuits and our goodbyes, we heard the slow toll of a nearby church bell, it was 18.35 and we knew that our worst fears were realised. It's a time and place that will be forever remembered.

Thank you so much Allen and Moira for all your hard work and the presents you made us! *Chris and Shirley Sturgeon 2897*

We have just returned from the Scottish Rally and would to a a huge Thank You to



Allan and Moira. At Falkirk, in good weather, we visited the Falkirk Wheel, walked along the canal to the town and some visited The Kelpies. At Alyth the weather continued to be good. We visited the village and it's museum, walked up to the old church and visited Commonwealth War Graves. Took the bus to Blairgowrie another riverside walk, and then back to the site to Play Skittles. Then on to Ballater and the weather changed, we had rain thunder and lightning on the journey there, however, between the showers we were able to visit the village and some of the walks from there. We were given dingbats and quiz's (just to make sure we weren't idle!) and medals and prizes were awarded .

The last day was marked by the sad news of the Queens declining health and during the coffee evening we heard the bells tolling and realised that Her Majesty had passed away. We held a minutes silence for her - probably the first group in the world to do so. Thank you Moira and Allan for another wonderful rally.

Ian and Jean Sellers 8655



Club hub

Briarfields Rally

We would Like to thank Brian and Linda Ellis for stepping in to run our Briarfields Rally as we were unable to go. We are sorry not to meet the new ralliers and the many friends we have made over the years.

If Brian and Linda had not stepped in we would have had to cancel.

Rita and John Tubb

Just watching the Queen's funeral while on the Briarsfield rally thank you for organising it Rita and John shame you were not here with us, rally in capable hands of Brian and Linda. Thank you for the rally at Winchester and thanks to those that sponsored me for my abseil down cheddar gorge in December for St Margaret's hospice, where I have worked for 35 years it was much appreciated. *Diane Leader 2759.*



I should like to say a big Thank You to everyone on the Rally at Briarsfield for making the week easy for me. I nearly cancelled at the last minute as I was on my own, but need not have worried. The help and love that I received from so many members was invaluable. I know now that I shall keep going to future rallies. Hopefully this will encourage others in my situation. Thank you everyone.

Mo Valentine

Having read "Editors View" in September edition of the magazine, I felt compelled to reply.

My husband, Vic and I, joined the Autosleepers Club in October 2009, having purchased a 2001 VW Trooper second hand then. Our first trip was to go through France and down into Southern Spain, spending time in Granada and Madrid. Amazing.

In 2010, we attended our first Rally in Whitby (which is only about 40 minutes from home). Incidentally, this rally is still running now, and enormous thanks must go to Liz Irvin and Chris and Peter Brown for running it for so long.

We enjoyed that rally so much (and I continue to do so still) that we started to attend many more, including the National at Newark, Dartmouth, Lichfield, and Stafford Boat Club. Each one having its own individual set up and appeal.

When Vic passed away in 2018, I still attended rallies on my own - very hard - but even extra ones like Beamish, Wigginton and 3 Scottish Rallies in 2019. Then in

August this year, I assisted in running the first Redcar Rally, which will be run by Martin Ross and myself next year.

So John, you ask in general terms, "why are you members?". Well, for me personally, its the rallies (or in your words, club events). I really look forward to receiving the monthly magazine so that I can apply. The bi-monthly magazine just complicated applications so, I feel, a monthly magazine is far better.

I also have to say I love the paper version!

A rally can be in any location because, for me, the whole idea is for like-minded people to meet up, socialise, enjoy each others company, create new friendships, exchange contact details and keep in touch. Which I have done for a long time. I have many friends in the Auto-Sleeper Club, all scattered across the country, but it is great to look forward to seeing them both at rallies and various other camping locations, especially the Lake District, which wouldn't have been possible without the closeness of the club members.

The Club has been a lifeline for me, especially after losing Vic, and long may it continue. I'm sure I'm not alone in that respect as I know many single ralliers who have lost their partners and rally alone but meet up with such wonderful people who help us "singles" keep going. If anyone reading this, hasn't attended a rally - give it a go - I'm sure you will be pleasantly surprised how friendly and laid back everyone is, and it really is a great way of making new friends. I'm still keeping in touch, and meeting with, people I met in 2011!

As a bonus, remember how cheap a rally is in comparison to camping sites, and we are all Autosleepers together. Its lovely to see all the vans parked up. If anyone has a problem with their van during a rally, then we all bounce off each other and help one another as best we can. A real comfort, especially if you are on your own.

Sadly, winter is looming now. But roll on the Spring! I can't wait for Newark!

Lesley Prince 6599

Providing more defibrillators

Following a recent suggestion that we need more defibrillators made available.

My response was that the general public have a misconception of the use and value of defibrillators.

Please bear with me on this as I explain.

Previous methods of resuscitation which, looking back were crude and barely effective, were all we knew. Then along came CPR, or Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation,

(basically translated as heart and lung resuscitation)

This was far more effective "when performed correctly".

Shown so often in films and T.V. soaps people believed it performed miracles and that a few breaths (kiss of life) and a few pushes on the chest (barely ruffling the shirt) and the casualty will get up and run a marathon.

First aid training is a tremendous help but first aiders often perform just a few minutes of CPR and that is unlikely to be to perfection.

I have trained on a computerised resuscitation Manikin that measures rate and volume of breaths and the position, depth and rate of compressions performed.

We had to do this frequently and for an extended period as do ambulance personnel, both the professional and volunteer organisations. ▷

In truth, the survival rate with CPR in Cardiac arrest is about 12% outside of hospital or medical facilities and between 25% – 40 % with medical facilities. There are so many other factors involved. That said, it may still save a life so do it.

Many first responders have reproached themselves after failing to revive a casualty feeling that perhaps they could have done more or better. In truth, they did their best in what was possibly already a lost cause.

Then along came defibrillators. These miracles of modern science that can jump start a casualties heart and every home should have one.

The myth:

Defibrillators do not “start” the heart they “stop it” all very briefly, by stunning it with an electric shock.

Now the explanation.

Other than accidental stopping of the heart such as electric shock or severe impact trauma, we have what is generally collectively considered as heart attacks.

We have the M.I. or myocardial infarction (death of heart muscle) which can be caused by a blockage to the heart valves or the blood supply to the heart muscle and may be minor or major depending on where or how severe the blockage is.

A true heart attack, however, is an electrical malfunction which could stop the heart or cause it to misfire out of sequence (fibrillate). Like a misfiring car engine. The electrical impulses causing the heart muscle contractions are out of sync.

A short controlled electric shock will briefly stun the heart and “hopefully” as it fires up again it will be in proper order. Hopefully, being the operative word. There are other factors involved.

Let us consider the value of the defibrillator.

If it is an M.I. or major blockage stopping the heart ? ? ? ? ?

If it is a heart fibrillating, pulsing but out of sync then the defibrillator may set it back in proper firing order (de - fibrillate).

Which brings us to the suggestion of providing more defibrillator.

The argument for is that If they save just one life it is worth it.

Against:

How many serious medical issues have you encountered ?

Of these, how many were heart related ?

Of those heart related how many were M.I.'s, blockages to blood supply major or minor ?

How many were true heart attacks (electrical) and how many were fibrillating? ▷

Finally, how many have had adequate training to know when and how to use a defibrillator?

An instructor once told me, "if you need to stop and read the instructions, you shouldn't be using the equipment".

Not strictly true, but when time is of the essence he has a point.

Learning First Aid, even basic, is still a very worthwhile consideration.

Brian Ellis 2360



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