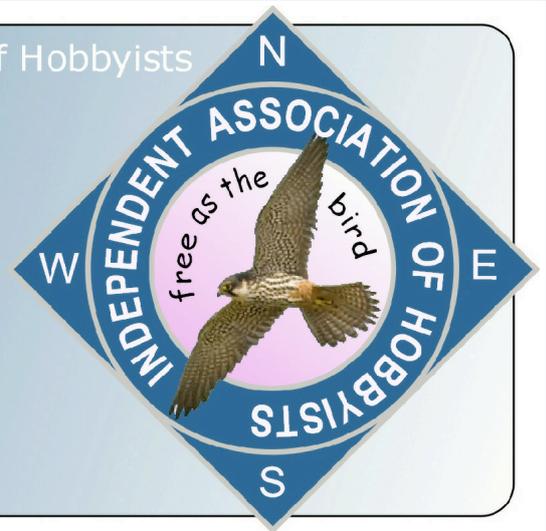


IAH - Independent Association of Hobbyists

Hobby Motorhome Owners Club

The UK's only club for Hobby Motorhome Enthusiasts



NEWSLETTER APRIL 2012

Annual General Meeting

The 2012 AGM Rally is to be held between Wednesday the 6th and Monday the 11th of June with the AGM on Saturday the 9th. To help with planning it is requested that those going let Angela Wood know as soon as possible with an email to rcandamw@btinternet.com.

The venue for the event will be Overbeck Farm, Whitton Village, Stockton on Tees. TS21 1LQ.

Your Club needs you! Several Committee appointments will become vacant at the AGM and new blood is required. If you can spare the time it is an ideal way to become involved and meet people. If prepared to help but you cannot make the AGM just let Angela know on the email address above.

Annual Subscriptions

Just in case you had forgotten it is that time of year again with Annual Subscriptions due at the beginning of April 2012. If you pay by Standing Order thank you very much (you have made the treasurer very happy) and no further action required. However if paying by other means please action soonest if you have not already done so! Sending reminders out is a time consuming and frustrating chore!

Snuggly Wuggly

Unsubstantiated rumor has it that intrepid travellers Tony and Pam and their trusted passion wagon Snuggly Wuggly may be attending the Ambleside Rally. If so this will be an ideal opportunity to find out first hand about living full time in a motorhome whilst travelling in Europe. To catch up on their most recent adventures check out their Blog at <http://snugglywuggly.wordpress.com/>

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Camper UK 28 March to 3 April

The entertainment weekend scheduled by Camper UK was cancelled because of lack of interest but six couples from the Hobby Club made the journey to North Hykeham just outside Lincoln and made use of the Rally field. Six motorhomes and a 15 acre field made for plenty of space for all. Sitting out in the evening we were able to watch a multitude of birds including Buzzards, Geese and Ducks, the latter frequenting the on site lake. On the ground Rabbits were abundant and we were able to watch Hares boxing at the end of the field. The weather was kind to us with some really warm sunshine and evenings were rounded off by spectacular sunsets. Favorite daytime pastimes appeared to be visiting Lincoln and Newark including a stop off at Brownhills at Newark to survey what motorhomes and accessories were on offer. Evening pastimes included good old fashioned group drinking and chinwag courtesy of Messrs Lawson and Charity (Many thanks from all attendees). The conversation was, to say the least, at times forthright but good humored, not necessarily politically correct and at times a bit risqué but altogether very enjoyable. A group Sunday Lunch was arranged by Christine Lawson at The Railway Inn, Thorpe On The Hill about three miles from the campsite. Whilst a totally new and unknown venue the Sunday Lunch was excellent and good value for money. They have a camping field behind, available by making use of the pub. Post visit research shows some very mixed reviews on Tripadvisor!

Motorhome Tyres

We all have them and probably take them for granted but they are key to safe travelling. Type Motorhome Tyres in a Web search engine and you will be inundated with offers and information. Some pundits suggest using appropriate light commercial tyres as they are usually cheaper than specific camping variants yet have similar specification. It is unclear why you are paying extra for the camping designation as load capacity speed rating etc often appear identical between commercial and camper tyres. When buying new tyres do you buy summer, winter or all season tyres? In some countries all season or winter tyres are a legal requirement during colder months. But the gist of it all is use the right tyre for the job, check them regularly and replace them when over 7 years old (some say 5 years but my wallet does not agree!). If you want advice check out any or all of the following sample:

<http://www.etyres.co.uk/motorhome-tyres>

http://www.motorcaravanning.com/vehicles/tyre_test.htm

<http://www.puretyre.co.uk/tyre-information/motorhome-tyres>

Tyres specifically made for motorhomes usually have the suffix CP after the size. Some C designated tyres may also be suitable. Known manufacturers of Camper tyres are:

Continental Vanco Camper

Michelin Agilis Camping

Michelin XC Camping

Pirelli Camper

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I am sure there maybe others but that is all I identified in a quick trawl of the web.

Tyre Snow Chains

I am only aware of one member who found out he needed snow chains, the hard way, when his Hobby started tobogganing downhill! He lived to tell the tale and now winters in the sun! Well done Tony F. However like winter tyres snow chains are also a legal requirement in some countries.

For information on which countries require winter tyres or snow chains see any or all of the following:

http://www.theaa.com/motoring_advice/overseas/snow-chains-winter-tyres.html

<http://www.blackcircles.com/tyres/winter-tyres/laws-and-legislation>.

[www.ukecc.net/read_write/file/winter tyres ECCs january](http://www.ukecc.net/read_write/file/winter_tyres_ECCs_january).

Tyre Monitoring

In addition to your basic tyre you can equip your vehicle with temperature/pressure monitoring systems. Such systems have been compulsory in all new vehicles sold in the USA since 2007. Some systems only measure pressures and in their simplest form are just replacement valve caps that you can only check by visual inspection whilst the vehicle is stationary, needless to say these are the cheapest. One example is supplied at <http://tyrepressuremonitors.com> at a cost of less than £3 per wheel. Next step up the ladder is a pressure monitor with dashboard display whilst top of the range is pressure and temperature monitoring via dashboard display. Most of these systems can be retro fitted to older vehicles if required some, but not all, require tyres to be removed to fit sensors. There are numerous systems but a few follow (this is not a recommendation nor an exhaustive list).

<http://www.hella.com> (tyres off and replace valves)

<http://www.tyrepal.co.uk> (no need to remove tyres, sensors in valve caps) 6 wheel system £250 ish.

<http://www.tyresave.co.uk/> (type of fitment NK) 6 wheel system £325.

<http://tpmsuk.com> (tyres on or off to fit sensors dependent upon model) prices NK.

<http://www.tyron.co.uk/> also offer tyre monitoring.

Tyre Retainers

Aside from tyre monitoring one can also consider Tyron see <http://www.tyron.co.uk/>. Tyron is a patented lightweight well-filler band that converts a standard steel or alloy wheel into a safety wheel. When fitted, it will significantly improve the performance and safety of any wheel or tyre in the event of deflation. At speed it assists the driver in maintaining steering, cornering, braking and traction control. It provides a short run-flat capability so you can choose a safe place to stop and change the wheel. Six Tyron bands will set you back around £420 including fitting. Offer to be had if fitting tyre monitoring and tyre bands at same time.

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Diesel Particulate Filters

Diesel Particulate filters (DPF) catch bits of soot in the exhaust. They are fitted to many modern diesel cars and are expensive to replace. When a diesel car fitted with a DPF is used for regular short journeys only there is a tendency for the DPF to clog and fail. The AA do not recommend a diesel with DPF for short journeys see - http://www.theaa.com/motoring_advice/fuels-and-environment/diesel-particulate-filters.html

As with any filter they have to be emptied/cleaned regularly to maintain performance. For a DPF this process is called 'regeneration' – the collected soot is burnt off at high temperature to leave only a tiny ash residue. Regeneration is usually an automatic process that takes place on longer journeys at reasonable speeds. However regeneration does not always clear the problem possibly necessitating DPF replacement. If replaced and the same driving style is maintained the new DPF is also likely to fail in time.

One alternative now being offered is to remove the DPF and reprogram the ECU to remove the fault codes. This is not necessarily very green but is claimed to be entirely legal. One of many companies offering this service is <http://www.dpf-delete.co.uk/>.

New Laws in France

For those planning a venture into France in the coming months you should be aware of changes to French laws that affect **you!**

Safety/Speed Cameras. On 3 January 2012 the French government issued a new law that effectively bans all systems that are able to provide warnings of safety/speed cameras. This law includes all sat nav based systems. With immediate effect it has become illegal for anyone travelling in France to have any speed camera warnings on any device across the entire territory of France. Garmin offer advice at <http://www.garmin.com/uk/extras-camera-alerts/#france> and Tom Tom at http://uk.support.tomtom.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/5560. Failure to comply with the law can result in a €1500 fine.

Breathalysers. Strange as it may seem for the nation that allegedly likes a tittle with their meal France has strict drink driving laws, blood alcohol levels being lower than in the UK (0.5 mg/ml rather than 0.8). Over the limit and you could face punishment including imprisonment. **From July 1st 2012 it is compulsory to carry an NF approved breathalyser kit in the car.** The idea is that you self test with a breathalyser before driving after drinking alcohol eg possibly the morning after! Therefore at least two kits per car are advised. Single use breathalyser's are available from various sources and are around £2.50 each with discount for multiples. Digital reusable models are available but cost considerably more. Do ensure whatever you buy it is NF approved which means it has been listed in the "Official Journal of the French Republic". If it is not listed, it won't be accepted by the French Gendarme and you risk being fined anyway. 15 euro fines for non-compliance will be levied from November 1st 2012.

High Viz. Do you tow or carry a motorcycle? If yes be aware that motorcyclists in France will be forced to wear high visibility clothing from January 2013, following a change in French road traffic law. An amendment to 'Le Code de la Route', the French version of the Highway Code, will make it compulsory for riders of bikes over 125cc to wear a reflective item of clothing. The rule comes into force on 1 January 2013. The reflective area must be on the upper body and cover at least 150cm². The requirement will apply to riders and pillions, including foreigners travelling in France. Failure to comply with the new regulation could lead to a fine of €68.

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Avoid the Boredom

I am sure that some readers (ladies in particular) will find the technical slant to the content of this Newsletter somewhat boring! With approaching 80 members somebody must have some interesting stories to tell, places to recommend or information they would like to share. Input does not need to be a test of grammar or English send to me a I will gladly edit for your approval - blame the errors on me! Accompanying pictures always welcome.

Some Forthcoming Shows (to keep abreast of events and ensure accuracy please check the Internet before travelling):

National Motorhome Show, East of England Showground 27 - 29 April

Southern Motorcaravan Show, Newbury Showground 18 - 20 May

Mid Summer Great Escape, Kelmarsh Hall Northampton 15 - 17 June

The Motorhome Show, Stratford Racecourse 22- 24 June

UK Motorhome & caravan Summer Fair 30 June - 1 July

Northern Motorhome Show 13 - 15 July

Hobby Websites

Hobby Germany <http://www.hobby-caravan.de/en/>

Hobby UK <http://www.hobbycaravansuk.co.uk/> It would seem the Hobby UK website is being updated/ revised watch this space.

Stockton-on-Tees - Tourist Information

History

Stockton-on-Tees is an ancient settlement, founded by the Anglo-Saxons, developed on high ground close to the northern bank of the River Tees. Stockton was located in a rich agricultural area and in medieval times it developed as a prosperous market town. The town's impressive High Street is said to be the widest in the country. At its centre is stands the picturesque Town Hall dating from 1735.

Stockton once had a Norman castle, owned by the Prince Bishops of Durham, but this was destroyed on the orders of Oliver Cromwell after the Civil War. Today its site is marked by a shopping centre called the Castlegate Centre. By the 17th century Stockton had become the main port on the River Tees and in the early-19th century cuts were made in the course of the winding river to create a more efficient route out to sea.

In the 19th century chemical and steel industries were established in Stockton, along with ship-repairing. The town also became famous for its association with the Stockton and Darlington Railway. In 1825 the world's first steam hauled passenger train ran on this railway line. Stockton boasts the oldest railway station building in the world.

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There are also some fine Georgian buildings in the town, including the world's oldest Georgian theatre, dating from 1766. In recent years the creation of the Tees Barrage has produced a deep, clean waterway and helped upstream Tees become an impressive international water sports destination.

What to see - Stockton-on-Tees

HMS Bark Endeavour Castlegate Quay, Riverside, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 3BB approximately 7 miles from Rally Site. Alongside Castlegate Quay is a full-sized replica of the HMS Bark Endeavour, the ship Captain James Cook (1728 - 1779) made his "First Voyage of Discovery" to Tahiti to observe the 'Transit of Venus' and then to map the coast of New Zealand, [HMS Bark Endeavour information](#)

Preston Hall Museum & Country Park Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 3RH approximately 7 miles from Rally Site. Preston Hall, a substantial country house dating from 1825, a museum of social history. Period rooms dating from 1880s to the 1960s, toys, armour and art. A highlight is the world-famous painting "The Dice Players" by George de le Tour. [Preston Hall Museum information](#)

Hardwick Hall Country Park Sedgefield, Stockton-on-Tees TS21 2EH approximately 7 miles from Rally Site. Off the A177 Durham - Stockton road, Hardwick Halls outstanding landscaped garden is unaltered since the 1750s, there has been a house here since medieval times but the present 18th century building, now a hotel, was built by John Burdon. [Hardwick Hall Country Park information](#)

For details of more parks and information see <http://www.stockton.gov.uk/citizenservices/environment/parksandopen/parksopenspace/>

Tees Barrage, Stockton-on-Tees - Postcode TS18 1LD approximately 6 miles from Rally Site. Completed in 1995, the Tees Barrage has four massive flood gates, operated by hydraulic pistons, that maintain levels upstream. The channel has allowed the creation of a new River Tees Water Sports Centre. [Tees Barrage information](#)

Saltholme Nature Reserve - Postcode TS2 1TU approximately 12 miles from Rally Site. RSPB site big skies, fantastic wildlife and a friendly welcome in the heart of Teesside.

Infinity Bridge - Postcode TS17 6BH approximately 9 miles from Rally Site. The newest bridge on the River Tees is a pedestrian and cycle bridge linking the North Shore development with the University of Durham's Queen's Campus and the Teesdale Business Park. There are two asymmetrical arches and the arched section is 180 metres long, (main arch 120m) and is 273 metres overall, and uses 450 tonnes of locally produced steel. It creates a reflection in the river forming the mathematical infinity symbol, hence its name. **A special feature is made of the way the bridge is lit at night.**



Additional Information - Stockton Borough Visitor Guide - <http://issuu.com/stocktoncouncil/docs/stocktonvisitorguide?viewMode=magazine>

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Forthcoming Rallies (to keep abreast of events please check the Club Website for latest information):

Lake District Rally, 21 – 28 May 2012 at Ambleside Rugby Club

Thanks to Vera and Ed we will again have use of one of the best rally sites in the country for access to the delights of the Lake District walking country but convenient for shops and pubs/restaurants of Ambleside. The site is level and well drained and Windermere Ferries depart from the jetty only 5 minutes walk away. Camping will be on the rugby field and we have the use of the clubhouse facilities, toilets and showers, plus use of the clubhouse for evening get togethers. Externally, there is fresh water and a chemical disposal point. No electric hook up.

Annual General Meeting and Whitton Rally, 6 – 11 Jun 2012 at Stockton On Tees.

Overbeck Farm, Whitton Village, Stockton-on-Tees, TS21 1LQ

AGM to be held on Saturday 9th June and rally from Wednesday 6th to Monday 11th June. Would members who will be attending please let Angela Wood (rcandamw@btinternet.com) know in order to help with the planning.

For Your Amusement (Allegedly True - thank you Ed.)

ON JULY 20, 1969, AS COMMANDER OF THE APOLLO 11 LUNAR MODULE, NEIL ARMSTRONG WAS THE FIRST PERSON TO SET FOOT ON THE MOON. HIS FIRST WORDS AFTER STEPPING ON THE MOON, "THAT'S ONE SMALL STEP FOR MAN, ONE GIANT LEAP FOR MANKIND," WERE TELEVISED TO EARTH AND HEARD BY MILLIONS.*

BUT JUST BEFORE HE RE-ENTERED THE LANDER, HE MADE THE ENIGMATIC REMARK "GOOD LUCK, MR. GORSKY". MANY PEOPLE AT NASA THOUGH IT WAS A CASUAL REMARK CONCERNING SOME RIVAL SOVIET COSMONAUT.

HOWEVER, UPON CHECKING, THERE WAS NO GORSKY IN EITHER THE RUSSIAN OR AMERICAN SPACE PROGRAMS. OVER THE YEARS MANY PEOPLE QUESTIONED ARMSTRONG AS TO WHAT THE 'GOOD LUCK, MR. GORSKY' STATEMENT MEANT, BUT ARMSTRONG ALWAYS JUST SMILED.

ON JULY 5, 1995, IN TAMPA BAY , FLORIDA WHILE ANSWERING QUESTIONS FOLLOWING A SPEECH, A REPORTER BROUGHT UP THE 26- YEAR-OLD QUESTION TO ARMSTRONG. THIS TIME HE FINALLY RESPONDED. MR. GORSKY HAD DIED, SO NEIL ARMSTRONG FELT HE COULD NOW ANSWER THE QUESTION.

IN 1938, WHEN HE WAS A KID IN A SMALL MID-WESTERN TOWN , HE WAS PLAYING BASEBALL WITH A FRIEND IN THE BACKYARD. HIS FRIEND HIT THE BALL, WHICH LANDED IN HIS NEIGHBOR'S YARD BY THEIR BEDROOM WINDOW. HIS NEIGHBORS WERE MR. AND MRS. GORSKY. AS HE LEANED DOWN TO PICK UP THE BALL, YOUNG ARMSTRONG HEARD MRS. GORSKY SHOUTING AT MR. GORSKY.

"SEX! YOU WANT SEX?! YOU'LL GET SEX WHEN THE KID NEXT DOOR WALKS ON THE MOON!"

From Colin and Jenny the Hobby bar - see <http://bondsathome.com/hobbyvan/hobbybar.jpg>