



CHAIRMANS NEWS. February 2010.

Welcome to my February newsletter. What a month we have had. Snow, ice and all the chaos that goes with it. I hope you all escaped without too many problems. Let's hope February will be a lot warmer.

NEWS of MEMBERS.

Gladly I have not received any bad news this month. However Linda Samain has spent some time in hospital with a severe chest infection. Thankfully she is now on the mend and back at home. No doubt John will be keeping a careful watch on her to make sure she rests and relaxes to speed up a full recovery. I am sure we all wish her a speedy return to health.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS and RALLIES.

Valentines Rally 12th-14th February

Geoff and Carol and the team have a lot planned for the weekend so if you have not already booked in please get your bookings to them as soon as possible. I am sure a fun time will be had by all. Don't miss it.

Charity Race Night 12th -14th March

This is Carol's first Charity event of the year. Please come out and support her and the Charity committee and get the appeal off to a racing start. Bring out the gambler in you and place your bets for a great night out at the races. Book soon to avoid disappointment. You need to book the race night and the rally separately, see the web for booking forms.

Bearsted Club Site 26th-28th March.

This will only run if we get volunteers to run the rally.

Easter at Birdham 1st-5th April.

There is a special booking form with this newsletter or on the web. This is a lovely site near Chichester and the Witterings so if you have not ventured out yet this year make a note in your diaries and book in early. Space is limited

PAST RALLIES or EVENTS.

Rally Officers Meeting.

I would like to thank all of you who braved the cold to come and collect your rally envelopes. Fortunately most of the rallies have been taken up but there are 4 that need rally officers.

AN APPEAL FOR RALLY OFFICERS FOR THE REMAINING 4 RALLIES

Bearsted Club Site 26th-28th March

Last chance to offer to run this for us as to be fair to club we will need to cancel it fairly soon if no-one will run it. This is a new club site and as rally sec last year I fought hard to get it. I will be so disappointed if we have to cancel it.

Alderstead Heath 17th-19th September

Tillingbourne School Christmas Party 3rd-5th December

This is a Prime date in the centre calendar. Please think hard. We need new blood. We cannot expect the same people to run this year on year for all our pleasure. It is after all our centre get together before Christmas where you can wish your friends a Happy Christmas and exchange cards etc. It would be such a shame to lose this event.

New Year Holy Trinity School 31st December-2nd January

Another great time to celebrate with friends. It was a huge success last year with an invite to West Sussex who want to come again. I am sure if we cannot get a team to run this we will lose it to West Sussex and never get it back. Please don't let this happen. Your committee cannot run everything. Please see if you can help. To run any of the above contact Ken on 01293 784727.

Following the issue of our new handbook I have had a few people taking issue with the colour of it.

Let me explain.

Just as the book was due to go to print our usual printer informed us he was putting up the price by 4 times. The committee felt this was a hike too far, so we set about finding an alternative. One was found and though still more than last year a significant amount less than the old printer's new price. We then found 3 advertisers to offset some of the cost. Geoff worked very hard to coordinate our book to the new printer's requirements. They had been given a blue book to copy. The first we knew of the green book was when we opened the boxes. This was just before Christmas and far too late to do anything about it. We would have incurred costs I am sure, so we decided we had to go along with it this year.

Anyone who really knows me will know my least favorite colour is green but so be it. I am sorry if it has offended some of you. We all do our best voluntarily and sometimes things do not go to plan, so we take note and move on.

If there is anything you want to run past me my ears are always open.

STOP PRESS.

18th-20th June Invite to West Sussex HOG ROAST rally.

Booking forms can be obtained from Ken. If you want to go to this rally and book the Hog roast please book soon. We are told this is very popular with West Sx members and gets full very quickly. Avoid disappointment and book as soon as you can.

20th March S.E. Region Open Forum Gatwick Manor Hotel.

There are 120 tickets available for this event (Free). If you would like to go to this please contact me as soon as possible. There will be several speakers from the caravan club to answer all your queries. Take the opportunity while you can.

It has come to my notice of a problem that may affect your driving licences.

If you have to renew your driving licence, please check it carefully on its return. It seems a lot of people have had entitlements removed in error. Take a photo copy before you send it off so you can prove your entitlements. This can affect B+E especially (car + trailer). Don't lose your ability to tow.

APPEAL FOR CENTRE SECRETARY.

Teresa has done a sterling job for us for several years now but her daytime job is getting more and more demanding. She feels therefore she will be unable to continue as centre secretary after the next AGM. I am therefore asking if there is anyone out there willing to take on the task. We cannot run without a secretary so please give this appeal serious consideration.

The following article has been sent to me by Brian & Patricia Hill take heed.

ROBBERY ON A CAMPSITE IN FRANCE.

We had never believed it possible to be robbed while asleep in a caravan, well it has happened to us! Fortunately we were at the end of our holiday staying at the municipal site at Wimereux near Bologne. I must admit we went to bed after a large meal with too much alcohol, so would have slept well. The first we knew was when I got up to make coffee and Patricia went to the bathroom and discovered her laptop missing, and the window wide open. I was fully awake now and was noticing that cupboard doors were open and other things were wrong such as my trousers were missing, which contained my phone, wallet (which I had just filled from the safe and contained £200 + cards) and car keys, also Patricia's keys and watch. In a panic now I opened the door but the car was there! However examination showed a camera was missing together with my tool box, a new waterproof jacket and worst of all, the detachable tow ball. So there we were no wallet, no keys, and no means of towing the caravan. Time for that coffee I think. From this point things began to get better. The thieves had not got Patricia's handbag so we had her phone, her purse with cards (on a different joint account to mine so would not be cancelled when mine were) nor the passports, a closer examination of the car produced both sets of keys left on the back seat so we had funds and transport. Firstly phone B/card being in a state of shock this was difficult as the lady had quite a strong accent and I could not always understand her or remember the answers to the security questions, it did not help that there were different questions for different cards.

Then to the site office. As we arrived there was not 1, not 2, but 4 Police cars! 4 other vans had been done. Return with 3 officers, one a fingerprint man, who proceeded to make a mess with his black powder of the window surround with no result. I suspect this was more for show than anything. Then off to the police station to make a formal statement. The police officer a brigadier no less, was charming but spoke less English than Patricia's French and surprisingly for a major tourist area no dictionary. Fortunately Patricia had her pocket one. We also learned that this was the 8th time the site had been broken into this year!!

Back to the site and on to MAYDAY. They were charming and helpful but told me most of what had been stolen was not covered but would arrange for a tow ball to be sent from England as Witter have no representation in France.

Lying in bed that night I thought that what would French thieves want with a tow ball, so the next morning we searched the field behind the site from where the thieves had entered and discovered it. I was disappointed that the police had not already done so and I also discovered where the thieves had cut the wire and entered the site. This was still open. A month after returning home my wallet complete with cards was returned to me by the police.

We now unless in a very secure site sleep with the alarm on. The detector is under the bed so will pick up movement but I do have to remember to turn it off when we get up. Finally we are grateful that we were not hurt and neither the car nor caravan damaged. So how much did we lose and recover from insurance? From the caravan approx. £800 The car £400. We claimed for £395 and received £239

Why the difference? Red Pennant does not cover valuables, these are under house insurance and the excess on this did not justify a claim. Items in the car under car insurance and excess exceeded the claim, and £40 excess on Red pennant. They also require proof of purchase and value, it was lucky that I kept the currency receipt. Brian and Patricia.

P.S People have asked if we were gassed and our answer is almost certainly not, if we were unconscious they would have been able to climb on the bed and reach Patricia's handbag.

Well that is quite a story and one we should all head if we are in foreign lands. If anyone has any snippets that would benefit us all I will gladly include in the newsletter.

That's all for this month. I look forward to catching up with you all on a rally soon.

Regards,

Ann