



# Winter 2017



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## **INTRO - THOUGHTS FROM THE LAPTOP!**

As I write this intro for my second Newsletter we are all "recovering" from the "Beast from the East" and, although I love snow and the freshness it brings, I have to admit that I'm glad to see the back of it and the freezing conditions that came with it!

So, welcome to the Quarter 4 edition of the AAOC's Newsletter - a time when we can look back on 2017 and look forward to 2018.

I feel that I must start be remembering the very sad loss of two of our club's great characters

April 2017 saw the loss of Stan (Chilton) - Stan and Sylvia were members of the AAOC for a number of years until they sold their caravan a few years ago. I am sure everyone has their own memories of Stan ... probably with his coat and tie on enjoying his time on the rally field - a truly gentle man.



*Stan, without his coat!!*



January 2018 saw the loss of our Chairman, Paul (Everett) following a long, brave fight against illness. Paul had been a member of the club's committee as Equipment Officer and more recently as Chairman - Paul gave his time and energy selflessly in leading all of us and our club.

Both will be greatly missed and our thoughts are with Sylvia and Liz and their families.



In other ways last year was another challenging year for the club, with the membership numbers settling at around the mid-thirties point, and attendance at the AGM and New Year Rally down on previous years. But we're still here and we're holding our own financially.

The committee continue to look at ways to reduce costs and improve the membership numbers and the attendance at rallies - your committee would welcome your views on any initiatives that could be considered going forward.

The New Year will undoubtedly bring more challenges for the club but we must remember why we rally and why we are members of the AAOCC.....

- it's for

*the fun, and*

*friendship of meeting like minded souls,*

*in the middle of farm fields,*

*in all kinds of weather*

***- isn't it????***



## **RALLY REPORTS**

### **New Year Rally, Robin Hood Activity Centre - December 2017**

After a busy few days spending Christmas with the family and Matt being at work, we set off from storage giving us plenty of time to arrive by the time the New Year Rally was to open allowing for a few hold ups as usual on the M1 ... guess what we sailed through, had the best run ever to the Scout Camp. We even pulled over in a layby to kill some time. We still arrived first and before the opening time of the rally. We were warmly welcomed and quickly set up in our usual place. Mince pies and a nice cuppa were very welcome.

The numbers were down this year, with a few cancellations fairly last minute for a variety of reasons. You were all missed!

The marshalling team did us proud over the rally, keeping us entertained and well fed. We were concerned that they were one down but Gary arrived in plenty of time for New Year's Eve, this working malarkey gets in the way of our caravanning doesn't it???



Once again the panto that Christine had arranged was a great success this year with 3D glasses. We decided not to go this year and popped out to a couple of pet shops that sold Leopard Gecko's. As if by luck the last shop wasn't far from the East Midlands Designer Outlet ... It would have been rude not to have paid a visit!

We welcomed the New Year in in true AAOCC style, with a Tramps theme including newspaper tablecloths. We all felt sorry for the poor boy begging for chocolate at the door. We had fabulous games which kept us all entertained and giggling before we danced out 2017 and welcomed in 2018.



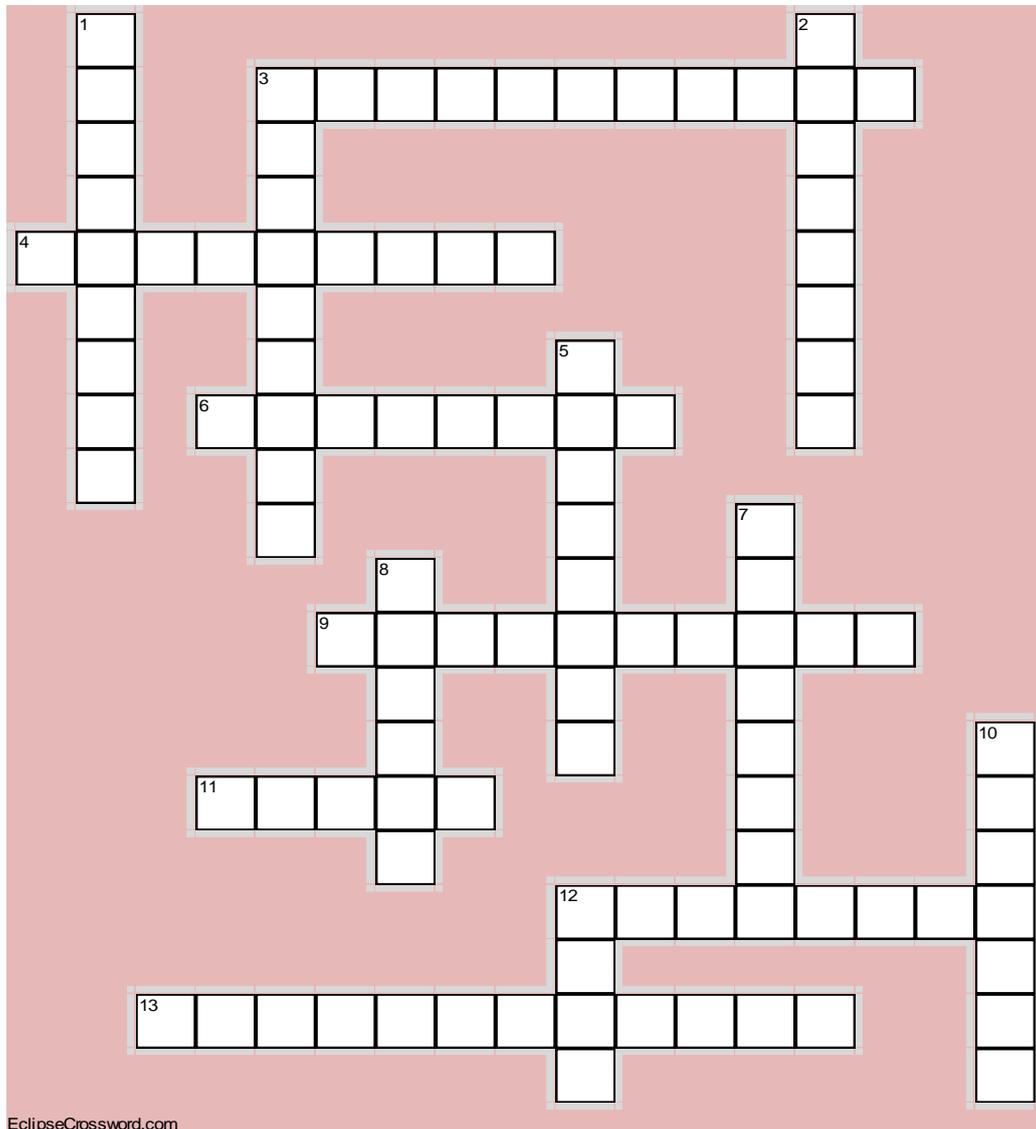
A big thank you to the team Gary, Sandy, Steve, Val, Mick, Christine, Jack and Harry we had a great time and I am sure everyone else did too.

*Gaynor, Matthew and Calvin*



## **CROSSWORD?? - JUST FOR FUN!!**

**Clue:** You should get them all right with the Rally Handbook!



EclipseCrossword.com

### **Across**

3. Not going here this time? (11)
4. Plenty of "activities" here. (5-4)
6. A track on a Northern hill? (5-3)
9. River gate near York. (6-4)
11. A great pace to watch the horse. (5)
12. A pub near Stockton. (5-3)
13. Time for brussel sprouts? (9-3)

### **Down**

1. A site in the smallest county in England (6-3)
2. The monarch's wooden pub? (5-3)
3. The regular season opener? (9)
5. Did a lady live here? (8)
7. At the side of Ilkley? (8)
8. Ken of "the street" would be happy here? (6)
10. You can't always find the same footwear? (7)
12. Is this farm site in Lancashire? (4)



## **TECHIE STUFF: BATTERY CARE**

*This section is written as a guide only - I'm no expert and I am willing to be corrected if any of the statements are wrong or misleading but all endeavours have been made to confirm the accuracy of the information. While I accept that most members will already know this information it sometimes pays to be reminded as it is all too simple to overlook some of these issues.*

A battery will not last forever and its life will depend on how well it is maintained and how often used.

### **Charging sealed batteries**



Increasingly, caravan manufacturers are fitting 'maintenance free' or 'sealed for life', These have cells that have no filler caps, and which are not intended to be topped up with water. These batteries must not be overcharged since this will reduce the level of the electrolyte in the cells, which cannot be replenished.

Sealed batteries should be charged with an 'automatic' or 'voltage-controlled' battery charger, which can be bought from most battery specialists, including Halfords. After several cycles of voltage-controlled charging and resting, the battery is fully charged.

### **Maintaining and charging older batteries**

At least annually, thoroughly clean the battery tray, terminals and connectors and smear the latter with petroleum jelly. Unless 'sealed for life', remove the battery vent plugs or strips and shine a torch into each cell to check the electrolyte level, which should cover the plates completely. If the plates are exposed, top up with distilled and de-ionised water; never use tap water or meltwater from a 'fridge. Check with the battery manufacturer's literature regarding how much water to add.



Check the battery's state of charge on the consumer unit – usually located above or alongside the main door.

If the battery is not 100 per cent charged, it should be re-charged at a lower rate for a longer period rather than at a high rate for a shorter time. Do not charge at more than one tenth of the battery's capacity e.g. 6 Amp for a 60 Ah battery.



When the battery is thought to be fully charged, disconnect the charger mains lead. Re-check the electrolyte level then leave the battery for at least four hours before checking its state of charge again. If necessary, re-connect the charger (charger mains lead last) and continue re-charging. A 75 per cent charged battery may only take a few hours to charge fully, whereas a fully discharged battery may take more than 24 hours. It is better to do this in sessions up to 12-hours rather than all at once.

If the battery was left discharged and had been run down for a week or so, it is likely that it has become sulphated. This means that a permanent change has taken place which may render the battery totally useless.

Always re-charge a battery after use and if the caravan is to be stored for more than one month, ensure the battery is removed and stored in a fully charged condition in a cool, dry place. Check every two months and re-charge if necessary to ensure long and trouble-free battery life. A battery left below 12.4 V will



deteriorate quickly and will not be able to be recharged to its original capacity. If charging the battery when removed from the caravan, ensure that the premises are well ventilated.

### **Continuous charging**

Some caravanners like to leave the leisure battery in situ and allow it to be continuously charged during winter. Ask the caravan and/or battery manufacturer first if this is appropriate, and always check the battery every month or so. Most batteries like at least a short rest period (say 24 hours) from charging for best performance.

### **Self-discharge**

Over time, a battery will lose its charge, even with no equipment attached. Modern batteries lose 0.1 to 0.2 per cent of their charge per day at room temperature, even when new - hence a newly purchased battery may not be fully charged. As batteries age or temperature increases, the self-discharge rate also increases.

### **Adding a second battery**

Some owners find that they need additional battery capacity and choose to fit a second leisure battery. If considering this, make sure that there is an appropriate space for it (secure fixings to restrain the battery, ventilated to the outside, and sealed from the habitation area). Check also that you have enough payload capacity to cope with the additional weight.

A second battery, if charged up before going away, will maintain a good state of charge for some weeks, and hence can remain disconnected as a reserve. Just swap it with the main battery once that one runs low. An alternative would be to wire up a manual changeover switch to allow either battery (but not both at once) to be in circuit.

It is harder to set up a system where two batteries are continuously in circuit, and are both charged (by mains hook-up or vehicle alternator). In principle, two identical batteries connected in parallel would work this way, but problems could arise if there is any difference in the state of charge or the charge capacity of the batteries. Any difference could result in one battery reaching full charge before the other, and then being overcharged (with a consequent risk of damage or overheating) as the charger continues to charge the second battery.



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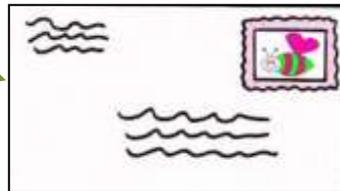
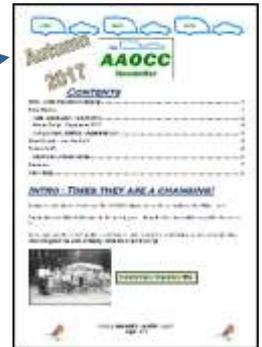
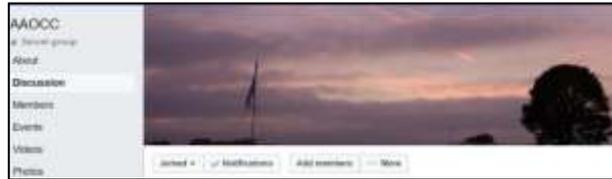
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## **AND FINALLY:**

Remember that there are a number of ways that we communicate within the club:

- The Newsletter!!!!
- The Club's Facebook Page
- The Website
- By Post



Don't be afraid to communicate - after all, it is your club!!!

Thank you for your continued support.

*Peter Cook*

Publicity Officer

## **POSTSCRIPT:**

If anyone has any items that they are wanting to sell, or are looking for help on any club related issue please contact the Newsletter and we'll do our very best to help.