

# The Rallier

## West Warwickshire Centre Newsletter

January 2005

[www.westwarwickshirecentre.co.uk](http://www.westwarwickshirecentre.co.uk)

Issue 1/2005

### **Editor**

It's New Year's day and having recovered from last night spent with two of my children and their families and friends, I wondered what to do today. I know I've got to get on with the dreaded end of year accounts for the Club, but I haven't had the last statement from the Bank yet, so I may as well wait for that so that I can see whether I've made any enormous errors in the overall total before I start worrying about the nitty-gritty. So, I decided I'd better get on with this Newsletter, so that I can get it printed ready to go out with the Rally Books as soon as they are available.

It's not going to be a very thick one, I'm afraid, because I have had very few contributions this time. However, I'll try to pad it out with my usual ramblings – after all you might need some wrapping paper for something, now that you've got rid of all the Christmas paper that had filled up the waste paper baskets!

I'm looking forward to the new season and I'm determined to get out as much as possible this year – mind you, I've got to get out a fair bit – somehow I found I'd volunteered to run or co-steward five rallies. Don't be surprised to get some shameless promotion of my own rallies in this and future editions of the Newsletter – there's no point in running rallies unless you get a reasonable attendance.

There are plenty of Social events in the meantime to keep you interested. I'm planning to go to the Skittles evening and supper at the Woodbourne Club on 29<sup>th</sup>. January, with a number of my family and friends and then the Fish & Chip Supper and Social on 19<sup>th</sup>. February at St. Peter's School in Solihull. I am hoping to take my van out to that one, it's a good opportunity to make sure everything is still working properly before the season starts in earnest. (If you do want to go on this rally, book early, because it coincides with the Caravan Show at the NEC and we are likely to get quite a lot of visitors)

I don't think I will be going to the Dinner dance at Drayton Manor on 12<sup>th</sup>. February, because it is not really the sort of event you can go to on your own. It is a pity, because Kay and I really enjoyed the last three or four years; it has always been a great weekend.

If you want to attend any of the above three events, please contact our Social Secretary, Margaret Wiltshire on 0121 430 4427 and she will be able to give you more details. Please make an effort to attend as many of these as you can, they are always enjoyable, especially if there are plenty of people there. You can come to the Social at St. Peter's School even if you don't want to get the van out for the weekend.

For the more energetic amongst us, there will be another ramble organised by Dave Varley and Vic Cotton, on 6<sup>th</sup>. February. More details later in the Rallier, but just to say that last year's event was a great success according to all those who went and I am quite certain this year will be just as good. It's a great opportunity to get out in the fresh air with friends and enjoy the countryside, with the promise of a pleasant end to the day at a local hostelry, hopefully with a nice log fire and the usual trimmings.

There is no point in going through rallies at this point, as you should have the Rally Book in front of you by now but I will just mention Burton Hill Farm on 1<sup>st</sup>. April (see – I told you I was shameless!) I don't quite know what we will be doing yet, but as it coincides with April Fools day and a birthday happens around the same time, I guess it's going to end up as sort of party at some stage over the weekend. The wine stocks are building up again quite nicely, so I can promise a warm welcome to anyone who comes out.

I won't go any further into the season, because I will try to get another Rallier out for the Easter Rally at Furlong Farm. Just one thing though, please make an effort to book in for rallies in reasonable time. Last year we cancelled rallies because we had such low bookings when we got to just a week before the event, only to find out that a number of people were planning to come, but just had not bothered to tell the stewards. Please try to get your bookings in at least a week in advance so that this doesn't happen again; it also makes it so much easier for the Stewards to plan a good weekend for you if they have a good idea of attendance in advance.

Well, that's about all from me for the moment, so I will wish you all a very happy New Year and look forward to seeing plenty of you out at rallies over

the next few months. Now I'm off to see if I can get rid of a few of the surplus calories which seem to have been floating around over Christmas. I can't understand why, but most of them seem to have taken roost around my waist and are refusing to allow most of my trousers to fasten up properly. Never mind, a few energetic sessions trying to get my van on and off the drive with cars parked all the way along both sides of the road should burn off a few over the next weeks and then there is always the struggle to get up the awning which always seems to get me hot and bothered! See you soon,

*Neil Taylor.*

## **Charity News.**

As most of you know, we are continuing to raise money for your nominated Charity, Macmillan Nurses. So far we have paid £95 into the Bank, mainly through the sales of books that are running throughout the season, but it also included a useful contribution from the Craft Stall which Margaret organised at the Henley High School rally. Please continue to support the Book sales, either by providing or buying books and with any other fund raising ideas you may have. It is our intention to carry on collecting for Macmillan throughout this season, but we may ask you to choose another charity at the AGM that we can support for the next couple of years.

I ought to make special mention of the efforts of one of our younger members, Nicola Wiltshire. She spent along time making cakes and biscuits for sale in aid of Children in Need at Henley. She raised the magnificent sum of £12.12 and deserves all our congratulations. They were pretty good too; especially the ginger bread men!

At the Easter rally, Peter and Janet Houghton want to run a cake stall to raise money for Macmillan Nurses. They would welcome donations (and buyers) to raise plenty over this weekend.

One final extra bit of information, to give you plenty of time to save! At the Charity Rally in Feckenham in early August, Alan Clarke, husband of our Chairlady, Jane, (Incidentally, I don't know if this is the politically correct term of address, but I refuse to refer to Jane as a Chair! – Ed.) has volunteered to have his legs waxed for charity. I don't quite know how it is going to work,

but I believe it is going to be on the basis that the more money is pledged, the higher up the legs the waxing will go. Personally, I am not normally of a sadistic nature, but this could be too good to miss. I am saving now and intend to go for the throat – literally! I just hope for his sake his chest and other bits are not as hairy as his legs!!

Jane has asked me to remind you that there will be various money raising events taking place over this weekend and that donations such as raffle and tombola prizes would be welcomed at any time over the intervening period.

## **Centre News.**

Many thanks to all those who took the rallies for 2005.

There are still 2 rallies requiring stewards :-

Brook Leys, Bidford, 15 17<sup>th</sup>. April

Yew Tree Farm, Bewdley 13 – 15<sup>th</sup>. May.

If anyone is interested in taking them on, please contact your new Rally Secretary, Dave Varley. His details have changed since his move, so here are the latest :-

Telephone: 01788 819083

E-Mail :[rally-sec@westwarwickshirecentre.co.uk](mailto:rally-sec@westwarwickshirecentre.co.uk)

The Central Region of the Club is holding another Members' Question Time at the Sketchley Grange Hotel in Hinckley. It is open to all club members living in the area but only by ticket. There is an application form on page 8 of the January issue of the Club magazine.

Other news which you may be interested in is that the 2007 National will be taking place at Blenheim Palace. It will be the Centenary Rally and it is hoped to include an exhibition on the history of caravanning. The Club would be interested to receive any old photos or information which members might have that would be suitable for inclusion in this.



## Winter Ramble Information

Please join us for our annual winter ramble. This year our walk is in the Warwick & Hatton area and takes us mostly along canal towpaths and riverside tracks (generally easy going). Distance about 7 miles. Naturally, our chosen route includes a pub stop (Cape of Good Hope), where lunch is also available.

Meet at the Warwick Racecourse carpark at 10.30am on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2005. Remember to bring boots and a waterproof coat.

If you need any more information, contact either Vic Cotton (02476 640770) or Dave Varley (01788 819083).

Go on, the exercise will do you good! We hope to see you there!

## Stoke Bruerne August Bank Holiday

Arrived Friday Lunchtime. Just in time to spend all afternoon helping to erect the Centres Gazebo / Pavilion. Minimum of eight willing volunteers required and a beer break. It was all worth while as it was put to good use during the rally with a Cheese and Wine party, a Noggin and Natter, Tea and Coffee and for Flag during a very heavy rain shower.

There was plenty to do around the area; loads of good walks, watching the boats go through the locks on the adjacent canal, the canal museum and a pup within walking distance. What more could you wish for. Thanks go to the Stewards Margaret & Roy Wiltshire and Eileen & Phillip Howitt for an enjoyable rally.

Ps. The only downside of this rally is the burrowing rabbits that seemed to target Sandra & John Burdens pitch. This resulted in a 15° tilt of their van and several re-sittings

*Gail & Mark*

## Christmas Social

The Family Christmas Social took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> December at Bentley Heath. When we arrived it was already in full swing with a packed hall. Uncle Mick

had the children of all ages entertained for the whole evening with some hilarious antics and great tricks, with his son-in-law providing some great music too. I don't think I will ever forget the sight of Ray Roberts doing the conga in a bright pink afro wig! I recall some interesting animals on Old MacDonald's farm too. Fraser was amazed when Uncle Mick produced red lights from behind his ears. I was too, I'm sure I had washed behind them before we came out!!

There was plenty of food, many thanks to all those who prepared it, it was great. I don't think there were many who didn't go back for more at least once.

Father Christmas paid a flying visit with one of his helpers. We were a little concerned that said elf looked just a bit too happy to be wearing tights but don't worry Dave, I'm sure you can get treatment for it on the National Elf Service! The children thoroughly enjoyed this visit and they all received great presents (thanks Gail and Mark).

We really enjoyed the evening, a great night out and a lovely way to round off the year. We shall definitely be there again next year!

*Samantha Terry*



## Recipe Section

### Christmas Whisky Cake

- 1 cup butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 6 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup Bourbon Whisky
- 1 pound chopped pecans
- 3 cups white raisins or candied fruit
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 large bottle of Bourbon!

First sample the whisky to check for quality. Assemble all of the ingredients. Check the whisky again. To be sure it is of the highest

quality, pour one level cup and drink. Repeat this step.

Turn on the electric mixer and beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add one teaspoon of sugar and cream until beat. Make sure the whisky is still OK..... try another cup.

Turn off the mixer. Beat six eggs and add to the bowl then chunk in the cup of dried fruit. Mix on the tuner. Throw in two quarts of flour. Gradually pour in the milk. Add 2 dried anything. If the fried fruit gets stuck in the beaters, pry it loose with a drawscraper. Sample the whisky and check it again for consistency.

Next, sift two cups of salt, or something. Who cares?? Check the whisky again. Now sift the nutmeg and strain your nuts. Add one table. And the spoon. Of whiskey. Or something. Whatever you find left.

Grease the oven. Turn the crake pan to 350 degrees. Don't forget to beat off the turner. Pour the oven into the batter. Throw the bowl out of the window. Lick the batter off the floor.

Bake 300 minutes at 50 degrees. Finish the blobble of wishy and flow to bed.

And now for a more serious contribution from Mark Wiltshire

### Strawberry Liqueur

5 lb. strawberries

1 lb. Caster Sugar.

75 cl.Vodka.

Put the fruit in a bowl and sprinkle over the sugar. Mash the mixture to a pulp. Cover and leave to stand overnight. Next day, pack the mashed strawberries into a sterilised jar. Cover with the Vodka and seal tightly. Store in a cool, dark place for 5 days, shaking the jar daily. When ready, strain the liquid through coffee filter papers or a muslin sieve and place in bottles. Seal tightly and leave for a few weeks to mature before drinking.

Sounds good to me – and think how many calories you could burn off, crawling around one of the PYO Farms, collecting the fruit! Ed.



## **Members' Adverts.**

Harrison Porch Awning, good size, Grey and Burgundy

Very good condition - £175 o.n.o.

If interested and would like to try on your caravan, contact John Burden on 0121 706 7650.

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Eurovent awning to fit Award Brightstar or similar van (awning length 8.75 metre) Excellent condition, 4 zip out panels, polyester 10 cate fabric and no tears or rips. Best offer over £100 secures, available to borrow on trial if required.

Old Porch Awning, quite serviceable but will not fit a very high van - £10 or best offer.

Also Alko 2000 stabiliser hitch, complete with new friction pads. Easy to fit and adjust on any van with two horizontal fixing points in the draw bar for the hitch. £75.

Contact: for all three of the above items

Neil Taylor, 0121 707 6981 or 07721 426001 or e-mail [neil.kay@virgin.net](mailto:neil.kay@virgin.net)

CARAVAN SOLAR PANEL, 14 watt with carrying bag.

As new condition – Cost £140, accept £95 o.n.o.

Tel : 07958 599133(Viv or Malc Griffin)

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Isabella Porch Awning, 628 Green with Fibreglass Poles. Includes curtains and ground sheet.

Enquiries and offers to Geoff Canning on :- 747 6525.

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Isabella Sun Canopy, 2 years old. Size 875cms. Suits Swift Challenger 460 or similar. Light weight poles. Excellent condition - £225.

Contact Derek Chalmers on 07771 917627.

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## **Wanted.**

A young local family are looking for a 4-berth van in good condition for around £4000. If you know of one or have one you are preparing to sell, please contact the Editor. (details in the advert. section.)

## **Page Filler**

### **The Silent Treatment.**

A man and his wife were having some problems at home and were giving each other the silent treatment. Suddenly the man realised that the next day he would need his wife to wake him at 5.00am. for an early morning business flight. Not wanting to break the silence (and LOSE) he wrote on a piece of paper, "Please wake me at 5.00am." He left it where he knew she would find it.

The next morning, the man woke, only to discover it was 9.00am. and he had missed his flight. Furious, he was about to go and see why his wife hadn't wakened him, when he noticed a piece of paper by his bed. The paper said "It is 5.00am. WAKE UP!"

Men are not equipped for these kinds of contests.

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The following is a memo sent out by IBM to its Field Engineers about a computer peripheral problem. The author of this memo was quite genuine. The engineers rolled on the floor!

Re: Replacement of Mouse Balls.

If a mouse fails to operate or performs erratically, it may need a ball replacement. Mouse Balls are now available as FRU (Field Replacement Units) Because of the delicate nature of this procedure, replacement of Mouse Balls should only be attempted by trained personnel.

Before proceeding, determine the type of Mouse Ball by examining the underside of the mouse. Domestic balls will be larger and harder than foreign balls.

Ball removal procedures differ depending upon the manufacture of the mouse. Foreign balls can be replaced using the pop-off method.

Domestic balls are replaced using the twist off method. Mouse balls are not usually static sensitive, but excessive handling can result in

sudden discharge. Upon completion of ball replacement, the mouse may be used immediately.

It is recommended that each engineer have a pair of spare balls for maintaining optimum customer satisfaction. Any customer with a missing ball should contact the local personnel in charge of removing and replacing these necessary items. Please keep in mind that a customer without a properly working mouse is an unhappy customer.



### **A Christmas Story.**

One particular Christmas season a long time ago, Santa was getting ready for his annual trip... but there were problems everywhere.

Four of his elves were sick and the trainee elves were producing toys a lot slower, so Santa was beginning to feel the pressure of being behind schedule.

Then Mrs. Claus told him that her Mother was coming to visit. This stressed Santa even more. When he went to harness the reindeer, he found that three of them were about to give birth and two had jumped the fence and were out, heavens knows where.

When he began to load the sleigh, one of the side boards cracked and allowed the toys bags to fall off, scattering toys all over the ground. Frustrated, Santa went into the house for a hot cup of coffee with a shot of whisky. He went to the cupboard and discovered that the elves had already been at his stock and there was nothing left to drink.

Even more frustrated now, he accidentally dropped the coffee pot, which broke into a thousand pieces and soaked him in scalding liquid. He went to the broom cupboard and found that the mice had been at the broom and eaten away most of the bristles.

Just then the door-bell rang and Santa cursed his way to the door. He opened it to find a little angel with a great big Christmas Tree.

The angel said, very cheerfully, "Merry Christmas, Santa. Isn't it just a lovely day? I've got a beautiful tree for you. Isn't it just such a lovely tree? Where would you like me to stick it?"

Thus began the tradition of the little angel on top of the Christmas tree.

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Finally, two items to prove that I do not believe in too much political correctness –

### A Woman's Prayer.

Dear Lord, I pray for  
Wisdom, to understand a man,  
Love, to forgive him and  
Patience, for his moods.  
Because, Lord, if I pray for Strength,  
I'll just beat him to death.

### History repeats itself ?

It is the year 1805. After 18 years of Tory misrule, it was Paradise Regained when Blair the younger won the 1797 election for New Labour, bringing many socialist benefits for the population. However, the country is now having a bit of a problem off the Spanish coast at Trafalgar, so our intrepid Prime Minister has despatched our gallant navy, under the command of Admiral Lord Nelson, to sort it out.

"Order the signal to be sent, Hardy".

"Aye, Aye, Sir".

"Hold on, that's not what I dictated to the Signals Officer. What's the meaning of this?"

"What do you mean Sir?"

"England expects every person to do his/her duty, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious persuasion or disability. What gobbledegook is this?"

"Admiralty policy, Sir. We're an equal opportunities employer now. We had the devil's own job getting England" past the censors, lest it be considered racist".

"Gadzooks, Hardy. Hand me my pipe and tobacco."

"Sorry, sir. All naval vessels have been designated smoke-free working environments."

In that case, break open the rum ration. Let us splice the main-brace to steel the men before battle."

"The rum ration has been abolished, Admiral, because of Government policy on binge drinking."

"Good Heavens, Hardy. I suppose we had better get on with it. Full speed ahead."

"I think you'll find there's a four knot speed limit on this stretch of water."

"Dammit man, we're on the eve of the greatest sea battle in history. We must advance with all dispatch. Report from the crow's nest please."

"That won't be possible sir."

"What?"

"Health & Safety have closed the crow's nest, sir. No harness. And they say the rope ladder doesn't meet regulations. They won't let anyone up there until proper scaffolding has been erected."

"Then get me the ship's carpenter without delay."

"He's busy knocking up wheelchair access to the fo'c'sle, sir."

"Wheelchair access? I've never heard anything so absurd."

"Health & Safety again, Sir. We have to provide a barrier-free environment for the differently abled."

"Differently abled? I've only one arm and one eye and I refuse even to hear mention of the word. I didn't rise to the rank of Admiral by playing the disability card."

"With respect, sir, you did. Positive discrimination; the Royal Navy is under-represented in the areas of visual impairment and limb deficiency."

"Whatever next? Give me full sail. The salt spray beckons."

"A couple of problems there too, sir. Health & Safety won't let the crew up the rigging without crash helmets; and they don't want anyone breathing in too much salt – haven't you seen the adverts?"

"I've never heard such infamy. Break out the cannon and tell the men to stand by to engage the enemy."

"The men are a bit worried about shooting at anyone, sir."

"What? This is mutiny!"

"It's not that, sir. It's just that they are afraid of being charged with murder if they actually kill anyone. There's a couple of lawyers on board, watching everyone like hawks."

"Then how are we going to sink Frenchie and the Spanish?"

"I'll overlook 'Frenchie' sir, but actually, we're not."

"We're not?"

"No, sir. The French and the Spanish are our European partners now. According to the Common Fisheries Policy, we shouldn't even be in these waters. We could get hit with a claim for compensation."

But you must hate the French as you hate the Devil!"

"I wouldn't let the ship's diversity coordinator hear you saying that, sir. You'll be up on a disciplinary."

"You must consider every man an enemy who speaks ill of your sovereign."

"Not any more, sir. We must be inclusive in this multicultural age. Now put on your Kevlar vest. It's the rules."

Don't tell me – Health & Safety. Whatever happened to rum, sodomy and the lash?"

"As I explained, sir, rum's off the menu and there's a ban on corporal punishment."

"What about sodomy?"

"Clause 28. I believe it's to be encouraged, Sir."

"In that case.....Kiss me Hardy."

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If you want future copies of the Rallier, they will be published on the Web-site, hard copies will be distributed at rallies, or you can send me an A5 self addressed envelope and I will post you a copy.

*Neil Taylor.*