

News *headlines*

Thousands pitch up on Peak Booking Day...



AN INCREDIBLE 31,002 site bookings were made in the first hour when the Club's telephone lines and website opened for business at 9am on 7 December. And by midnight, 70,000 reservations had been made as eager members booked their breaks for 2012.

"A series of improvements has been made throughout the year to ensure

members are able to make their site bookings in a timely and user-friendly manner," said the Club's Director of Marketing, Lawrence Bate.

The Club is asking members to give as much notice as possible if they need to cancel a site booking, while email reminders have helped reduce late cancellations by 20%.

The minimum notice required for any pitch cancellation is 72 hours. Members who cancel inside 72 hours, or fail to turn up at a booked pitch, three times during 2012 will forfeit their ability to book for 14 days – any forward bookings will also be cancelled.

The Club has also asked members to give a minimum of 72 hours' notice if

they decide to leave a site early. Notice given to the site warden for an early departure within 72 hours will incur a charge of one site night.

The late cancellations and early departure policy will result in more pitches being available to more members, more of the time.

HOW TO CONTACT THE CLUB

MAIN SWITCHBOARD
01342 326944 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm)

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES AND MAGAZINE CIRCULATION
01342 318813 (calls may be recorded)

SITE BOOKING (MEMBERS ONLY)/UK CLUB SITES ADVANCE BOOKING
01342 327490

INSURANCE
Caravan 01342 336610
Car/motor caravan 0800 028 4809
Home/contents 0800 028 4815

TRAVEL SERVICE
01342 316101

BROCHURES ON CLUB SERVICES
01342 327410

TECHNICAL ADVICE
01342 336611

CLUB MAGAZINE EDITORIAL
01342 336799

CLUB MAGAZINE EMAIL
magazines@caravanclub.co.uk

FAX – ALL DEPARTMENTS
01342 410258

EMAIL – ALL OTHER DEPARTMENTS
enquiries@caravanclub.co.uk

CLUB WEBSITE
caravanclub.co.uk

... but there's still plenty of availability

IF YOU haven't made your 2012 bookings yet, there is still plenty of availability at sites across the country. Check out our Peak Booking Day myths listed below:

Myth 1: Everyone rushes to book sites on Peak Booking Day

Fact: 17,994 members made bookings on 7 December – that is less than 5% of the membership

Myth 2: Some members book every weekend throughout the year
Fact: Members made an average of 3.4 bookings each on the day

Myth 3: After Peak Booking Day there is no availability left
Fact: The total number

NOT A MEMBER?
A copy of this magazine is posted every month to all members of The Caravan Club as part of the annual subscription – currently £42. For more details of all the benefits of Club membership, call 01342 318813 or see caravanclub.co.uk



Cae Mawr (top) in Wales and Broomfield Farm (above) in Sussex are just two sites on the Club's extensive network

of site nights booked on the day was about 33 8,000 – less than 10% of overall availability

Myth 4: Many members just book weekend stays
Fact: The average booking was for 5½ nights

Myth 5: Members book lots of sites on the same weekend and then decide where to go nearer the time
Fact: The Club's system prevents members from booking more than one site on a specific date

Myth 6: The majority of sites sell out on Peak Booking Day
Fact: Only a handful of sites and dates sold out on the day – most sites, including popular locations in the New Forest, still had availability after 7 December

London's calling!

THE MOTORHOME, Caravan & Camping Show at London's ExCeL promises something for all the family – from towing tuition, cookery demonstrations and canoeing taster sessions to the chance to check out all the latest vehicles.

The show runs from 14 to 19 February, so there's still plenty of time to plan your visit.

All the big names from the world of caravan and motorhome manufacture will be exhibiting, including the likes of Adria, Auto-Trail, Bailey, Chausson, the Coachman, Elddis, Lunar,

Romahome and Swift – and many will be showing off all-new models.

Travel and tourism experts from all over Europe will be providing information on a host of holiday destinations, while visitors will have the chance to look for bargains from accessory megastores and independent specialists.

Official show partner, The Caravan Club, is offering free caravan manoeuvring/motorhome driving tuition (don't forget your licence!) – while TV chef James Martin is the star of the show in the Cookery Theatre on Thursday 16 and

Saturday 18 February. Club members can buy discounted tickets for any day of the show when booking before 13 February. The Caravan Club advance adult ticket costs £7 (standard advance adult ticket £8), while the senior (60+ years) Caravan Club advance ticket costs £6 (standard senior advance ticket £8)*. Call 0844 858 6756 or see motorhome caravan and camping.co.uk/TCC1, quoting 'TCC1'. Parking is free subject to availability.

*£1 transaction fee applies to advanced bookings



Blon Hayes

THE CARAVAN Club is sad to announce the passing of former Vice Chairman Blon Hayes on 2 December 2011, aged 93.

Blon, from Bewdley, became the first Chairman of the Worcestershire Centre in 1969 and joined Club Council a year later. He started on the Grants Committee, of which he later became Chairman, in 1975 and

joined the Executive Committee in 1977, becoming a Vice Chairman in 1985. He also served on the Sites sub-Committee.

He was presented with Honorary Life Membership at the Club's Annual Members' Meeting in 2003. At the time, Chairman Bob Black said, "Blon's dedication to ensuring the best governance of our Club for the benefit of its members has been a model for us all."

Blon's funeral was attended by members of the Executive



Committee and current Club Chairman Grenville Chamberlain. "Blon worked tirelessly as a dedicated volunteer for The Caravan Club for very many years and encouraged so many others to do the same. Although his mobility was restricted in recent years, he still attended Caravan Club events whenever possible," said Grenville.

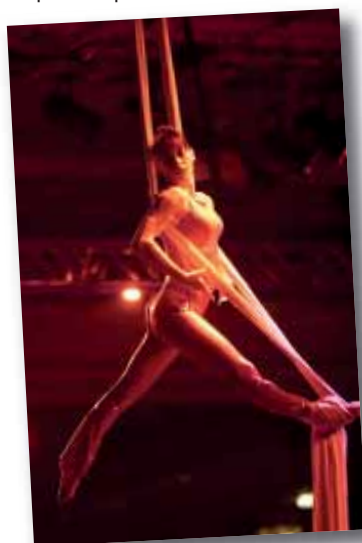
Blon leaves two daughters, Rose and Pippa, their husbands, four grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Have a ball with The Caravan Club

IT'S TIME to book your place at The Caravan Club's big event of 2012 – its summer Celebration Ball at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London on Friday 15 June.

The evening, which will include a mesmerizing display by the Silks Aerial Ballet (pictured right), begins at 7.30pm with a Pimms Reception followed by a four-course meal. Other highlights include an auction hosted by cricketer great Sir Ian Botham on behalf of Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research and a performance in the style of 'Last Night of the Proms' by the British Imperial Military Band.

Tickets for this member-only event cost £85 per person and go on sale on 25 January. Bookings can be made by Visa or MasterCard at caravanclub.co.uk or by calling 01342 327410. Payments by cheque will also be accepted – members should write to the Club's offices, marking their correspondence for the attention of 'Membership Administration'.



Upon booking, members will receive an acknowledgment letter. This will provide information about how to contact the Club with regard to table party details, dietary requirements and special requests.

TEMPORARY SITES

Three Club centres have arranged temporary sites close to London to coincide with the Celebration Ball. Coaches to and from the ball will be provided for those on site. Details are still being finalised – see contacts for further information.

Windsor Racecourse – organised by the Berkshire Centre. 13-17 June. The racecourse is set within 165 acres of countryside on the banks of the River Thames, 1½ miles from Windsor town centre. Take the chance to see the castle, Windsor Great Park or Legoland. A minimum of two nights must be booked but there's no obligation to attend the ball. 6A electric hook-up available. Fees to be confirmed. **Contact:** David Grover on 07783 359036 or 0118 988 3872 or email berkshirecc@googlemail.com

Knebworth House, near Stevenage – organised by the Hertfordshire Centre. 13-17 June. Knebworth House has a fascinating history and visitors can enjoy 25 acres of gardens featuring a maze, walled kitchen garden and Dinosaur Trail. A minimum of two nights must be booked. Electric hook-up available. **Contact:** Sandie Evans on 01767 640263 or email sandiejevans@gmail.com

Apps Court Farm, near Walton-on-Thames – organised by the East Sussex Centre. 13-17 June. The site gives access to the towpath and Sunbury Lock and there are good walks and cycle rides nearby. Local transport passes the site entrance and Hampton Court Palace is a short walk away. A minimum of two nights must be booked but those not attending the ball are welcome. Fresh water, chemical emptying point and dry waste disposable is available as well as electric hook-up. **Contact:** Maggie Scrase by email, maggiescrase@hotmail.co.uk

Return to the Dragons' Den

LIZ AND Alan Colleran, owners of Raskelf – the Yorkshire-based memory foam product specialist – made a return to television over the festive period following their success on the BBC2 *Dragons' Den* show.

Earlier in the year, the Collerans secured an investment of



£80,000 after impressing the newest Dragon, Hilary Devey, with their 'Duvalay', a zip-up memory foam mattress and duvet combination aimed at caravan and motorhome users.

This time they appeared on *The Hilary Devey Story*, which charted the career of the haulage industry businesswoman and saw her taking her first steps with her new Den investments. "2011 has been an amazing year for Raskelf and being invited back onto *Dragons' Den* is the perfect way to end it," said Liz.

Nissan teams up with Club for major shows

NISSAN WILL be working with The Caravan Club at two of the industry's biggest shows as well as bringing members a host of fantastic offers over the coming months.

Nissan is teaming up with the Club at the Scottish Caravan & Outdoor Leisure Show (2-5 February) and The Motorhome, Caravan & Camping Show at ExCeL London (14-19 February), providing X-TRAILS for the Club's towcar taster sessions.

What's more, members have the opportunity to save up to £5,014 on a brand new X-TRAIL which boasts a



2.0 dCi turbodiesel engine with 173HP and combined fuel economy of 44.1mpg – one tank can yield more than 630 miles of adventurous touring. Turn to p102 to find out more about

this fantastic special offer. Nissan will be promoting its 4x4 range with further deals in *The Caravan Club Magazine* over the course of 2012 – so watch this space!

Barleylands Temporary Site

THERE IS still time to reserve your pitch at the Club's Barleylands Temporary Site, which gives easy access to Olympic venues in 2012.

The site – at Barleylands Farm Park & Craft Village in Billericay, Essex – will be open from Friday 27 July to Sunday 12 August 2012. Fees are £22 per night with electric hook-up or £18 per night without (the price covers the pitch – there is no extra charge per person).

There is a regular overland rail service from Billericay station (2.7 miles from the site) to Stratford and a bus service to Billericay is available outside the site.



Top 10 Club sites for...

... a relaxing or romantic break

Escape for a while and enjoy yourselves at one of these sites.

1 Bath Chew Valley AS

Visit the stunning Roman city of Bath, take a walk across Putney Bridge and admire the Royal Crescent.

Contact: 01275 332127

2 Abbey Wood

Ideal for an exciting break in London. History, theatres, restaurants, shopping and so much more await.

Contact: 020 83117708

3 Cambridge Cherry Hinton

Take a punt on the River Cam and admire the city's beautiful

university buildings (below).
Contact: 01223 244088



4 Stroud Hill Park AS

Recharge your batteries at this quiet, attractive, adult-only site in the heart of rural Cambridgeshire.

Contact: 01487 741333

5 Stanmore Hall Touring Park AS

Set in beautiful grounds, this peaceful Shropshire site has the perfect spot in which to relax – a conservatory

overlooking a lake.
Contact: 01746 761761

6 The Sandringham Estate (right)

This site, set in the heart of Norfolk's Royal Estate, is popular for its walks, including one which leads to Sandringham House itself.

Contact: 01553 631614

7 Edinburgh

Fall in love with Scotland's capital city. A variety of attractions, activities and entertainment combine for a memorable visit.

Contact: 0131 312 6874

8 The Woods AS

Enjoy unparalleled views of the Ochil Hills or explore Stirling's historic city centre. This site is an excellent choice



for a winter break.
Contact: 01259 762802

9 Tredegar House Country Park

The site borders one of this Welsh country park's ornamental lakes. The house itself is recognised as one of the best examples of a 17th-century mansion in Britain. Newport and Cardiff are both close by.

Contact: 01633 815600

10 Glen of Aherlow AS

This Irish site enjoys spectacular scenery and offers a warm welcome as well as top-class amenities.

Contact: 00353 62 56555

You can book your pitch online at caravanclub.co.uk/searchandbook, by calling our Advance Booking Service on 01342 327490 or, for AS sites, calling them direct.

Lunar lands top award

THE LUNAR Delta FB was named Caravan of the Year 2012 in *Caravan* magazine's annual awards.

The £23,795, five-berth, end-bathroom model, which sports twin bunks and central offside dinette, also won the Best Layout category and was shortlisted in the Best Family Caravan over £15,000 and Best Luxury Caravan categories.

"These results prove that the Lunar Delta FB is a superb all-rounder, offering an impressive combination of space, practicality, comfort and cost – all in a beautifully-crafted and relatively lightweight package," said *Caravan* Managing Editor John Sootheran.

Other winners included the Elddis Avanté 372 (Best Couple's Caravan under £15,000), the Swift Challenger 580 (Couple's Caravan over £15,000),



John Sootheran (left) presents Lunar Managing Director Brian Mellor (centre) with *Caravan* magazine's Caravan of the Year award

the Bailey Orion 450-5 (Best Family Caravan under £15,000), the Swift Challenger Sport 586 (Family Caravan over £15,000) and Bailey's Unicorn Pamplona (Best Luxury Caravan).

In the January issue we quoted the price for the St John Ambulance Standard Motorist First Aid Kit as £7.38. The correct price is £14.76. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Seasonal storage available

THERE ARE still seasonal storage and all-year storage pitches available at a selection of Club sites, including our newest site, Bridlington, in Yorkshire (right). To check availability and how to book, take a look at the *Essential Guide to the Network* or visit caravanclub.co.uk/storage.



Buying a motorhome?

WARNERS GROUP Publications, the company that produces *MMM* and *Which Motorhome*, is launching a new guide entitled *Buying Your First Motorhome*. "There are several stages in the buying

process where it is essential the right decision is made," says Managing Editor Daniel Attwood, "from which motorhome layout or base vehicle is right for you, to ensuring your licence covers you for the weight of motorhome you want to buy, right through to which finance options are best for your needs."

The guide, which contains contact details for 174 motorhome dealers, also offers advice on second-hand vehicles and where to buy.

Buying Your First Motorhome is available at WH Smith, priced £4.99, but Caravan Club members can receive it at the special price of £3.49 including postage while stocks last. Call 01778 392010 quoting 'Caravan Club' or see your-first-motorhome.co.uk using the code 'CCLUBBYFM2012'.



SHOWTIME

FEBRUARY

*2-5 GLASGOW: Scottish Caravan & Outdoor Leisure Show, SECC, Glasgow (QD Events, call 0844 395 4000 or see caravanshowscotland.com)

*14-19 LONDON: The Motorhome, Caravan & Camping Show, ExCeL, London (NCC Events, call 0121 647 7311 or see motorhomecaravanandcamping.co.uk)

MARCH

16-18 EXETER: South West Caravan and Motorhome Show, Westpoint Arena, Exeter (Apple Tree Exhibitions, call 01395 277002 or see appletree-exhibitions.co.uk)

24-25 NEWARK: UK Motorhome & Caravan Spring Fair, Newark Showground, Nottinghamshire (Event Developments, call 01775 723723 or see ukspringfair.co.uk)

APRIL

20-22 CHEPSTOW: Wales Caravan & Motorhome Show, Chepstow Racecourse (Apple Tree Exhibitions, call 01395 277002 or see appletree-exhibitions.co.uk)

*27-29 PETERBOROUGH: National Motorhome Show, East of England Showground, Peterborough (Warners Group, call 01778 391123 or see outandaboutlive.co.uk)

Note: details subject to change – please telephone event organisers in advance for up-to-date information. *Indicates shows at which the Club has a stand.

FEEDBACK WANTED

WE WOULD like your views on the models listed below for our Owners' Report features. You can now fill in your feedback questionnaires online at caravanclub.co.uk/news-and-events/club-magazine (click on either 'Owners' report caravans questionnaire' or 'Owners' report cars questionnaire'). Alternatively, call 01342 336799 (please be ready to quote your membership number) or write, fax or email (see p6) for a form and prepaid return envelope. Please specify the vehicle you wish to report on. Closing dates for return are highlighted.

JUNE 2012: Elddis Xplore 452 v Sprite Alpine 2 by 10 February.

JULY 2012: Ford Mondeo Mk4 (2007-present) – 2.0-litre petrol v 2.0-litre turbodiesel, by 9 March.

AUGUST 2012: Lunar Clubman ES (from 2008) v Sterling Eccles Moonstone (from June 2007) by 10 April.

We understand that some members have been having difficulty filling in the new Owners' Reports forms online. Please be assured that the forms contain the same number of questions as the previous paper ones and that you can save your progress and return to them whenever you want. We hugely appreciate your contribution to this popular monthly article.