

THE TRECKER



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Editor's Corner

As another rally season draws to a close, I've been reflecting on what seems to me to have been a bit of a strange year. We had an unusually cool and wet spring and early summer, which for us meant more rain in France than we've ever seen before. Plenty of hot and sunny days followed, but these always seemed a bit sporadic and if there were any prolonged hot spells, we must have missed them.

The weather may not have been to our liking, but the garden certainly enjoyed it. We've never known plants, not to mention grass and particularly weeds grow so quickly! Not exactly ideal for us as we'd booked more rallies than usual this year (9 in total so far) and spent the whole of May in France.

The other thing I couldn't help notice has been the scarcity of flying insects. Very few wasps and moths (seems a good thing but probably not?) and very few bees and butterflies (definitely not good). I can only assume this can be explained by the cool, wet spring and things should return to normal next year, but we'll just have to wait and see.

Geoff Heyes
Editor

Chairman's Chat

It's getting towards the end of summer and after a cool and particularly wet start to the main Suntrecking season we can say that we've had a great year. It goes without saying that it was better once things had warmed up but whatever the weather throws at us it is always good to get out and meet other Suntreckers. We have had a great year and hope you all have too. We have attended 7 rallies so far, including the Gala, with one still to go. The Gala was particularly good with two members of 17 years attending one for the first time and wondering why they had not done so sooner. The Gala has something for everyone as well as the chance to meet a lot more members than usual on a single rally.

The committee have been asking for help and ideas on how to grow Suntreckers. We have had some contributions but keep them coming. If there is anything in particular you would like to be involved in, please let us know that too – it all helps.

Alan Ingram
Chairman

New Webmaster – needed now!

We currently have a vacancy for the role of webmaster. With the rallies being on the web and the online booking facility this has become an important role. If you can use Word and Excel, then great as that is the main requirement. Neither I nor Clive had previous experience before we took on the role so with help and assistance then surely there is someone who can take this on and be part of the committee team. If you want to talk through before committing, then please call me or send an email to:

chairman@suntreckers.org.uk

Don't be shy!
Alan Ingram

Rally Organiser's Report

First of all, I hope you have all had a good rallying year, meeting old and new friends alike. I've been planning next year's rallies and had quite good responses from the sites. I've dropped some rallies because of the lack of members attending. If any of you have a site to recommend, please let me know and we can see whether it's possible to have a rally there.

I've been asked to add Willows Farm back into the calendar, the request has been sent based on the 2022 rally dates. Next year Broadlands has its 90th anniversary and we've been asked to make our members aware of this. This is not a rally but I'm sure some of you will be interested in joining in the event which will be on the August bank holiday. You will have to book directly with the site. There will be quite a few rallies around that time, but it will give you all plenty of options.

At times there are changes between our Yearbook and what the site is charging. This often happens when the site has their AGM after the book goes out. This happened a few years ago when the electricity prices changed. I ask the sites to let me have their charges but at times I can only provide the current price in the Yearbook.

I am sure some of you have wanted to go on a particular rally only to find it is fully booked. The best way to avoid this is to volunteer to be the rally officer. We want to get the Yearbook completed by the end of this year and we need members to volunteer to be rally officers. You may already have the latest list – if not it will be going out soon, so please volunteer so that we can get the Yearbook finalised.

Martin Hodgson
National Rally Organiser

Greenhill Park Fees

Those of you who have attended a rally at Greenhill Park will know that there is a building there, known as the 'chicken shed', which can be used by ralliers to meet in case of poor weather. If the chicken shed is used in the evening, there is heating and lighting available, but at a charge per evening of £40. This fee has traditionally been simply divided among those ralliers who used the chicken shed, but following requests from some members for more certainty of the cost, it was decided to raise the pitch fee by £4 to cover use of the chicken shed. However, more recently several members have stated that they would prefer to pay a per head cost for the chicken shed if they use it, so we have decided to revert to the previous lower pitch fee and the cost of the chicken shed, if used, will be simply divided by the number of people using it. The Rally Officer will be responsible for collecting the additional fees if necessary.

Rally Coffee Mornings

Since the restrictions following the Covid outbreaks, there have been discussions about the preference of some ralliers for Bring Your Own (BYO) rallies, where ralliers bring their own supplies for coffee mornings and group gatherings, rather than the Rally Officer providing for everyone in the traditional way. The survey responses and comments from the June online survey did not indicate a clear preference for either system, although 54% disapproved or were neutral about every rally being a BYO. Therefore, we have decided that there should be no change to the current system and the Rally Officer will continue to provide supplies for coffee mornings or optionally arrange this through the club if on a site with catering facilities.

Raffle Tickets

Please note that Terry Jackman has obtained a new batch of raffle tickets for the Gala Rally raffle and the old tickets are no longer valid. If you have any old raffle tickets, please destroy them. If you haven't sold raffle tickets before and would like some to sell on rallies before the Gala, then contact Terry:

gm3@suntreckers.org.uk

Suntreckers Committee

Gala Rally and AGM

This was the third year at Candy Farm for the Gala Rally and each year seems to be better than the last. This year's theme was 'Circus' and attendance was good, even the weather was kind overall, with the use of the barn for evenings and in case of poor weather. Along with various helpers, Terry Gascoyne laid out the pitches to his usual high standard and Alan Ingram (never short of something to say) ably performed the role of Ring Master (Master of Ceremonies).

Wednesday evening as usual was a chance to reunite with old friends and meet new ones, with drinks and nibbles supplied by Sylvia and Brian Caldicott, the rally officers.

Coffee mornings were held outside, and a variety of activities was arranged throughout each day, from fancy dress for dogs and people to Molky and Pétanque competitions. A 'round the vans' picture quiz provided an excuse to wander round inspecting everyone's caravan or motorhome and admiring the fantastic van decorations for the best-dressed van competition, while another quiz taxed our brains with some obscure circus facts. Professional musical entertainment was booked for Thursday and Saturday evenings, with a comedian on Friday, so there was no shortage of things to do.



Simon the naked motorcyclist

A couple of entertainment highlights worth mentioning were an impromptu music set following on from Friday evening's comedy, ably performed by our own Ed Pruen and professional singer Steve Draper's energetic performance on Saturday evening which went on until midnight and had many of us dancing until we dropped.



Men's winner Will with ladies' winner Annette



Couple's winners Joe and Karen



Best-dressed van winners: Keith and Annette (left), Ed and Margaret (right)

Sunday morning as always saw the grand prize raffle draw, organised (and largely funded) by Terry and Lesley Jackman with 3 top prizes of a Red Letter 'Days Out' voucher, an air fryer and an £80 cash prize, with another 36 prizes to be won. The cake competition entries were consumed with great pleasure and prizes and plaques were awarded for the various competition winners, just leaving time for lunch before the Annual General Meeting in the barn at 1:30pm.

Several committee members were re-elected, or their appointment was ratified by the members, but there are still committee vacancies, especially Webmaster and Publicity Officer. Two resolutions were passed, one of which added 'motorhome' references to the Articles of Association and to the Rules. The other resolution changed the date at which membership is deemed to have lapsed from 28 February to 31 December, so please ensure that your renewal fee is paid before the end of the year.

It was announced after the AGM that over the course of the Gala rally, a total of £547 was raised for our chosen charity, Cancer Research UK, through the raffle and book sales and a further £500 was added from Suntreckers funds, giving a grand total of £1047.

A more laid-back Sunday evening was passed with a beetle drive, music from some of the members, a standup comedy spot by Jeff Pearce and a few monologues from Terry Cadby before we went our separate ways on Monday morning, remembering good times at this Gala and already anticipating next year's event.

John Furley

Long Service Awards

10 Years

Keith & Annette	Evans
Stewart & Jane	Greenfield
Don & Jill	Kent
Ian	Sinclair
Alan	Wilson

15 Years

Bryan	Bunce
Chris & Kathy	Genn
John & Aileen	Hobrough
Graham & Lucille	Scott

20 Years

Jim & Yvonne	Matthews
Fred & Marion	Newman

25 Years

Tony & Ellie	Drakard
David & Margaret	Jones

30 Years

Stuart & Janice	Dowson
Eric & Angela	Hounslow

35 Years

Terry & Mary	Cadby
Diane	Howard
Ann	Jones

40 Years

Tony & Angela	Berry
John & Heather	Tidbury

Raffle Prize List

Prize	Name
Days Out Together	David Pike
Air Fryer	Kevin Filtness
£80 Cash	Rachel Thompson
Bowl And Plate Set	Maureen Fox-Dowden
Whizzy Whisk	Eileen Heyes
Bathtime Candle	Malcolm Burland
Wellington Boots	Nick Payne
Angles Morts Sign	Alan Ingram
Riesling Glasses	John Barnett
Kitchen Tool Set	Monty Toplis
Cotton Traders Packing Set	Terry Jackman
Sudoku Cube	Pauline England
Champneys Health Spa Set	Pauline Finney
Avon Microfibre Towel Wrap Turban	Janet Wilding
Snowdrops And Ivy Candle	Tony Pratt
Sarong	Jack Padgett
Wearable Bath Towel	Eileen Heyes
Cork Notice Board	Val Pearce
I'm With Stupid Trivia Came	Terry Cadby
Backgammon	Kevin Filtness
12 Piece Place Mat Set	Graham Penney
Butterfly Ear Rings	Pat Silk
Floor Mop	Trish Moore
Bug Zapper	Robert Finney
Harrods Teddy Bear	Nigel Todd
Christmas Cookie Cutters	Robert Finney
3 Candles On Black Stand	Nick Payne
Go Naked Mug	Bryan Bunce
Vanilla Fudge	Robert Finney
Photo Album	Eileen Heyes
Fleece Blanket	Carol
Clipper Velvety Hot Chocolate	Ed Silk
Mindfulness Puzzles	Nick Payne
Napkin Rings	Kevin Filtness
Cake Stand	Terry Jackman
Two Candles	Rachel Thompson
Cosmetic Pouch	Alan Mcpherson
£10 Book Token	Dave Pike
Pizza Peel Set	Bryan Bunce

Competition Winners

Molkky	Bob White
Cake competition	Monty Toplis
Dog fancy dress	Daisy (Sylvia Caldicott)
General photo	Ed Pruen
Ken Webster photo	Tony Sayers
Best dressed unit	Keith/Annette Evans & Ed/Margaret Pruen (joint winners)
Round the van pictures	Dave & Trudi Pike

Circus quiz	Dave & Trudi Pike
Fancy dress	
Male	Will Rees
Female	Annette Evans
Couple	Jo & Karen Grun
Pétanque Friday	Val & Jeff Pearce
Pétanque Saturday	Irene & Bill Campbell
Pétanque Overall	Val & Jeff Pearce

All the winners were entered into a special prize draw and winner of the voucher was Annette Evans.

Pétanque Pairs Competition

As usual, those members who indicated they wanted to compete in the Pétanque competition at the Gala rally were split into two groups, to play on either Friday or Saturday. A total of 40 members played over the two days, with a grand final between Friday's winners and Saturday's winners to decide the overall champions.

Val and Jeff Pearce won the Friday competition, beating Geoff and Eileen Heyes in the final, then on Saturday Irene and Bill Campbell beat Tess Wagstaff and Ron Wilding. The final game resulted in Val and Jeff being the overall Pétanque Champions for 2024.

Gala Rally 2025

I have offered to be your Rally Officer for the Gala Rally in July 2025. The Assistant Rally Officer is Alan Ingram, together we will endeavour to create another fun few days at Candy Farm.

I am asking you for suggestions for a **theme** for the Gala, which will be a feature for the fancy dress, best dressed van, quiz, picture quiz etc.

We also need a **subject** for the Ken Webster photo competition, which will have an open category alongside.

Please send me your ideas before 10 October.

email:- treasurer@suntreckers.org.uk.

Thank you

Sylvia Caldicott

Gala Rally Officer/Treasurer

Other UK Rally Reports

Rally 28 – Manor Farm

We had 7 units attending for all or part the 7-day rally. The weather was - like the curate's egg, "good in parts". As some of you will know, Manor Farm is sloping and can be very windy. We were able to gather outside for the odd coffee morning but were really thankful for the use of the barn and for Paul and Michelle's motorhome (pictured) being large enough and level enough for us all at other times.



The sporting scene culminated in an Anglo-Welsh pétanque match (also pictured) where I'm pleased to say Wales did better than they did in the six nations, and came second.

Everyone had a really enjoyable time and fitted in with our usual Suntrecker camaraderie. Such a shame numbers were again down over previous years.

Malcolm & Maureen Burland

Rally 44 – Cilan

We had another sizzling rally at Cilan in early August with temperatures rising to 30 degrees in the shade and 38 degrees in the sun. Too hot for most, so there was a lot of 'shade bathing' going on under the trees.

As usual, the site had been beautifully prepared for the rally by Alan and Cindy Mayes and John and Jan Chadwick. The hedges had been trimmed, the grass freshly cut, marquees were up and the tea-urn ready for use. So, there was little for me to do as RO other than organise the daily events. We managed a Fish & Chip supper on Friday, a pub lunch on Sunday, a coffee morning every day, some games of Pétanque and Finska / Mollky in the afternoons and an event in the marquee each evening. We got to do 'Playdough Pictionary', where instead of drawing something you had to model it in Play-Doh. There was a night of singing and monologues, a beetle drive, pass-the-parcel, prize bingo, and the inevitable quiz, but this time with a music round too. Being Olympic week, we ended with a medal ceremony for the pétanque competition, with Eileen Heyes & Mary Filtness taking gold, John Hobrough & Jackie Ingram taking silver and Graham & Maureen Fox-Dowden taking bronze.



The wonderful site that is "Cilan"



Nineteen of the twenty-five "Treckers" who attended the rally



Geoff Heyes giving us a rendition of the monologue "Albert and the Naturist"

There were a few goodbyes to say as well, this being the last Suntrecker Rally for George and Anne Rickels, and the last ever Suntrecker Rally at Ciln . . . more about that in a separate article.

For me too, this is the end of an era, as I've now relocated to Devon and will not be 'Trecking' around Norfolk and Suffolk for the foreseeable future. I've met some fabulous people on the way, so say thanks to all who've attended the rallies I've done as R.O. over the last seven years.

Roger Coggan

Farwell to Cilan

As you may have already read, August saw the last ever rally at 'Cilan' in Hempnall, near Norwich. The owners Cindy and Alan (hence the name 'Cilan') have been members of Suntreckers for over 25 years and have been hosting rallies in their 1.5 acre 'paddock' since 2001.

In the thirteen years from 2001 to 2014 there were 25 Suntrecker rallies at 'Cilan', usually two a year, but notably there were three each year in 2002, 2004 and 2007. Each of these events is recorded in the impressive display of rally plaques that adorn a wall in the shower block, and you might also notice that for 19 of the 25 rallies they also hold Rally Officer plaques, a duty that Alan and Cindy shared for many years with their good friends John and Jan Chadwick. Anyone who has hosted a rally or been a Rally Officer will appreciate that this is a formidable record and demonstrates a significant contribution to the club.



Impressive display of rally plaques on the wall of the shower area

After a hiatus of seven years, Cindy and Alan began hosting rallies again in 2022. June Salmon stepped in at very short notice to lead the first of two rallies that year, when the original R.O. fell ill, and I've had the pleasure of being R.O. for the last three rallies there.

The site has developed over the years since its use as a horse paddock, adding high hedges, a shower block and even a few EHU points. Before each rally, Alan, John and friends spend time getting the place ready, cutting the hedges, mowing the lawns, erecting the marquees and in some years even adding an above-surface swimming pool. It's hardly a wonder that 'Cilan' rallies have been popular. In their heyday, there were upwards of 30 units on some rallies, and even nowadays we have been getting about 15 units for each event.

But a good rally does not rely solely on good facilities. It's also about the warmth of the welcome, the feeling of being among friends and the freedom to do pretty much as you please. Whether it's sun-bathing or shade-bathing, the chairs and sun-loungers congregate near Alan and Cindy's static van each morning and afternoon and many hours are spent recounting tales of various travels, colourful characters and amusing incidents and, of course, putting the world to rights over yet another cup of tea.

It's been a great experience getting involved with the rallies at 'Cilan' and getting to know the 'Treckers' who come back year after year for more 'rest and relaxation'. Although it's sad to think there will be no more, we can look back and be thankful for the good times we've had there, thanks to Alan and Cindy and all those who have helped them over the years.

Roger Coggan

And farewell to George and Anne

We joined Suntreckers in 1986 at Southleigh Manor in Cornwall having been invited by the late Pat Saunders and Stan Hilder. In July 1989 we ran an informal rally at Le Cols in the Pyrenees, which only one other member attended and three years later we booked the first real Suntreckers continental rally at Le Clos Barrat, with four units attending.



Alan and Cindy with Anne and George on their final Suntrecker rally

All in all we have attended 170 Suntrecker rallies and acted as rally officers on 25, in England, France, Spain and Croatia and we have enjoyed every single one. Our favourite inland site is Le Couderc and our favourite coastal site is El Templo.

We now plan to reduce our amount of travelling and this will be our last season with Suntreckers. It seems fitting that the last ever rally at Cilan should be our last rally too. We'd like to thank everyone, especially Alan and Cindy for welcoming us at their lovely site as well as Roger for his efforts as rally officer here.

Continental rallies 2025

Monty has been working on a programme for next year, following a discussion during the Gala Rally with some of those interested in participating. The plan is to start on the Spanish Costa Brava towards the end of May and work our way up through France in June. Four rallies are proposed, each lasting for 7 nights. The provisional programme looks like this:

25 May	Relax-Nat, Mont-ras (Girona region)
2 Jun	Mas de la Balma, Montbalo (Eastern Pyrenees)
11 Jun	L'Olivierie, Saurais (Poitou-Charentes region)
20 Jun	Pallieter, Bourseul (Britanny region)

Monty doesn't have pricing details from all the sites yet, but this should be available in time for publication of the 2025 Yearbook. There should also be more information in the December Trecker.

Saturday coffee mornings by Zoom

These have been suspended for part of the summer to allow Monty and Trina to get away and enjoy some rallies. They resume on Saturday 14 September and are a great way of keeping in touch with fellow Treckers throughout the winter months. All you need to do is connect to Zoom and of course have your own supply of coffee and biscuits. In case you need a reminder, the access details are:

Meeting ID: 752 9216 3604 Password: 2020

Time: 10:30 – 11:15 every Saturday morning

Or use this link: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75292163604?pwd=clIzaWxTWERFRDZEB2tBOWVXWnJCZz09>

A warm welcome

Let's give a warm welcome to the following members who've joined us recently.

David E	Gloucestershire
Steve and Hazel A	Pembrokeshire
Ianto M and Christopher K	Herefordshire
John G	Lancashire
Tim and Angela R	Shropshire
John and Susan A	Dorset

A fond farewell

Ken Vogl's wife Nita passed away recently and Suntreckers were represented by John & Lyn Furley and Rae Argent at the funeral in Nuneaton

Dennis Mann has passed away and his funeral is on Thursday 26 September at 11:00 in the Edgar Newman Chapel, Kettering Crematorium, NN16 8XE. Afterwards at The Woolpack Inn, Islip, NN14 3JU

No flowers, but donations via Crowsons website or on the day in aid of The Air Ambulance Service

And finally...

Members' contributions for *The Trecker* are always welcome, as are photographs, which should be sent as separate files and not embedded in a document. Please remember that you need permission from everyone in your photograph.

Please send all contributions to Geoff Heyes thetrecker@suntreckers.org.uk

Thank you to John for sending this newsletter by email, as well as to John and Lyn for printing and sending out the paper version.