

THE TRECKER



Suntreckers

The UK's Largest Naturist Camping, Caravan & Motorhome Club



Issue 84

November 2019

Editor's Corner

Much as I hope you'll enjoy reading your *Trecker* newsletter, its purpose is to inform as much as to entertain and there is quite a lot of important stuff in this issue. New for 2020 will be a change to the Yearbook as the current wire-bound version is being replaced by a ring-binder folder and pages with punched holes for you to insert. This is described in detail in the contribution from the Membership Secretary. It is really important that you read this and the paragraph on early membership renewal very carefully. Also important are the contribution from the Rally Organiser and the short section on Invitation Rallies, with an appeal for volunteers for Invitation Rally Officers.

On a lighter note we have the usual UK and continental rally reports for you to enjoy and maybe even to encourage some of you to visit these sites at future rallies. Happy reading!

Geoff Heyes
PPO

Chairman's Chat

Well here we are getting towards the end of another rallying year, summer rallies finished and already onto the winter programme. I hope it's been a good year for you the members. Jenny and I ran one continental rally and attended another, run by Monty Toplis, at a new venue to Suntreckers where we were made very welcome by Céline the owner who runs the site "alone and unaided". I don't know how she copes but she is doing a marvellous job - Jenny and I hope to visit again in the future.

We were also at wet and windy Watlington last month for the first of the winter rallies run by Geoff and Eileen. It was marvellous watching the red kites soaring on the wind and when we were outside, hearing them what I would describe as croaking as they walked about the field looking for worms.

I hope you will support the rally officers by attending a few winter rallies (they are all very social events). Of course it's always nice to get away in the motorhome and meet up with like-minded friends.

I hope that I am not stealing anyone's thunder here as my few words always appear at the front of the *Trecker* but I hope that some of you will respond favourably to our cries for help and support later in the mag. I will sign off for now and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year on behalf of all the committee.

Peter Chapman
Chairman.

Membership Matters

New Yearbook Folder

Several options for saving money on the cost of printing and distributing the Yearbook (normally around £1500) have been investigated, with most of the cost being for the printed cover and the wire bound pages. The preferred option is to print the updated content of the Yearbook exactly as in this year's book, with 3 rallies per page, but with two punched holes and no cover. Members will receive the pages and a Suntreckers A5 polypropylene ring binder folder to hold the pages, then in each subsequent year, if membership is renewed, just the new printed pages will be sent out. The ring binder must be retained, and the old pages discarded each year. Although the initial cost of the ring binders causes an increase of about £350 in the first year, over the next 2 years this new system should save around £1500 and will continue to save money in future years. Forecasting the savings over the next 5 years, it is predicted that we will see a net benefit of about £2500 over the cost of the current style of wire-bound Yearbook.

Early Membership Renewal

As usual, Suntreckers membership will expire on 31 December and there will be 2 months' grace for late renewals before the additional fee of £10 becomes payable. Normally, the new Yearbooks are printed and distributed in February, but in 2020 the Membership Secretary and his helper (wife) will be too busy with an extended holiday to deal with the later renewals. ***If you want to receive your new Yearbook promptly and do not want to wait until late April, please renew your membership in plenty of time, before the end of January if possible.***

Recruitment Incentive

In the last few years, we have run an incentive scheme where any member who recruited new members had a discount of £5 from their annual renewal fee. This has proved very successful with 13 new memberships being created by introduction in 2018/19. Several members have recruited more than one new membership in a year, although they have only been able to claim a single discount. With immediate effect, the discount scheme is being extended to allow for multiple introduction discounts to be earned in a recruitment year (1 Aug – 31 July), up to the value of the renewal fee, currently £30.

Accelerated Membership Process

In order to cater for people who are away from home and want to join Suntreckers because they have met up with a rally group or a Suntrecker member, an accelerated membership process will be introduced from 1 January 2020. Under this scheme, it will be possible for prospective members to complete one of the forms from a member's Yearbook and pay the joining fee and subscription, currently £40, in cash to the Rally Officer or introducing member, or else pay by bank transfer to Suntreckers Ltd. A photo or scan of the signed form must then be sent to the Membership Secretary for checking and entering on the membership database. If paid in cash, either the Rally Officer or introducing member must also send an email or telephone to the Membership Secretary confirming that a cash payment has been received, which must then be forwarded to the Treasurer or Suntreckers bank account as soon as convenient.

Once the receipt of funds or cash payment is confirmed, the Membership Secretary will email to the new member details of their membership number and attach relevant documents, such as the Suntreckers Rules, the latest *Trecker* and our Privacy Notice. The Webmaster will also be informed of the new membership so that it will be possible to register for full access to the Suntreckers website for details and on-line booking of

rallies. The membership card and Yearbook (if wanted) and will be sent to the new members' registered postal address.

British Naturism Newsletters

British Naturism (BN) regional newsletters and e-zines (electronic magazines) are regularly received by the Membership Secretary as the Suntreckers club is affiliated to BN. In order to keep the membership informed of Naturist events and activities it is proposed to distribute the BN information, solely to those non-BN members who receive email communication and who currently wish to receive Suntreckers newsletters. No members' details will be passed to BN at any time, this is simply a re-distribution by Suntreckers of the BN information. If you no longer wish to receive the BN items, please let the Membership Secretary know by email. A separate option is still available if any member wishes to opt-out of receiving the Suntreckers Newsletters.

John Furley

Membership Secretary (mem.sec@suntreckers.org.uk)

Rally Organiser's Report

Dear Treckers I hope you are all keeping well. Whilst typing this I am looking at what now appears to be non-stop rain, I suppose it keeps the dust down. Let's hope for sunnier days in next year's rallying season.

I started work on next year's rallying season the day after the Gala rally finished and by the time you read this you should have already been sent the 2020 rally list, either electronically or by post. Have a good look at it, fill as many of the vacant rally officer posts as you can, but even if you can't run a rally, would you in any case please **complete the form and send it back to me either in the stamped addressed envelope or by email to: rallyorganizer@suntreckers.org.uk**

I have also included in the form a yes / no option regarding your availability to be an invitation rally officer, there is more in the *Trecker* relating to this role.

The next time I shall be in touch with you via the *Trecker* will be sometime in March and I hope to be able to say thanks for the tremendous response in volunteering and that I have had to turn some of you away, but in any case, make sure you all enjoy what is being offered in way of the rallies for 2020.

Don't forget if you have any ideas, sites new and old you may want to visit or ideas for the gala rally then please let me know either by telephone, email, writing a letter or leaving comments on the Suntreckers Facebook group page.

That's all folks so, its cheerio from me for a little while.

Steve Wagstaff

National Rally Organiser.

Webmaster

We've reached the end of another summer rally programme and the winter rallies have already begun. This has been the first season in which it's been possible to book the majority of rallies online and this applies to the winter rallies too. Feedback from both Rally Officers and ralliers has been positive and I hope online booking will be used more extensively in future. With no paper booking form, cheque or stamp required it is just so convenient. You just have to be a registered website user with your own User ID to access this feature so if you have not already done so just click 'Register' on the

homepage of the website and fill in your details. (Note: paper booking will still remain for those rally officers and ralliers who prefer to use it.)

As far as I know the website has been and is working as it should. If a problem is encountered then please let me know by email webmaster@suntreckers.org.uk so I can fix it.

Alan Ingram
Webmaster

Invitation Rallies

This year we were able to organise our first invitation rally for some time, at Broadlands over the Easter weekend. This allowed non-members to attend, to experience a Suntrecker rally and decide if they wished to join, which a few did. Over the years a significant number of members have been recruited in this way, including three of the current committee.

Until recently we have only been able to hold invitation rallies at commercial sites or naturist clubs, because our exemption certificate would not allow non-members to attend rallies at field sites. However because we now have a different type of exemption certificate, we can open up some field sites to non-members, provided certain conditions are met.

Obviously all potential new members attending an invitation rally need to be welcomed and looked after, and given sufficient information about our club to help them to decide if they wish to join. This can of course be undertaken by the rally officers, provided they are willing to do it in addition to their normal duties during the rally. Otherwise another rallier would need to take on the role of "invitation rally officer", as was the case at Broadlands this year.

By the time you read this you will have been sent a provisional list of rallies for 2020. As well as the usual appeal for members to volunteer as rally officers we will also be asking you to indicate your willingness to host an invitation rally. **Steve needs to have your response to this by the end of November, either by telephone on 01384 622946 or email at rallyorganizer@suntreckers.org.uk**

UK Rally Reports

Rally 80 - Telford

We really enjoyed our visit to Telford club at the weekend despite the less favourable weather. Lovely club with good facilities. The undercover pool & Jacuzzi were well used & enjoyed. A friendly welcome by all. Thanks to Wendy & Mike for organising. We will be looking out for the next rallies there for next year when we receive the new book.

Trudi and Dave Pike and Chaz the dog.

Rally 81 - Karen's Retreat

The last of this year's summer rallies was held at Karen's Retreat in West Sussex at the end of September. The weather had decided that it was already autumn, but the facilities inside the "bubble" helped to ensure an enjoyable rally.

Mike Parkinson



Inside the "Bubble"



Fish and chip supper

Rally 82 - Watlington

The first of our winter rallies was again held at this attractive location in south Oxfordshire, our third year at the site. Unfortunately the fine late summer weather we had enjoyed for the first two years completely deserted us and instead we had to endure a very wet weekend.

Not for the first time this year Terry and Lesley's dome came to the rescue and allowed us to enjoy the usual coffee mornings and evening get-togethers despite everything the elements could throw at us. It was a bit cosy with all twenty ralliers inside at the same time, but that helped to keep us warm.

We had fish and chips on Friday and on Saturday evening eight of us set off for Didcot as guests of Oxnat for one of their naturist swims in the attractive wave pool. Most of us enjoyed an excellent Sunday lunch in one of the local hostleries followed by tea and cakes back in the dome in the afternoon. Luckily the weather cleared up enough to allow Terry to take the dome down in the dry (with several of us hanging on to prevent it from blowing away), before the next deluge came down in the evening.

Eileen and Geoff Heyes

Continental Rally Reports

Rally 27 - Lous Suais

Although we have many sites we love and want to visit again, I do try to introduce new sites for us to enjoy. I can choose from a book and hope it's an interesting site, but it is the members I rely upon as there are a great wealth of sites in France, so let me know of useful sites for rallies, so we can keep expanding. This year we visited Lous Suais in June and Camping du Port in September.

Lous Suais is in the Haute-Vienne, not far from Limoges, approximately two thirds of the way down the middle of France. Gilles welcomed everyone to the site which he purchased five years ago, together with Vincent. They're constantly making improvements and gave us an overview of what they planned for the foreseeable future.

Every morning at 10.30, Gilles welcomed everyone to the clubhouse by the large lake for free tea and coffee with biscuits. After many refills we would make our way back about lunchtime. The only slight drawback was the terrain as it was hilly, but most could walk on gentle slopes down to the lake and I took our car down and supplied a taxi service back to our vans - the knees and hips can be a problem on long slopes! The lake can be used for fishing, wild swimming and using pedalos to cross to neighbouring friendly farmer's land to sunbathe on the shore.

Besides the morning beverages, most of us joined in with the evening meals, our hosts offering us *cassoulet du canard*, and *raclette*. A raclette is a long heated tray where you heat the cheese to bubbling and pour it over baked potatoes - the upper part of the Raclette is where you heat the meats. There must have been over a dozen different types of meat to stimulate the taste buds, along with tomatoes, courgettes etc. and similar to the tea and coffee mornings, the food kept coming until one said 'enough'. Having been told of my liking of chips, Gilles produced two huge bowls of them, free of charge, even though they were not on the menu.

The only disappointment was that only six units booked and two of those had to cancel, so I am planning a return visit for September 2020. This is a great venue, so I hope for a great turnout next year. Come and join the happy Suntimeers in the photo.

Monty Toplis



Pictures from Lous Suais rally

Rally 69 - Creuse Nature

Journalists will tell you that when you see the word 'fury' in the headlines, then they have phoned one annoyed person to substantiate their claim. Similarly when claiming rampant 'outrage' they have found someone who is mildly disgruntled. But when I tell you that the rally at Creuse was freezing at night, take it from me that everyone found it freezing. The days however, were filled with sunshine and our return to Creuse Nature, in the centre of France after an absence of seven years was a most pleasant one. Little had changed since Suntreckers held regular rallies at Creuse, many organised by Mike and Roe Whittaker. The photo below shows one of the more attractive spots.



Els and Reinier were still in charge and, apart from being as ever pleasant and helpful, they treated us to coffee, tea and a delicious home-made cake on the terrace by way of greeting. There were 16 or so units with plenty of familiar faces; continental rallying is alive and well. The Thursday market in Boussac was still popular with stalls filling the central square and several side roads. Monty, our rally officer provided a varied programme for our entertainment and managed to twist enough arms to deplete his extensive stock of home-made brews. Alan organised an excellent boules tournament. Modesty forbids me to name half of the winning team but suffice to say Lennie held the other half of the cup aloft. The picture shows us before the 'bully off', or whatever they do to get a boules match started. Lennie is gently dislocating an opponent's biceps as part of his cunning tactics.





A BBQ, quiz, communal meal and 'Terry telling jokes', (including one or two new ones), helped make the evenings pass pleasantly, as did chats and wine and cheese tastings. We are a friendly group! Reinier led an intrepid bunch on a 7km Sunday 'stroll'; there were fewer takers for his 14 km walk the following day! Many thanks to Monty (and Trina), not only for organising our continental programme but also for running several of the rallies themselves.

Fritz Henning

Rally 77 - Camping du Port

Camping du Port is about 35 minutes inland from La Rochelle, in the heart of Marais Poitevin. Last year I heard about this small site owned by Céline, a young lady who wanted a career change and bought the site from retiring naturists. At the time she was not a naturist herself.

What a lady, she's about 30, runs the campsite, does everything herself, even unblocking sewers, and is never without a happy smile, which is infectious. The site may be small, but she had a clubhouse built which easily sits 50 to 60 with plenty of room for dancing. The swimming pool is large and covered and can be used early and late in the season as it is heated. All the pitches are wide enough to erect an 8m awning.

Saturday evenings were set meals starting around 19.30, and French meals are eaten over a long period of time, so we started with hors d'oeuvres with endless jugs of wine for well over an hour, baby tomatoes, olives, sausages and popcorn. Then came the main meal followed by a dessert, and when ready – dancing. All for 15 Euros - very good value!

Val and I played a set of well known songs aided by Jeff who led the singing, it was our first live performance for Suntreckers and was enjoyed by the French, Dutch and a couple from New Zealand. We had a great night and if asked to repeat it, then we'll know it was a success!

I don't usually mention the Boules competitions, but it seems that we were playing for the CST Trophy, which I'll explain shortly. The large, heavy trophy had been presented to the winners Fritz and Lenny at the previous rally. Fritz handed it to Lenny, who promptly wrapped it in a bag and handed it to me. I made it clear that whoever won it at Camping du Port would have to keep it, as I definitely didn't want to see it again! After a keenly-



contested tournament the eventual winners were Alan and Margaret and judging by the picture, they seemed quite pleased to have won it!

The trophy actually came from Clère-les-Pins, when one of our members won it at the Club du Soleil de Touraine (CST) rally last year. However CST now stands for “Continental Suntrecker Trophy”!

You’ll notice from one of the photos that we did have some rain at times, but it didn’t spoil the fun too much. There are also a few interesting places to visit quite close to the site.

Courcon has a market - not large but as always we found a café to meet at and watch the world go by. Coulon has an Information Centre for Marais Poitevin - evidently the whole area was a salt marsh until the 11th century when monks drained a small area to build an abbey. The Hundred Years War saw it in decline until Henry IV of France opened the system up again. Napoleon brought over Dutch engineers to drain the land, install sea locks and build the grand canal. The whole area is about a metre or so above sea level.

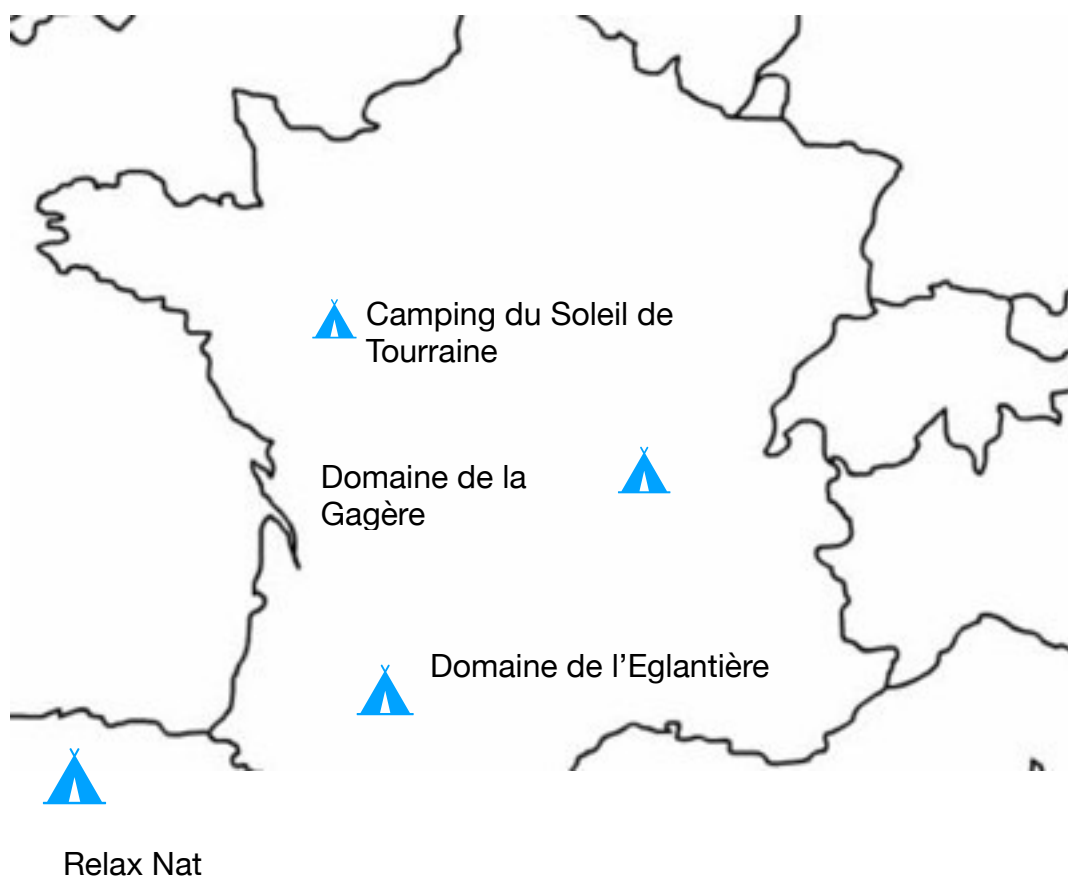
A great place that I definitely want to return to.

Monty Toplis

Early Summer Continental Rallies 2020

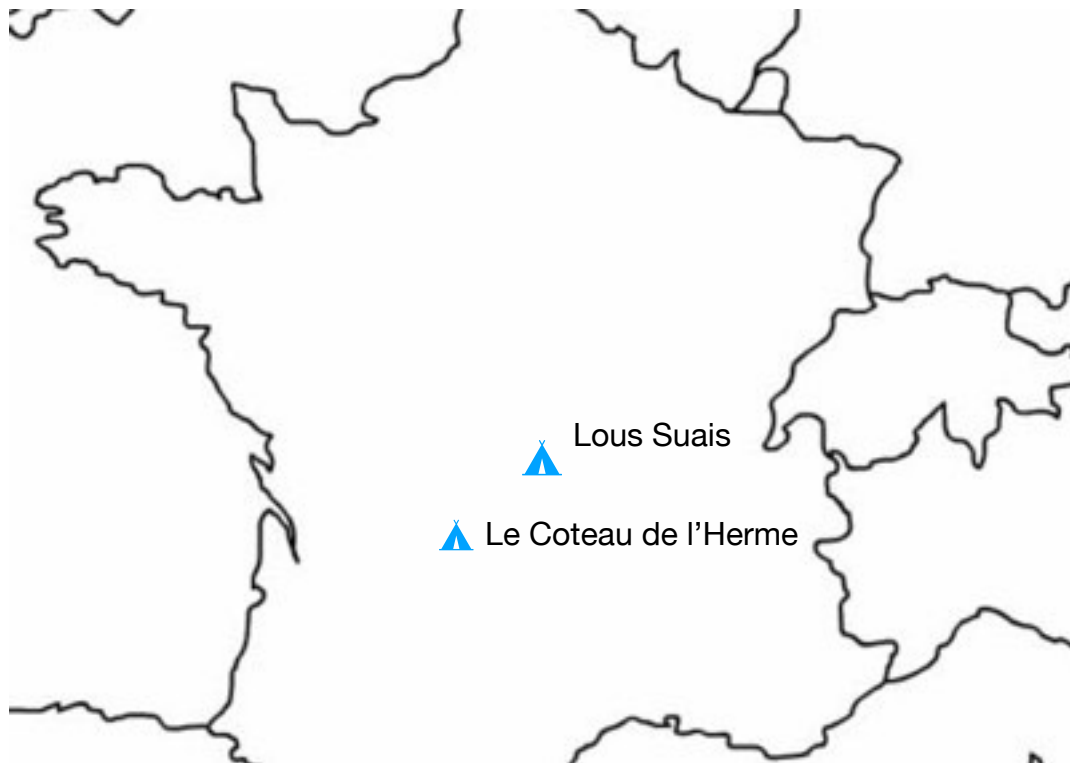
Next year's early summer programme starts with a trip to Relax Nat on the Costa Brava, not far from the ports of Bilbao and Santander (12 to 25 May). All being well this will be followed by a cross-border journey to Domaine de l'Eglantière in the Hautes-Pyrénées region of the south west of France (27 May to 6 June), but the first of the French rallies is still not confirmed as we go to press. Then it's up to the Burgundy region to Domaine de la Gagère (8 to 15 June) and finally to Clère-les-Pins in the heart of the Loire Valley to an old favourite - Club du Soleil de Touraine (22 June to 2 July).

The map below should give you some idea of the approximate location of each site, but please bear in mind that Monty may need to make some changes if he can't secure a booking at Domaine de l'Eglantière.



Late Summer Continental Rallies 2020

For September Monty has planned two ten-day rallies in France, starting with a return to Lous Suais to the east of Limoges (2 to 12 September), followed by Le Coteau de l'Herme in the rolling green landscape of the Périgord Noir in the east of the Dordogne region (14 - 24 September).



Obituaries

We received the sad news of John Clayton's death just in time to be included in *Trecker* 83 and more recently we heard that Colin Gorham had passed away. They were both long-term members and true stalwarts of the club and it seems fitting to pay tribute to them here.

John Clayton

As *Trecker* 83 was going to print it was announced that John Clayton had passed away. He had a stroke at home and died a few days later on 3rd September in hospital. He had been a member of Suntreckers for more than 30 years, with his wife Ann, until she died in 2012. He served on the committee for 14 years and was one of just a few to get Honorary Life Membership. We are sure many of you will have some great memories of him and many will remember the auction at the Gala Rally, which he ran for around 20 years. The

funeral was a private one. We would like to say thank you to everyone for the cards, messages and kind thoughts at this time.

Jackie & Alan Ingram

Colin Gorham

Sandra and I had the pleasure of knowing Colin for many years, having met him and his wife Avril in 1979 when we joined Arcadians Sun Club as first time Naturists. They and others including Jane and Alan, Clive and Brenda made us most welcome. When we left Arcadians and joined Suntreckers in 1983 little did we know that the other two couples would also join. In this small band Suntreckers gained three Chairmen, one Treasurer and a Rally Organiser amongst other jobs.

Colin was at one time over a period of eight years The Treasurer and Membership Secretary as well as acting as a Rally Officer on many rallies and Colin and Avril also assisted Clive and Brenda on many other rallies.

Colin worked tirelessly to do his best for Suntreckers both at our AGMs and as the club's British Naturism Representative for many years. His input at Suntreckers AGMs were always carefully thought out and worth listening to and many times swung an argument to his point of view, not always to the Committee's way. I as Chairman had many a tussle with him, but we always stayed friends. At a local level he found two rally fields for us which we are still using many years later. Colin was always ready to give advice to anybody who asked, both personal and in relation to Suntreckers Rules and Regulations or how to get the best out of a formal meeting.

He also loved playing Pétanque and organised the Gala Rally Competition and represented Suntreckers at national competitions along with BN at international level. He kept us in check when he ran the competitions at our local rallies. Colin and Avril were always a pleasure to be with on rallies and I know the Essex members will miss their company.

I know many of his friends will mourn his passing. I know because Sandra and I are among them.

Graham Addison

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 ppo@suntreckers.org.uk

Thank you to John for sending this newsletter by email, and to Malcom and Maureen for printing and sending out the paper version. Also thanks to Alan for putting it on the website.