

The **LAIKA**[®]



CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN



NEWSLETTER

www.laikaclub.com

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Summer 2021

Your Laika Club Committee

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Chair's Chat

Welcome to another edition of the club newsletter which I hope will provide you with some interesting reading and a selection of opportunities to get away with the club. As I write this the Government has announced that it will hold back on further relaxation of the current lockdown measures although I know many of you will already have taken advantage of the re-opening of campsites.

Ruth and I have yet to get away properly. Our MH had been SORNed since January 2020 but we ventured to the south coast and the Southdown's workshop at the end of May in the hope that they could fix our door once and for all. Our previous visit there was August 2019 and parts were needed. The parts arrived in December 2019 but our subsequent 2 bookings had to be cancelled due to various lockdowns. So we had 2 nights away at the very well organised CMC Rookesbury Park site and a day walking along the pleasant and vibrant Portsmouth coastline whilst Southdown worked on the MH, and all seems good now with the door. Following our 15 months of full-timing the MH needed a little TLC so a deep clean, some running repairs, new carpets, and we are all ready for the off.

We are booked for the Ilkley and Little Hereford rallies and we hope to see some of you at one, other, or both of those. We had planned to fill in some other sites between these rallies but it seems that a ready mix lorry and a new garage floor have got in the way of that. Maybe we will head somewhere else after the Little Hereford rally before heading back for the quiet and safety of

The club has arranged a varied rally programme and we hope that everything planned can go ahead. On behalf of members I would like to extend my thanks to the organisers of these rallies for taking up the challenge during these unpredictable times.

Whatever you do this year, stay safe, take care, and enjoy your travels.

Paul Lawrence

Welcome to New Members

Ross & Gertrude Helmy

The following is an extract from our travel blog for our trip from home, through France, Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia down to Dubrovnik in 2017.

Paul & Ruth

Peljesac Peninsula

Wednesday 11th – Sunday 15th October

So, our overnight stop at Zaostrog was comfortable but today we must make for the ferry from Ploce across to Trpanj on the Peljesac peninsula. Now as you may be aware by now, we are not that good at getting going early and we thought that the 11am ferry would be too tight for us, so we opted to try for the 14:15. It is a straight-forward drive down to Ploce from Zaostrog and we got there in plenty of time. In fact the ferry terminal was deserted when we arrived, the markings on the road and quayside were almost non-existent and so it was difficult to know where exactly to go.

I parked the motorhome in no-mans land whilst Ruth went in search of the Jadrolinija office to buy our ticket. There had been a little discussion at the ticket office because Ruth had told them our motorhome was 7m. That presented some difficulty because they have pricing for under 7m and over 7m – so 6.99m it was and the 274Kn fee was duly paid. I started to move the motorhome up to where I thought we might have to queue and we waited.

A short time later a couple of men came over and told me to move, not only was I in the wrong lane (there are lanes?) but I was too far forward (those invisible stop lines are so difficult to judge). So, we moved as instructed and waited. We knew it would be some time so I stayed with the dogs whilst Ruth went in search of some provisions for lunch. Some time later a few other vehicles started to arrive and presumably used our vehicle as a guide of where to queue. Of course when the 'queue manager' came I had to move forward because I was not quite in the right place whilst other vehicles had to swap 'lanes'. It all seemed a bit bizarre to me because when we finally loaded onto the ferry both lanes went on at the same time.

We saw our ferry come in some time before our expected sailing and unload the vehicles that had come from Trpanj. It was no problem waiting for the ferry because the quay at Ploce is so pleasant. A Swedish gentleman came over to talk to me and introduced himself as working for the leading camping magazine in Sweden. He was travelling in a car but asked me about the lo-



gistics of taking a motorhome across on the ferry. He obviously knew the Peljesac peninsular because he imparted various tips of where to go and places to see. Some of those we had already pencilled in but it's useful to have independent verification that your plans are along the

right lines. He did suggest that we try the oysters at Ston but they have never really appealed that much to me so me might leave that one off the list.

We had good weather for the ferry crossing, it was a beautiful day and the view as we crossed was magnificent. It's about an hour crossing but on a nice day the time soon flies. You have to leave your vehicles during the crossing and dogs have to stay in outside areas on the ferry. OK on a nice day, but I can imagine during cold and rough weather we might have had a difficult time. We did notice that some did not take heed of the signs to vacate vehicles and we didn't see anyone challenged so I guess that might always be an option in poor weather.

We were front of the queue on the quay, first to load, and would be first off. I could just imagine the joy of the car and van drivers who loaded behind us. At Trpanj there is nowhere to pull over and check your bearings once you disembark, you are straight off the ferry in the town centre and on your way out of town, and over the hills either towards Oribic or Ston.



We were heading to somewhere just the other side of Oribic, but somewhere as yet we hadn't quite decided. Once over the hills from Trpanj we began our descent down the other side towards Oribic. The views are breathtaking. We just cannot get over how the views in Croatia just keep coming, you think you've seen it all and then round the next corner, wow, another fantastic view.

We passed through Oribic, still uncertain of where we would stay. We had identified a couple of options but it came down to arbitrary decision as we were driving along that we would head for Loviste and a site called Camp Lupis.



We followed the coast road along out of Oribic and through a couple of other small settlements and then began a steep climb up an over another set of hills. Wow again, another fantastic view this time looking back and down at where we had been a few minutes earlier. Around the corner at the top and starting our descent back down again and towards Loviste and yes, you guessed it, wow. In terms of views coastal Croatia just keeps on giving.



Loviste is about as far north as you can go on the peninsular. There is no through traffic because everyone that has come here has come to Loviste. This as we were to find out made it a really quite and peaceful place to be.

As we approach Loviste the satnav wanted us to take a right turn down a rather makeshift road which appeared to double back on itself. We didn't take it, opting instead for the wider and much more suitable road ahead. It transpires that this makeshift double-back road is a sort of by-pass and avoids you having to negotiate all of the parked cars along the sea front village centre. Well it was too late for us but both roads ended up in the same place and we were fine.



The final approach road to Camp Lupis is single track at best and when we got to the site there seemed no way I was going to get the motorhome in the entrance, let alone up to the pitches. Ruth had gone to find the owner and investigate whilst I waited blocking the road. Of

course whilst waiting a car came up behind me so I had to move. A three point turn, reversing onto the beach and then into the first part of the entrance was enough to let the car past. Ruth returned with the owner who explained that he had another entrance a little further up the road and he would guide me to it.

The owners were extremely nice and helpful in every way. They helped us get the motorhome onto a lovely pitch (in fact it was two but it didn't seem to be a problem in low season) and then explained everything about the site and the village, what was open, what was closed, and where to walk.

One of the things that impressed us at Loviste was the night sky. There is very little light pollution at Loviste and the clear sky presented a fantastic starry night.

I've been trying to get into a bit of photography of late and I've always been amazed at some of the photos I've seen of the night sky and in particular the Milky Way. What better thing to do than to use this fantastic sky and see what I could do with my limited camera equipment. Well I have to tell you that I was amazed, and to be honest probably fairly lucky to capture the

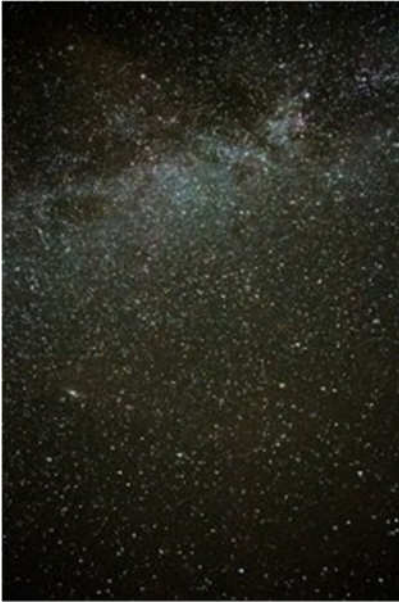


photo that I did.

I didn't really know what I was doing but that is the beauty of digital photography, it doesn't really matter, if you take a series of shots and they don't turn out it hasn't cost you anything, OK, a bit of time, but hopefully it will have been a learning experience and well worth the time spent. My shot isn't perfect by any means, but I have learnt from it, and it has inspired me to take similar shots when I have the opportunity.

On the Thursday, our first full day at Loviste, we did a bit of a recce of the area, having a walk around the bay, seeing what shops there were, restaurants, walking

opportunities, and of course where we might be able to take Lily for a swim. Most of the beaches around the bay seemed to be signed as not dog friendly but when we asked the campsite owner he just indicated that it was low season and it wouldn't be a problem – and indeed it wasn't.

The owners had kindly identified some walking opportunities and we checked these out a little more just by having a wander to see where the paths were and what they looked like.

On the Friday we decided to walk over to Rasoha Bay which is on the mainland side of the peninsula. It wasn't a difficult walk although the first part was quite stony whilst the latter bit was a little narrow and damp.



It is a beautiful little bay with one small boat moored and not a lot

else. Unless of course you count the huge pile of flotsam and jetsam that

seems to have been washed up at the end of the bay. As with everywhere we have found in Croatia the sea is so crystal clear. Lily of course was in here element and had a good play and swim.



That evening we had decided to try out one of the Konoba's for an evening meal. We had spotted one of the other couples from the campsite eating at Konoba Mirce two nights running which we thought sounded like a reasonable recommendation. We had also

seen them making their way there for a third night and so we decided to give it a try, and we weren't to be disappointed.

It wasn't busy, us, the regulars our neighbours, and another couple from the site. The place is only small so another few couples and it would have been full. We both ordered Sea Bass but the waitress returned to say they only one left, so I had the Gilt Head Bream which afterwards we both decided was the better fish. Ruth had ordered a Dalmatian style side dish after a little encouragement from the waitress. This turned out to be boiled chard, garlic and potato, a sort of boiled version of bubble and squeak. We again were in unanimous agreement that ordering this was a mistake, however you have to try these things at least once.

The next day (Saturday), I was a little sluggish getting going so Ruth took the dogs for early morning walk along the track that runs to the rear of the campsite. Part way along she had discovered that there was an apiary right next to the track a few hundred metres along from the campsite. Being a beekeeper this was of course very interesting so later in the day we walked the same way so that Ruth could show me.

I have to admit that I was taken aback. In the UK, beekeepers are used to keeping their bees away from public places, for two reasons really. The first is safety, not all bees are placid creatures, although they are defensive in nature so are only normally a problem if they feel threatened. Secondly, in

the UK, hives are frequently vandalised and sometimes stolen so there is a tendency to keep them out of site and reach of the public. Not in Loviste however, an apiary of about seventy hives, right next to a public track, and even with a sign that must surely encourage the inquisitive to have a look. I wouldn't recommend that anyone approaches a bee hive without protect clothing, that's the way we are in the UK, but being experienced and assessing the situation I couldn't resist having a closer look. The bees seemed so calm and gentle, not bothered by my intrusion (I wish that my bees were as calm as these Croatian ladies) – it does help though knowing how to behave around bees and hives so don't try this one at home folks! I was respectful of being in someone else's apiary and wouldn't have done anything to disturb them, but curiosity satisfied we continued our walk around the tracks and bay.

It was a glorious day and we were hoping for another nice sunset tonight. We weren't disappointed. The sunsets we have seen during this trip have been truly spectacular and honestly like no other sunset I have seen. What a fabulous way to end the day.



We had only intended to stay at Loviste for a couple of nights but to be honest, we loved this place, in fact I could have stayed there I think. We have however plans to visit and see a lot more of Croatia so we decided that we would stay on for the Sunday and then move on the following morning.

Sunday seemed like any other day in Loviste, lovely, sunny, warm, beautiful, peaceful, relaxing, and oh yes Lily wants to play ball in the sea! We spent the day chilling, having



another walk around the bay, and making sure that Lily could get her last swim in. We also did some boring but necessary stuff like laundry.

Monday the 16th October and it's time to pack up and ready for the off. It was quite a sad feeling because we really could have stayed here much longer. The area is great, the campsite is great, the campsite owners are lovely and helpful, and to be honest, our fellow campers were all very nice too.

We were the only Brits on the site and couldn't really strike up a meaningful conversation with anyone but you do get a feel for how people are. We 'spoke' with one of the couples on the site just before we left and asked how much longer they were going stay. They looked as though they had already been here for some time and when asked they said that they would stay as long the weather held out, when it changed, they would go home. We do feel that on another trip to Croatia we would certainly drop in here and probably stay and chill for a little longer.



So, all packed up, ready to hit the road, and we find that Vincent feels exactly the same as us. He likes the place and does not want to go – Vincent is staying by the look of things. Of course he couldn't, we had places to go, and he would get to like other places too. Eventually, a bit of coaxing and persuasion did the trick and we left Loviste.

The full blog can be read at <https://ourmeanderings.blog>.

Paul & Ruth

Address Change

Richard & Ruth Moss – 13, Sturton Road, Saxilby, Lincoln. LN1 2BH

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SCOTTISH ISLE HOPPING

This year seemed the ideal time to visit Scotland, something which we have often thought we should do. With no foreign travel allowed and May/June being a favoured time for Scotland off we went planning to do the NC500.

We hopped over to Arran and all our plans changed – Arran, Kintyre, Islay, Ulva, Mull, Ioana and Skye. We would have done the Outer Hebrides but CalMac had their biggest ship in dry dock for 6 weeks and they weren't taking bookings before mid June.

Whilst touring the Scottish Isles we came across several interesting community ventures, one of which was Ulva, a small island in the Inner Hebrides off the west coast of Mull. It is separated from Mull by a narrow strait and connected to the neighbouring island of Gometra by a bridge. Much of the island is formed from Cenozoic basalt rocks, which are formed into columns in places. It has an area of 19.9 km² and an elevation of 313 m

It is owned by its 18 occupants and its assets include:

- Sheila's cottage – a restored traditional cottage, open to the public

- Oyster farm

- Bunkhouse

- 500,000 native trees

- Refurbished ferry building

- Flock of Hebridean sheep

- Herd of Highland cattle

- Purchase of barge to transport animals, goods etc

- Installation of solar panels

- Self catering cottage (fully booked)

- Hosts history and archaeology students

- Kayaking groups

- Salmon farm

- Footpaths signed and maintained and leaflets provided

- Island website <http://www.isleofulva.com/>

- A motorhome aire on Mull next to the ferry.



We stayed on the 4-pitch camping aire which had electricity, water and waste disposal and used the ferry (5 minutes) to get across the Sound.

We started with excellent coffee and cake in the tearooms and then followed the paths for 4 miles through some beautiful scenery, returning for lunch at the tearooms.

The roads on all the islands were mainly single track with passing bays and we were amazed to see a double decker bus on Mull, plus a couple of large lorries – I pulled in and let them overtake!

The people were friendly and happy, quite content to live so far away from what we call civilisation. We tried one campsite on Skye, which was full, and the owner directed us down a lane towards Elgol telling us to go past the yellow digger and we would find a piece of level ground just beyond. We did, and were joined by another motorhome later on.

The trip was a real tonic after lockdown. Beautiful scenery, no pressures and a sense of normality. The ferries weren't that expensive and apart from the Outer Hebrides, we managed to get on ferries without a booking and usually the same day or early the following morning.

We shall return to do the Outer Hebrides and then Orkney and Shetland, as well as the NC 500.

Katrina Lancaster

Delamere Forest Moot

Escape at last! A select group met at the Delamere Forest CCC site. We were blessed with fine weather for our walks and bike rides in the forest and also a café serving outdoor refreshments.

Tim had a problem with his bike – the chain jumped off and got twisted

round the gear sprocket and he couldn't get it right. A kind person stopped to try to help but said a stand was needed to get the bike up and do the job. Then along comes the RAF – hoists the bike on his shoulder and carries it to the forest bike shop where for £20 the problem was solved. Wonderful to meet such people.

A group took the train from the adjacent station into Chester for a bit of retail therapy, historical discovery tour of the walls and cathedral and of course an outdoor lunch. Another day was a visit to Marbury Country Park where the bluebells were in flower and there was a good choice of walking and cycling.

Great to meet up once again and a good venue to use in the future.

Katrina Lancaster

Rally Programme Update

Karen and I have returned from a month touring Scotland in our Laika. Despite the foul weather we really appreciated the insulation in the van which kept out the constant biting Northerly wind. We realised that when the locals wear bobble hats in May it was cold! Our 2,200 mile tour took us right to the top of Scotland and some amazing scenery and sites. Anyone fancy a Scottish Rally in 2022?

For those of you who attended the Cheddar Bridge Rally the photos in Facebook, it looked like a great start to the rally season. Thank you to Eric and Dee Gould for organising.

The Ilkley Rally, June 20th to June 25th, has had a great response with 15 vans booked in. Looking forward to seeing all the photos from this rally run by Peter and Jane Wood.

Ludlow Rally, July 5th to July 9th run by Jacqui and Charles Chodkowsk, is also fully booked. The site situated by the River Teme will have lots of opportunities for walking and no doubt a trip or two to local hostelries.

Harrogate Caravan Park at the Great Yorkshire Showground from Sunday 3rd October to Friday 8th October 5 nights at £20 per night will make the perfect end of Summer Rally. 10 pitches have been reserved but there is a

minimum requirement for all 10 to be taken, so please send Kath an e mail and book your place asap and definitely before the end of June. krelliott1947@hotmail.co.uk to include your name, length of your motorhome and how many nights you wish to stay. With a pub only 200 yards from the site you won't need to cook often!

Christmas Rally at Teversal Nottingham at the Camping and Caravan Club site. 2nd December to 6th December. This will be our club AGM and no doubt apart from walks, pubs and visits to local attractions there will be last minute Christmas present buying opportunities. At the last count only 3 reservations had been made and Kath and Peter Elliott have reserved 15 pitches. So Please book your place - krelliott1947@hotmail.com

2022 Rally Season.

As a Club we like to have a few Rallies and Sites pencilled in well before Autumn. At the minute we have a blank canvas. I am sure many of you have your favourite site or area near where you live which you would like to share with other members and run your own rally. So do please email me at mchisholm11@hotmail.co.uk so we can discuss what the Club and I can do to help you run a Rally and get some publicity out to our membership. Thank you and Happy Motorhoming.

Murray Chisholm

2021 Rally Programme Overview

June 20th to 25th (5 nights)	Ilkley Rugby Club	Stewards Peter and Jane Wood	Fully booked
July 5th to 9th (4 nights)	Ludlow	Stewards Charles and Jacqui Chodkowski	Fully booked

October 3rd to 8th (5 nights)	Harrogate Caravan Park, Great Yorkshire Showground	Stewards Kath and Peter Elliott	£20 per night
December 2nd to 6th (4 nights)	Teversal, Notts AGM/Christmas rally	Stewards Kath and Peter Elliott	£19.70 per night

Ilkley June 20th to 25th (5 nights Sunday to Friday)

Ilkley Rugby Club

Fully booked.

Rally Stewards: Peter & Jane Wood

Ludlow July 5th to 9th (4 nights Monday to Friday)

Westbrook Park, Lych Lane, Little Hereford, Ludlow SY8 4AU

Fully booked.

Rally Stewards: Jacqui & Charles Chodkowski

Harrogate 3rd to 8th October 2021 (5 nights Sunday to Friday)

Harrogate Caravan Park, Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 8NZ

To hold this rally we need 10 units and pay a deposit. I have been given a few weeks to 'persuade' members to come before finalising the booking but 10 pitches have been reserved for us together. As it is early October it gives time afterwards to go elsewhere before half term (grandchildren).

Details - £20/night, approx 2 miles from Harrogate with half hourly buses from Sainsbury's, short walk away. Cycle path, dog walks and most importantly a pub 200 yards away. This site has been recommended by an ex member and it seems a good idea as we have nothing in the rally pro-

gramme for September or October. If like us, you are not planning on travelling abroad this year and prefer to boost UK economy! then please come along and let me know ASAP.

I will need to know number of nights, length of vehicle and your name!

Thanks

Rally Stewards: Kath and Peter Elliott

Xmas Rally & AGM December 2nd to 6th (4 nights Thurs to Mon)

**Teversal Camping and Caravanning Club Site, Silverhill Lane,
Teversal, Sutton in Ashfield NG17 3JJ**

The rally price is £19.70/night including Electric and dogs. This works out at 5p cheaper than you would pay as a member of the CCC (bargain!). A non member would pay £30.90. By going down the rally price route I have to collect the money. Therefore, please turn up with £78.80 (EXACT MONEY PLEASE) to give to me on arrival so I can get shut of the money to the office ASAP.

Please be proactive and let me know soon as we only have 15 pitches but may be able to get another 3 if early enough.

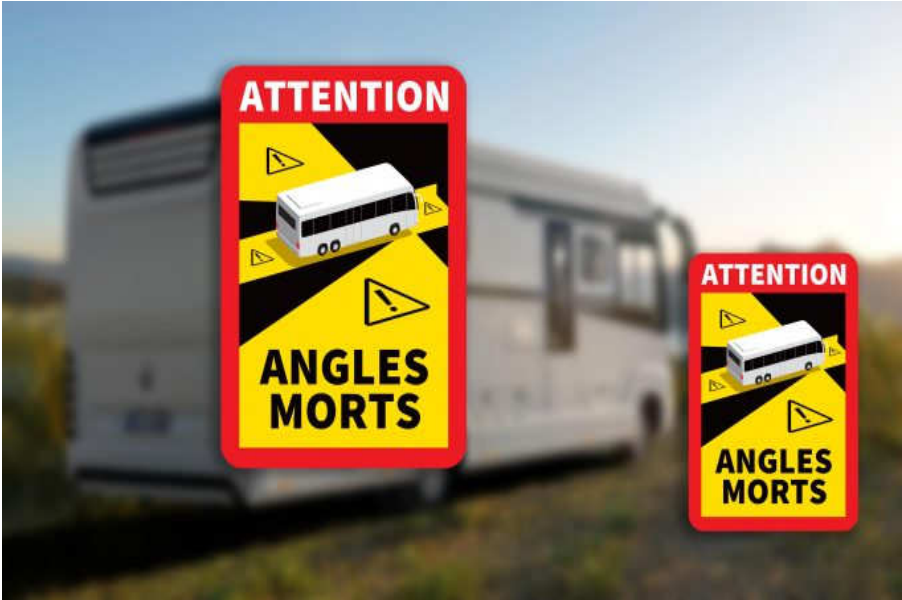
The Carnarvon pub is booked for 7.30pm on Saturday 4th December, 30 places are reserved but we can go up to 36. In August/September the Christmas menu and cost will be published. We have to pre-order and pay £10/head deposit. Further details will arrive by email once I have the menu.

The AGM will be on Friday 3rd December between 4 and 6 pm. It will be held in the Scout hut that was, now privately owned and refurbished. We couldn't hire the room on Saturday as they are holding a cake and candle event, all welcome.

Rally Stewards: Kath and Peter Elliott

New blind spot signage for France

Whilst I suspect few of us will be driving in France this year with all the restrictions on travel, there are some new requirements for blind spot signage (Angles Morts) which will affect any motorhome over 3.5 tons and not having the required stickers could result in a spot fine of 135 euro.



The rules state that you need signs that are “*visible on the sides and on the rear of the vehicle, in all circumstances. In general, it must be placed between 0.90m and 1.50m from the ground, except in special circumstances*”

The stickers are freely available on both Amazon and Ebay from around £7 for a set of 3 including postage.

Tim Sheppard

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Please, please let the rally stewards know as soon as possible if you have to cancel and make sure when you book that they have got correct email addresses and mobile phone numbers in case they have to contact you.

Thank you

The information and opinions in this newsletter are those of the contact name or names given. The Laika Club of Great Britain does not necessarily agree with nor endorse their comments and/or views. It is a totally independent Club, governed by its constitution giving no preference to any Publication, Dealer or other club. This however, does not prevent, with Committee approval, the fostering of mutually beneficial relations.