



# KNAUS KONTAKT

August 2008

## Newsletter – August 2008

**Well** I can't believe it is nearly the end of August. The Summer weather seems to have been a bit mixed to say the least. I hope all members have managed to enjoy their motor-homing, wherever you went and whatever the weather. I think most of you have been away as it has been quiet for the last few weeks. We've had a few breaks away before seeing some nice sun in Norfolk and North Yorkshire and are off to Scotland for a few days before the next meeting. At the moment we are 'Knausless' as she is in dock with a non-functioning Truma boiler (again!) and Leisuretech have found a blown fuse. The good news is that we found a CL site behind a very nice pub in Huddersfield whilst Lowdhams fitted a new charger. The electrics now work wonderfully well. We have also discovered the boiler dumps hot water on top of the spare wheel, but this should be easily fixed by extending/rerouting the pipe – I will let you know the outcome.

### Next meeting

The next meet will be at the Northern Motorcaravan Show at Pickering Showground, North Yorkshire in September (spot the deliberate mistake in the last newsletter where I moved it to Pocklington! - thanks to everyone who let me know). As usual, you can book by returning a form from any of the Motorhome magazines or book on-line at [www.northernmotorcaravanshow.co.uk](http://www.northernmotorcaravanshow.co.uk). Don't forget to put membership of the Knaus Owners Club, so we can camp together. If you need a membership number, quote the one against your 'van on our website database. The show dates are **19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>** September 2008. Pre-booking closes at **09:00** on **01 Sep 2008**. The organizers say this year you'll be able to stay one extra night free, with an extra night of free entertainment. Your free nights camping is on Monday 22nd September, all units must be off site by 12noon on Tuesday 23rd September. We are looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible there.

### Letter from Knaus

Following your questions at the AGM, I wrote to Knaus to ask if there were any UK Knaus approved service centres (in addition to Lowdhams) that members can use for habitation and damp checks, warranty work and purchase of spare parts. In response Knaus sent a complete dealer list for Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Germany, GB, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain and Czech Republic. The only ones listed for GB are Lowdhams at Huddersfield and Nottingham and the ex-Hants & Dorset dealership at Waterlooville. If you are going abroad and need a copy of the dealer list, let me know.

### Mike and Jill sent us two really useful tips:

**Did you know?** ... if you look at your dashboard it will tell you which side the fuel cap is on. On most vehicles you will see a small picture of a fuel pump, complete with delivery pipe and nozzle. If the fuel cap is on the left, the nozzle and pipe will be on the left and vice versa. If the fuel cap is somewhere on the back of the car, there will be no nozzle, just a dot above the pump. Thanks very much for this tip Mike as I am always pulling onto the wrong side of the pumps and then having to drag the hose over the car, or worse still drive out and back again to the right side! I looked at my Toyota car and there is also a little arrow.

**How to get a stolen mobile phone disabled.** Your mobile phone has a serial number. To check what this is, key in the following digits on your phone: **\*#06#** and a 15 digit code will appear on the screen. This number is unique to your handset. Write it down and keep it somewhere safe. If your phone gets stolen you can contact your service provider and give them this code. They will be able to block your handset so even if a thief changes the SIM card, the phone will be totally useless. You are unlikely to get your phone back, but at least you know that whoever stole it can't either use it or sell it. If we all did this there would be little point in stealing mobile phones.

## Air Conditioning

Gary Weston, a fellow motorhome owner sent an article he thought you may find interesting regarding the benefits of the latest portable air conditioning units. He says:

“Like anything, these systems and units have their pros and cons and your members may be interested in the systems I found and a few tips about the various cheap ones appearing on the market.

### The main benefits are –

- Less than £300 buys you air conditioning, heating, fan and dehumidifier as against £1300/£1500+installation – less than £200 buys aircon and fan only
- No installation – plug and go – could also be run off a 1000W inverter for wild camping
- Energy efficient – latest technology – low amps – less than 1amp
- Convenient – no constant draining water – self sufficient, very low maintenance (a bit like modern fridge freezers)
- Quiet – so quiet you can leave them on all night for comfortable sleeping
- Remote control, timer, 3 speeds and other functions
- Flexible and full use – use in the home, conservatory and office when not camping – tax savings when purchased through a business
- Easily transportable, compact, lightweight at 29kg

### Possible cons are –

- Still quite heavy for older owners to lift on/off the van
- Siting and trunking from back of unit to any outside door or window may be a problem for some van layouts
- Although compact, will still take up some floor space
- Securing unit whilst travelling as apposed roof installed unit
- Only really suitable for vans from 6.5-7m upwards

There is more information, online ordering and motorhome/caravan owners fact sheet at – [www.climachill.co.uk](http://www.climachill.co.uk).” (See Gary’s article at the end of the newsletter).

A news sheet for the Knaus Owners Club in the UK

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The Club website is at

[www.knausowners.com](http://www.knausowners.com)

and is where Steve Brock would be happy if you will email your experiences to him for others to share. There is also a Forum where you can post questions or put up subjects for discussion. Why not log on and see?

## Adverts

**as always, we make no recommendations and are just passing on the info**

**For Sale:** Sun Traveller 658 kg, 2002, 6-berth with rear bunk beds. Excellent condition. £21,000.00 ono. Tel: Mr Seymour on 01534 485163.

**TechLeisure Ltd** are offering members a free rally at the new caravan and motorhome show at the 3 counties Showground in Malvern on October 2-6<sup>th</sup> 2008. If you purchase two adult entry passes (at £7 each) for the show you will receive 3 days entry to the show and two nights free pitch fees. Contact TechLeisure on 0870 794 0111 or go to [www.techleisure.co.uk](http://www.techleisure.co.uk)

**Van Comfort** Silver Insulation Screens (Retford) are offering a ‘generous trade/club discount’ on their German made inner and outer screens. They advertise inner roof light screens for Knaus Sun-Ti and Heki. Contact Steve Beevers on 01777 701804 or go to [www.vancomfort.co.uk](http://www.vancomfort.co.uk)



**South Lytchett Manor Caravan & Camping Park** in Poole are offering a rally destination. Their brochure lists a good level of amenities including shop, off licence and internet access and there is a main bus route stop outside the gates. Rates are £11.50 per night with electric and £9 without. Contact Chris McFarlane on 01202 622577 or go to [www.southlytchettmanor.co.uk](http://www.southlytchettmanor.co.uk)

# **MOTORHOMING WITH A PORTABLE AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM**



(New aircon unit in situ photos to be taken over the next 2 weeks)

We took our new Ace Airstream 680FB to France for the first time this year, on a three week tour of the Dordogne and Loir regions. We had planned to also visit the Riviera and Provence, but with 35° in the shade temperatures, we and our two dogs couldn't take it and we turned north to slightly cooler 'climes'.



We loved France but decided next year we would need air conditioning fitted if we were to make touring a more comfortable for us and essential for our two pet passported poochies.

Looking through the motorhoming magazines told us roof fitting an air conditioning system to our van as a retrofit, would cost around £1300 for the system plus installation, and then there was the travelling with the additional roof weight, slight loss of performance, and additional MPG this would incur.

Then a friend suggested why not adding a portable air conditioning unit?

On return to the UK we visited Climachill ([www.climachill.co.uk](http://www.climachill.co.uk)), our local air conditioning experts in Sussex, and suddenly was a 'no-brainer'. Why doesn't every motorhome and caravan owner know about portable aircon systems?

Climachill demonstrated their very latest, compact energy efficient, fully featured 9000BTU systems.

Retailing for well below £300, as against £1300, and 'plug-and-go' needing no installation (and cost), we immediately saw the obvious attraction.

Climachill offer a below £200 aircon only 9000BTU system and both aircon and heating combined 9000 BTU unit but who wouldn't want the combined aircon and blown air heating combo – and I forgot to mention, these units also dehumidify and blow cool air like a fan in the same unit.

We took delivery of our unit straight onboard from Climachill and went camping.

Fortunately, it was a perfect hot weather weekend, and also perfect weather for testing out our new portable aircon system, now sitting in our van like CP30.

These units are portable and weight 41kg, come on wheels and with a chunky comfortable lifting handle, but still quite heavy and better for two people to lift onboard, than one person. Once onboard, it can be moved on wheels and secured ours in the washroom whilst travelling but will perhaps fit a securing strap somewhere for peace of mind.

The Ace Airstream 680FB is a 7m motorhome and not designed for floor positioned portable aircon units but we still found three suitable places for 'CP30' to sit so its back air ducting pipe could be placed out our van's nearby doors or window. On larger vans and especially coachbuilds, positioning the unit wouldn't be a problem with their extra floor space. Of course, roof fitted systems don't need floor space.

At 900W, the aircon unit works well from the mains and was no problem working alongside our onboard state of the art electric circuitry of the Airstream including microwave, fridge freezer and normal onboard works. At 900W, it may also be possible to run the unit from a 1000W inverter for any wild camping and all round motorhome use. Maybe even whilst travelling which would be a real bonus.

Other good news is these units are not noisy. They have 3 speed/power setting and once the van has been cooled or heated (taking around 10-15 minutes), the unit can then sit at its lowest setting and purrs away unobtrusively. In fact so quietly, you can leave it running all night for cooler climate more comfortable sleeping. It's also thermostatically controlled so will automatically maintain your desired temperature.

Other good news is these latest units come with remote control and they self maintain almost all water collection so no more constant water emptying (especially for all night running).

Once running, the unit can be programmed very easily using the coloured top settings. In fact, so easy, I didn't even need the manual to get things moving and read this later for any indepth info and tips. Now that's real 'plug and go'.

The quality of cooling and heating is excellent and very comfortable. The unit projects the air or heat forward and circulates the air and heat so effectively my wife could feel the benefits from the other end of the vehicle.

Another great benefit of these portable air conditioning units for us was when not touring, we can use it in around our home, conservatory or office, and then back onboard for camping which is impossible with a fixed roof system.

Now a word of warning. Such is the growing popularity of portable air conditioning that many major branded outlets such as B&Q, Argus (etc) now offer portable aircon units at considerably less price than the Climachill units - but beware – you only get what you pay for with aircon, and for motorhoming and caravan use, you need a unit that's up to the job. The cheaper units are not up to the job and you will find yourself taking your cheaper unit back pleading for a refund.

When I asked Climachill about warranty, their units come with full warranty, replacement and technical support but over the years Climachill have been selling their units, the only fault has been from rough haulage damage. These units are well built and well up to the job. Like I said, you get what you pay for.

Now when people ask if we have air conditioning onboard our motorhome, we can say... 'oh yes', isn't it wonderful. We wouldn't be without it – and of course with a portable's flexibility, you can take it with you wherever you go.

A no-brainer.

End 922 words

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**For more information and a motorhome and caravan owner's factsheet visit – [www.climachill.co.uk](http://www.climachill.co.uk)**