

GOOD TO KNOW APRIL 2010

OBITUARY

We have only recently read in the UCC club magazine of the death of Mr. Emili Freixa Boada, known to most of us as Emilio Freixa.

He died at the age of 88 on 23 January 2009 in his home town of Barcelona/Spain.

He was one of the founder members of Unio Caravanista de Catalunya and devoted his life not simply to his own club, but to the wider international camping movement.

Under his leadership, Unio Caravanista de Catalunya organised two highly successful international F.I.C.C. rallies. The first was in Vilopriu (near Gerona) in 1982 and the second at Montmelo near Barcelona in 2003. This was a large friendly gathering of enthusiastic rally-goers at which Emilio, his club committee and members made sure that we, the participants, experienced and enjoyed a real Catalan/Spanish occasion.

Everyone was happy to see Emilio Freixa and his wife Rosa at rallies. Thanks to their excellent grasp of French and English, they were able to make and keep in touch with many, many friends around the world.

Emilio Freixa was a very intelligent, sporty, proud and fair-minded gentleman who had a dry, even ironical sense of humour. He was an accomplished organiser (even audiences with the King of Spain) and was a pillar of strength for his federation.

For many years Emilio Freixa was F.I.C.C.'s auditor and, at the request of one of F.I.C.C.'s former Presidents, Ivar Kahl, represented the Fédération Internationale de Camping et de Caravanning at a number of important congresses in Spain.

Everyone who knew Emilio Freixa will have fond memories of him as a figure who was much valued and respected within camping circles, but more especially in the UCC, Catalunya and Spain.

Camping holidays gain increasing popularity in the Netherlands

According to Recron, Dutch people have been spending more time camping in their own country in recent years and in 2009, 500,000 of them chose to take their holidays on Dutch campsites. Principal deciding factors were the fun of seeking adventure, being close to nature and wanting to enjoy time together as a family of course. Increasingly holiday centres are coming up with attractive programmes and deals and are marketing these very successfully.

The consumer has realised that the Dutch tourism sector has invested wisely and offers both quality and variety, so everyone is eagerly awaiting the 2010 holiday season.

Source: De Caravan

Legionnaires' disease – A risk for caravanners?

Legionnaires' disease is caused by a type of bacteria known as Legionella. Legionella bacteria thrive in surface water and sea water and since they occur naturally and are everywhere, it is only natural that a small number are found in ground water. So it follows that it is possible to find Legionella in the drinking water supply.

You mainly get infected by breathing in mist from warm water, but an untreated drinking water supply in a caravan can also represent a serious risk. Other hazardous sources include filters on water taps (faucets) and, more especially, shower heads. Legionella multiply rapidly above 20°C, the optimum temperature for proliferation being between 30°C and 40°C. They stop multiplying above 55°C and evidently die off in temperatures above 60°C. It certainly doesn't pay to economise on the temperature of your hot water where Legionella is concerned.

Legionella multiply on biofilm that accumulates on the walls of the tank and pipes of the drinking water supply. Thermal disinfection that does not eliminate biofilm simply provides a good breeding ground for the bacteria, so is not successful in the long run. However using chlorine and peroxide in the Legionella cleaning-up process and thoroughly checking plumbing systems can obtain long term germ reduction and has resulted in a fall in the number of cases of the disease.

By using this combination one can obtain acceptably low systemic germination in new as well as old installations that have been in service for a long time.

Caravans per head of population – Sweden overtakes the Netherlands

The shift took place quietly and stealthily! The Dutch are no longer Europe's N° 1 caravanning nation - Sweden now claims the top position in Europe with 294 caravans for every 10,000 inhabitants.

The Netherlands have only just fallen behind with 285 caravans for every 10,000 inhabitants and Denmark is in third place with 263 caravans for every 10,000 people. According to CIVD, Germany is seventh with 116 outfits, but is nevertheless well above the average for Europe with 104 caravans for every 10,000 inhabitants.

Think about changing your holiday money now

Anyone who will be taking their holidays in a country outside the euro-zone would do well to think about changing up their money now. Thanks to the favourable rate of exchange, your stay in Norway for example could work out up to 25% cheaper (Norwegian Tourist Office).

Source: Camping, Cars & Caravans

Preparation - key to summer driving

With summer on the way, the coming months will see increasing numbers of motorists taking to the roads and heading for theme parks, seaside resorts and the countryside.

Before setting out, check your oil and tyre pressure: many drivers break down before reaching their destination simply because they fail to carry out such basic maintenance checks.

Motorists also need to spend time planning their journey and ensure that they are prepared for delays and route closures caused by excessive traffic and accidents.

Motorists often get lost because they use maps that are out of date. Research reveals that more than half of all drivers rely on road maps that are more than two years old, and almost a third use maps that are over four years old.

Source: The Caravan Club

Assaults on camping vehicles in Spain/France

Make sure you take the following precautions:

- ° Never stop overnight at a motorway service area or petrol station.
- ° When filling up, one person should remain inside your locked vehicle.
- ° Whenever you stop for a break, lock all of your car doors, and do not forget the safety lock on your caravan.
- ° If, when you are driving along, someone in another vehicle indicates that there is a problem with your outfit, don't stop but carry on driving.
- ° Don't be taken in by bogus policemen who signal to you to pull over. Unfortunately there are criminals around disguised as police.
- ° Always use your central locking when stopping at traffic lights.
- ° When you are stationary, keep your windows closed and never open them when asked to do so by a stranger.
- ° When stopping to have a rest in a service area, one person should always stay awake even in daytime.

Source: DCC

Proposed trailer towing changes in Great Britain

The Department of Transport is proposing to implement a European Directive in 2010 to allow trailers up to 2.55m wide to be towed by vehicles of a gross vehicle weight less than 3,500 kg. At present, British National Regulations only permit cars to tow trailers (including caravans) up to a maximum width of 2.3m.

Source: The Camping and Caravanning Club

Big growth in camping in Germany

The number of nights spent at campsites in Germany were 25 million in 2009, an increase of 9% compared with 2008. This is the second highest increase since 2001. Overnight stays by foreign nationals went up by 6% to 3.7 million and the figure for domestic visitors was 21.3 million, an increase of 10%.

Snippets of information about portable toilets

According to Wikipedia, the term "toilet", comes from the French term "toile" (cloth) or "toilette" (little cloth) used as a screen to shield one from one's entourage when answering a call of nature. The Chinese have a very eloquent expression for toilets, namely "Hall of Inner Harmony".

The English inventor, Alexander Cummings, patented his design for a water closet in 1775.

Thetford has been manufacturing portable toilets for over 35 years. The first portable model was the Porta Potti and Thetford now has six different versions in its catalogue.

The World Toilet Organisation has named November 19th World Toilet Day.

The Latin proverb "Pecunia non olet" – (Money doesn't smell) dates from Roman times when Emperor Vespasian (9-79 AD) issued a decree levying a tax on public toilets.

Basic rules for toilet maintenance

- Never pour toilet additives directly onto the sliding valve or into the toilet bowl; this can cause damage to the seal of the waste holding tank. Liquids should always be added via the tubing.

- The waste holding tank is easy to insert. If you have a problem, check that the lever is in the correct i.e. closed position. Using force = serious damage.
- When the toilet is in use, the sliding valve should remain closed; afterwards you slide the handle/knob under the toilet bowl to the side so that the waste holding tank valve opens and the toilet can be flushed for a few seconds. Close the valve again after use.
- Do not travel with a very full waste water tank otherwise water can spill out with the movement of the vehicle and cause damage. For the same reason the toilet bowl should be empty when travelling.
- If the “Water tank” sign lights up, there is still about a litre of water left in the tank. If the LED display on the control panel shows that the waste holding tank is full, it can still take about another 2 litres which corresponds to two or three toilet visits.
- Do not use bleach, vinegar or any other household cleaner to clean your toilet. When cleaning the waste holding tank do not use powerful high pressure cleaners or shake the tank too vigorously. Both of these actions can result in damage to the inside of the tank.
- The toilet’s rubber seals (valve, ventilation, cover) must be regularly cleaned with water and appropriate cleaning products. However, in time, all seals suffer wear and have to be replaced.

Source: Camping, Cars & Caravans

Caravan cleaning

If you leave your caravan standing under tall pine trees, it will inevitably get covered with droplets of resin. This sticky film can be cleaned off by using 100% alcohol or spirit - it dissolves the resin and the residue is removed by washing your caravan. You can use the same process to remove resin from the PVC roof of your awning.

Source: DCC

A thought...

If you are too open-minded, your brains will fall out.

Source: Blue Beret

F.I.C.C. secretariat