



2014 has been a bumper year for the Murvi Club. The AGM was the best attended to date - 44 vans - plus there were meets in Scotland and the Yorkshire Dales and there are lots more activities still in the pipeline as you can see below. Added to that Four Murvis joined a GB Privilege tour of Greece in the spring and a few of our members also went to the motorhome show in Wadebridge in early July where there was an area set aside for the Club.

The AGM weekend was a great success in part because the venue at the [Teveral campsite](#) on the Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire border proved to be considerably more interesting than many of us had anticipated. What's more the weather was much kinder to us than the previous year - plenty of sunshine despite a chilly wind! The campsite was delightful and the wardens Jayne and Chris did everything in their power to ensure that we enjoyed our stay. We had the use of the Scout Hut in the village for the AGM on Saturday evening and again on Sunday evening for an informal get together. The village also boasted the hugely popular Carnarvon pub which did a roaring trade that weekend thanks in part to the unquenchable thirst (and hunger) of our members.



Members at the AGM

As has become the norm at our Murvi Rallies there was no shortage of walking opportunities. The campsite was directly opposite the [Silverhill Woods](#) Country Park which has been created by landscaping the spoil heaps from the now defunct collieries in the area. The summit of the park offers huge vistas in all directions being the highest point in Nottinghamshire and there are numerous trails in the area, many of them utilising the routes of the old colliery railways. One such trail took us to the [Pleasley Colliery](#) which is now a pit museum where we were treated to a fascinating tour by two of the ex-miners from the colliery. At the opposite end of the social scale was Bess of Hardwick, an immensely powerful Elizabethan woman who was responsible for the building of the nearby [Hardwick Hall](#), now owned by the National Trust which many of us visited over the weekend.



The Pit Museum at Pleasley Colliery



Murvis at Cruden Bay

Then in June an ever changing group of club members met on the Aberdeenshire Coast of Scotland. Ronnie & Suzi Leadbitter had organised for an itinerant group of us to stay at three locations over 9 nights in all - firstly at the small community run campsite at Johnshaven, then right on the Harbour wall at Cruden Bay and finally at the village campsite in Portsoy. The coastal walking was delightful, although somewhat challenging at one point where we came across a 'path closed' sign due to cliff erosion. In the true spirit of Murvi pioneers we carried on regardless as otherwise we would have had to retrace our steps and make detour of some miles. Great company and a delightful part of Scotland!

Immediately following the meet in Scotland Geoff & Carol Wilkinson had organised a four night meet in the Yorkshire Dales at Kettlewell in Upper Wharfedale where a group of 6 vans met. I never fail to be knocked out by the beauty of the Dales and thanks to Geoff's knowledge of the Dales we sampled many of the delights of the area - and wore through a substantial amount of boot leather! We were also able to taste the build up of excitement for the forthcoming visit of the Tour de France which was due to pass right by the wall of our campsite a few days later. Everywhere there was yellow bunting, yellow bikes, tour jerseys and welcoming signs and the subsequent tour proved a triumph for Yorkshire.



Kettlewell - Murvis on the left

UPCOMING EVENTS

THE GREAT DORSET STEAM FAIR - TUESDAY 26TH AUGUST TO FRIDAY 29TH AUGUST 2014

If you're looking for an excellent fun and action packed event, you'll love the [Great Dorset Steam Fair](#). Traditionally this English fair is held at the village of Tarrant Hinton, near Blandford Forum in the heart of the beautiful Dorset countryside. Further directions are superfluous. Just find the village on the map, head in that direction and follow everyone else to the show. See the article on page 5 to get a flavour of the fair.

If you are thinking of going to the Great Dorset Steam Fair and wish to camp alongside other Murvi Club members then Alan Major has a cunning plan. Since the club cannot have a designated area for members Alan's plan is to meet up for lunch at the [Farquharson Arms](#) in Pimperne on Tuesday 26th August from 11:30 onwards. The group of Murvis will then all drive the short distance to the GDSF so that they arrive together and thus will hopefully all be sited together on the camping site.

Continued

.....Continued from page 1

Alan & Marilyn are booked in at GDSF for the nights of 26, 27 & 28 August and have purchased day tickets for 27 & 28 August. If you intend to join the convoy from the pub to the GDSF on Tuesday 26th then could you please let Alan know in advance at alandmajor@gmail.com.

BUCKLERS HARD IN THE NEW FOREST - THURSDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER TO WEDNESDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 2014



The 'peaceful haven' of Buckler's Hard is on the banks of the Beaulieu River in the New Forest National Park. Beaulieu River is one of the few privately owned rivers in the world and its banks play host to an exceptional variety of flora and fauna. It's an ideal base to explore the New Forest and is just a short walk to Beaulieu village along the river to the National Motor Museum.

The Maritime Museum and Buckler's Hard Story give an insight into the history of the village whilst a trip on the river or a walk beside the riverbank provides an opportunity to see some of its abundant wildlife. (See <http://www.bucklershard.co.uk> for more information).

Morning coffee, light lunches, all day snacks, and clotted cream teas are a few of the delicious items that can be enjoyed at the Captain's Cabin Tea Rooms. There is also a small selection of provisions including daily newspapers, milk and bread. The Master Builders House Hotel is located at the bottom of Buckler's Hard village street and serves lunch and dinner daily. (www.themasterbuilders.co.uk) Rallies of up to 40 vans can be accommodated and there is a drinking water point, chemical disposal point and public toilets in the village although these are not accessible after closing time. The rally site is only available to organised groups, so we should have it to ourselves.

We have negotiated a pitch fee of £11.00 per night which includes admission to Buckler's Hard Village and reduced rates on other attractions.

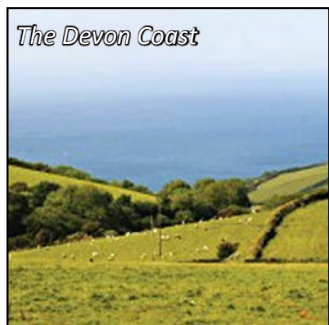
AN URBAN MINI MEET - MONDAY 6TH OCTOBER TO WEDNESDAY 8TH OCTOBER 2014

Organised by Steve Little, an industrial archaeologist and teacher who is used to leading walks and teaching about Manchester to "all sorts", and who can offer various options including architecture, the cotton industry, lost graveyards, canals, pubs etc. The area's many museums include Science and Industry, Air and Space, Imperial War, People's History, National Football and myriad other attractions include the Lowry, City Art Gallery and Ordsall Hall.

The meet will be in the cordoned-off car park of The Griffin pub, with loos during opening hours, outside water tap and drain. Limited cassette emptying if needed. The pub has good beer, does food and we can have a separate room if wanted. Bus stop outside and 5 minutes walk to tram station with frequent day and evening service to City centre.

Limited numbers. For details contact Steve Little at stevelittlereasearch@hotmail.co.uk or ring on 07917017137.

END OF SEASON IN DEVON - THURSDAY 13TH NOVEMBER TO MONDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 2014



Roger's ever popular November seaside meet this year will be at the [Hidden Valley](#) campsite near Woolacombe. If Roger is as good at organising the weather as he has been in previous years then this promises to be an unseasonably balmy weekend in a delightful part of the country.

AND ALSO A PRE-DEVON MEET - MONDAY 10TH TO THURSDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2014

Julia would like to put on a mini-meet before Roger's North Devon meet (as she did last year with Cambridge) probably at Exmoor House Caravan Club site at Dulverton. It is one of her favourite sites and should have room at that time of year, especially during the week. There is the Exe Valley Way footpath running close to the site, so people can limber up for Roger's bootcamp! Dulverton itself is a lovely village, with good pubs, a deli etc.

AGM MEET IN CHEDDAR - THURSDAY 19TH MARCH TO MONDAY 23RD MARCH 2015

Next year's AGM meet is planned to be at the [Cheddar Bridge](#) campsite on the outskirts of Cheddar village with the AGM meeting on Saturday evening being held in the Sports Club next door. Once again this promises to be a terrific venue with lots local interest to keep us all occupied

Due to downsizing here in the New Forest a couple of years ago to a 1895 Victorian cottage - which the estate agent described as a challenge - I have had very little time to use the Morello. I have also had six eye operations which has prevented me driving but fortunately I can now see again better than ever since my most recent operation.

This has also curtailed my other passion of nature photography so I have had to rely on my previously taken snaps for exhibition work except for the attached of some "squatters" that decided to nest in a hose reel in the garage this Spring. These pictures have recently appeared in the Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph and Southern Daily Echo.

Using the Morello as a very comfortable hide I was able to snap their progress without disturbing them. However I was somewhat amazed when the female Robin, whose first brood in the same garage had flown, decided to be a volunteer Dinner Lady as well and helped out with the Wren chick feeding for six days before leaving to have her second brood.

Unfortunately the Robins' nest was in a sack which I had filled with dried bracken last year for laying strawberries which I then could not use. These critters just take over. The RSPB's slogan is "Give Nature a Home!". In my experience of a six acre smallholding in The New Forest they take it anyway.



The robin feeding the wren chicks



..... and the wren feeding them.

When my snap of a female Grackle taking exception to her reflection in a hired minibus in St Lucia was printed in the RSPB Magazine a local agency contacted me to ask if "they could use it". It then appeared in The Times, Daily Express and the Daily Mail and several other worldwide publications. Another snap of a Short-tailed Vole scoffing a Blackberry won the "Picture of the Month" in the RSPB magazine the same thing happened all over again in the same dailies.



A Grackle on St Lucia spots an intruder



Short-tailed Vole feasting on blackberries

WASTE TANK PROBLEMS

By John Laidler

On the control panel of our Morocco there is a little red LED light which shows when the waste tank is getting full. We normally try to empty the tank every day so it doesn't often come on but earlier this year it came on continually, even when the tank was empty. The sensor is the same as those fitted to the fresh water tank and from the outside looks just like a stainless steel screw. I assume the electronics sense when water reaches it and this is what activates the LED. After a bit of head scratching it occurred to me the problem might be the inside of the waste tank being coated with scum and this was what was giving the false reading. The sensor being effectively "short-circuited" by deposits.

Continued

.....Continued from page 3

I first flushed the tank out by pouring hot water down the sink and though this did dislodge a lot of "crud" the LED still stayed stubbornly on. The next attempt was to fill the tank completely with water to which a good helping of dish washing powder had been added and leave it standing overnight.

Incidentally, the process of filling the waste tank revealed that there is a small hole drilled in the top of the tank and any attempt to over-fill the tank leads to a large puddle on the ground! The hole is probably there to allow air to pass in and out of the tank to ensure it is not damaged by fluctuations in pressure caused by temperature expanding or contracting the air inside.

Unfortunately, the overnight soak still didn't cure the problem although yet more "crud" was flushed out when it was drained the following morning. What finally solved the problem was another overnight soak but this time with water to which had been added a capful of biological washing liquid. When this was drained out the LED light finally went out.

So the lesson is to keep your waste tank clean and adding a capful of bio washing liquid, ideally after every draining, should prevent false signals from the LED light. It should also prevent any unpleasant smells because unlike domestic sinks the ones fitted by Murvi don't have the equivalent of a U bend to prevent smells coming up from the drain.

I have also read a couple of big bottles of supermarket own brand Coca Cola poured down the sink and left overnight will also clean the waste tank although I didn't try this as the bio liquid did the trick.

WHAT DO YOU USE YOUR MURVI FOR?

By Andy Embling

What do you use your Murvi for? Short breaks, visiting the family, adventure, to support your business, trip of a lifetime? Or perhaps stress of a lifetime?

What IS the most stressful thing you can do with your Murvi? Well I can tell you - look for a new house down the narrow lanes of the West Country!

Since March we have been visiting the "West Country" in search of a new house. Now of course we have to leave our home pristine just in case someone wants to look round in our absence - no more "Oh - leave it, we'll sort it when we get back". Rather "should we move the chair over a bit to make it look better!" and instructions to Judith to make sure she (our Estate Agent) doesn't lock the cats in.

We live in North Yorkshire so buying a house in Somerset (to be nearer to our family spread along the south coast of England) is no short trip. Ignoring all the time on the internet trawling through 150 plus possible properties before we leave, we must be able to get both a mobile signal and the Internet while away. Ever tried to filter club sites (or 5 van sites) by need to select phone reception and internet access (of any kind - never mind the super setups some Club members go for!).

So no relaxing departure, hardly a relaxing drive south as the summer months approach, stress over will the site actually enable us to book house viewings and allow us to see prospective properties on Google Earth. Saving grace - a Murvi (no - not the luxury this time - rather it is small enough to fit onto this restricted pitch which will not allow an awning over a busy weekend). And it is NEXT TO the Internet aerial for the site!

No lie in though. Need to leave early for an 09:30 viewing 20 miles away. Down narrow West Country lanes that is 40 minutes. But Murvi luxury essential this time. Oodles of water to have a quick early shower in the van (the pitch into which we squeezed is far from the toilet block - no time to spend 10 minutes walking). The diesel heater REALLY is good. Quick on board breakfast and then apart from a quick dash to unplug from the hook up we're away.

Estate Agent particulars do NOT allow for the fact that you are touring in a Fiat Ducato (or any other Murvi variant of almost any age). First site is no problem apart from facing a 30 yard drive along an actual river bed (laughingly called a ford!). Dragging your under-slung gas tank over invisible obstructions or craters - no. But how to turn round in a Devon lane?

Or try driving across Exmoor. Set off in the right direction following a SatNav from near Taunton. Width restriction 6ft 6ins. New Ducato 7ft +. Add 20 minutes to your journey driving round Exmoor rather than over it. Murvi benefit in such situations - loo on board. Not good really to turn up to a house viewing and ask for the cloakroom almost before you've started.

Then this house which is marvellous - just what the doctor ordered - but the lane to the garage was barely wide enough for a conventional car. Never mind, cancel that booking - drive to a nice spot for a cup of tea - not a flask of half cold tea made 8 hours ago - another Murvi benefit.

But we didn't find a house! Just have to move out into the Murvi - yet another benefit of being a Murvi owner (or even lover!).

Be nice to have a holiday in it though!

As we sat eating spag bol in our Morello, Audrey Postcode, we commented on what an attractive pitch we were on. There were lush green trees and shrubs to look out on at the sliding door side, and behind us was a thick and verdant hedge. We've been on a fair number of pitches over the years, but none quite as close to home as this one. We were on our drive.

We'd realised that with a trip to France on the near horizon, travelling via Euro Tunnel, we needed to use up some LPG and get the level down to the required 80% full for crossing the channel by train. "Well, let's eat in the van then and use up some gas", said I. Everything was chopped and diced in the kitchen in the house, and then transferred to the van for cooking. It was a novel experience and I briefly wondered, as I stirred away, what the neighbours would think. Then I realised they'd probably be envious as I know several of them in our small cul de sac quietly lust after having their own van and often pop around to have a chat and gaze in envy when we're preparing to go on a trip.

We dined in style with red wine to go with the spag bol. It was a great success, but the gas levels were still not low enough. The following evening, while I was out, husband Barry made blackcurrant jam in the van, using ripened fruit from the garden. I'm pleased to report he left the kitchen spotless with no blobs of blackcurrant goo in sight, and there's a neat shelf full of jars of jam in the house.

As I write this, he's at it again, this time making a large pan of ratatouille. I don't know if the LPG levels have gone down enough yet, but I'm relishing the pre-holiday use of our van along with what's emerging from the kitchen end!

Update and addendum: Panic appears to be over. Heard from the manufacturer this morning who has confirmed that LPG input has a stop on it at 80% full. The meter in the van now reads 7/8ths full and we no longer need to dine on the drive and can stop boiling up pans of water to use up the gas. Most importantly, we can relax and go to France via the tunnel as planned.



Barry Cooking

THE GREAT DORSET STEAM FAIR

By Meg Privett



We know that some of you are planning to attend this brilliant rally this year, and I thought it would be good to give you a 'flavour' of last year. Pete and I go as often as we can, but always camp with the Camping and Caravanning Club, and use a bus service to be driven right into the rally field entrance.



If you have never been before - take your walking boots and a shooting stick, you'll need them! Last year the site covered 600 acres and there is SO much to see and do!! We are hoping to be there this year, but have rather a lot happening on the domestic front, so may have to give it up. However, that would certainly be a last-ditch plan, so please look out for us..... needles and haystacks come to mind!

After many weeks of 'will we or won't we be going?' the Murvi Easter trip to the Peloponnese got underway in early April. This was a very select tour with only 6 vans in total, 4 of them Murvis. Normally the organisers, GB Privilege, won't run a tour with less than 10 vans, so we were very lucky that it went ahead at all.



Quite a few goats!

The trip down to Ancona, our departure point for Greece, was blessed with beautiful weather. Even in Luzerne in Switzerland it was too hot to stay in the sun for long. I wasn't expecting that on the second week in April, especially as in previous years the weather hasn't been good for me, despite going later in the year!

The great thing about going to Greece that early is that the flowers are amazing. Whole hillsides carpeted with wild flowers (no wonder they have so much honey) and the all-pervasive scent of orange blossom added to my abiding memories of the trip. Some of the drives through the mountains were brilliant, with hairpins galore. In fact, I became convinced that I needed an automatic.

Our first encounter with Ancient Greece came on our visit to Olympia, home of the Olympic Games, as well as containing the remains from the Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods and one of the best museums in Greece. A very enthusiastic guide brought the whole site to life.

Other fascinating trips included the cog train up the Voraikos Gorge to Kalavryta, famous for a massacre in the Second World War; Monemvasia, a town with historic links to the Byzantines, Venetians and the Turks; the island of Spetses, a typical Peloponnese island; the ancient amphitheatre at Epidaurus (4th Century BC); Athens; the Corinth Canal; Ancient Mycenae, a fabulous citadel built in 1300 BC; The fortress of Palamidi; Delphi, home of the ancient oracle. We also visited a couple of monasteries, one of which was reputed to be the oldest in Greece.



VIP pitch - the helipad at Semeli Winery

The trip wasn't just about ancient history. We were brought bang up to date with a visit to the Semeli Winery. This was established only 10 years ago by an Athens banker. Thankfully, he wasn't in residence so some of us were allowed to pitch for the night on his helipad. After a tour of the winery (it has to be done!) we then got down the serious business of wine-tasting (and buying), followed by a meal with unlimited wine.



Semeli Winery - the serious bit



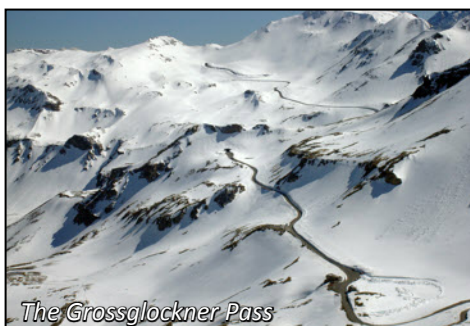
Delfi campsite farewell dinner

We spent Easter Sunday near Gytheio, where we caught up with Martin and Penny Sweet in their Murvi. Easter Sunday is a very important day for the Greeks with an emphasis on spending time with their families and feasting (after Church of course). We were very privileged to be able to visit a taverna on the beach where we were the only diners. (Most restaurants shut for the day.) The family owners made us very welcome and served a traditional meal of roast goat with all the trimmings.

Although the trip officially ended in Ancona, Italy, our tour leaders had arranged a very interesting trip home. We spend a few nights near Venice. This was followed by one of the highlights for me, crossing the Grossglockner Pass in Austria. I have had this on my 'to do' list ever since I got my first van so was very pleased to finally have the chance to drive it. It had only been open a few days and the snow clearance had been very successful, despite fresh snowfalls only two days earlier. The weather was perfect with clear blue skies and very little wind. For me it was the perfect end to a fascinating trip.



The joy of an empty campsite



The Grossglockner Pass



The Greek trip was organised by GB Privilege

Details of GB Privilege motorhome tours can be found on www.gbprivilege.com, or phone 01273 301930 for a brochure

Have you been stuck having to wash lots of clothes by hand when you're on the move? Worry not! Thanks to the ingenuity of our members help is at hand. Washing machine, spin dryer and clothes airer - they have a solution.

Thanks firstly go to Chrissie Williams for her ingenious solution to doing the washing in the first place. Buy yourself a suitable sized plastic crate that will fit on the floor of the shower compartment (preferably one that will fit under the van when you're parked up for the night) then fill it about 1/3rd full with



The spin dryer

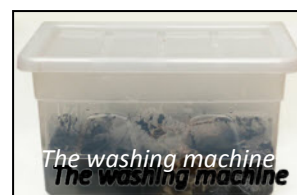
warm water and washing powder, put your dirty clothes in, put the lid on and place in the shower cubicle. All you have to do then is drive to your next destination and, hey presto, your washing is done. An automatic washing machine for around £5 (plus the cost of a Murvi)!

Next comes the spin dryer. Well, how about your trusty salad spinner? That's what Mary Laidler suggested, although I have to say we've tried it with our spinner and it didn't get our clothes much drier than wringing them by hand.

And finally there's the airer. Not usually too much of a problem but nonetheless there are a few good ideas around thanks to Ronnie and Suzi Leadbitter for their solution which uses an extending clothes prop (from Homebase) and also to Alan and Chrissy Williams for their variant using a walking pole.



Ronnie's clothes airer



The washing machine



And Alan & Chrissy's

GETTING A QUIETER EBERSPACHER HEATER

By Robert Flitney

I think that Murvi fitted Eberspacher diesel heaters until about 2008. This means that there are still plenty of us around who enjoy the benefit of these heaters, and the ready hot water every time we stop. However, I am sure that we are not the only ones who have been embarrassed by the noise generated when running on diesel.

We have been very reticent about using it when parked close to hikers in tents, and had conversations about how early we dare start the heating on cold mornings. Our biggest embarrassment was having a very voluble Italian lady banging on the side of our van at 7.00am on the tightly packed Aire at Arromanches on a cold March morning.



The exhaust

The other winter, while giving our van a quick sluice down I noticed the dangling remains of the Eberspacher exhaust. A quick visit to our now local agent in Telford yielded zero results, and so after several wasted phone calls I resorted to the internet. One company, P.F.Jones, based in Manchester appeared to have plenty of helpful information on their website, and helpful staff. What interested me was that the parts diagrams showed a silencer box, which I have never seen on a Murvi; No 7 on the accompanying drawing. It transpires that the large diameter section of pipe fitted to our van, which I had imagined was a silencer is in fact a section of insulated exhaust designed for boats. Close inspection when it was removed showed it to be a straight through section of pipe.

And so, guided by the helpful telephone conversation I ordered the necessary replacement flexible pipe, brackets, clamps, end fitting and silencer box to replace our exhaust. The flexible stainless steel piping is not cheap, the total cost of pipe, silencer and clamps etc was £126. Fitting was not too difficult, aided by running the van up on levelling ramps, provided you have decent quality spanners or sockets to deal with the retaining bolts etc.

And what was the result, a very significant reduction in noise. We would not claim it is quiet, but we no longer sound like a jumbo jet taking off when using the heater. And, it seems to have worked fine for the past 18 months. I would certainly recommend fitting the silencer to anyone who has an Eberspacher. The photo shows the arrangement on our van, a Sprinter, but it may end up slightly different on a Fiat.

Out of interest, I have learnt that these silencers are included in the standard Mercedes fitted system on similar model Sprinter vans. I have also asked Rex if there is any reason why they were not fitted, but so far no answer.

There have been discussions previously on chat group about Eberspacher agents. They appear to vary from totally useless to very helpful and efficient. I certainly found P.F. Jones, who appears to have branches in Manchester, Wigan and Stoke on Trent to be very helpful. www.pfjones.co.uk. From our experience of living in two parts of the country we have previously found Colchester Fuel Injection to be very good. Eberspacher themselves recommended that we use them, even though their Cambridge agent was closer! Do not waste breath or other effort on the guys in Telford.

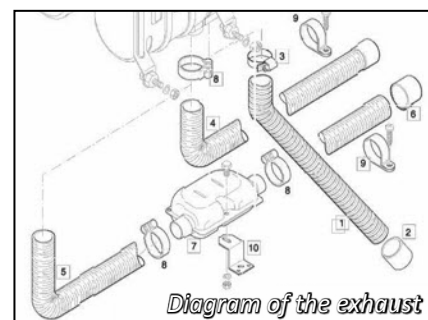


Diagram of the exhaust

Andrew and Elizabeth Bawn are fortunate enough to own two Murvis - one in the UK and one in New Zealand. Their daughter lives in New Zealand and so when they replaced their old Morello they didn't get rid of it, instead they transported it to New Zealand where it now lives permanently. Earlier this year they spent some weeks in New Zealand both travelling around in the Murvi and spending time with their family of course. Andrew has written a detailed account of their trip which you can find on the Murvi Club website (<http://www.murviclub.org.uk>). Below is an extract from Andrew's account of the trip.

What a shock to the system, having left home on a cold, wet and windy day we arrived at our daughter's to find temperatures of 30+ degrees, it took us over a week to adjust. Our flight was good, although we did miss New Year, going from early morning on the 31st Dec to early morning on the 1st January as we crossed the date line, and to cap it all we were asleep!

To explain, our daughter and family live near Napier in New Zealand, and several years ago we decided as we were planning on visiting each year, to export our original Murvi. It lives on a site near our daughters for about 9 months a year, awaiting our return.

Having collected the van from the local storage area, and the first job was to remove all the dust, pollen and spiders webs, so much easier then the green algae we have at home. Having said that there is still a lot of van to wash and clean!

Once the van was clean, MoT'd and taxed we were able to spend time taking the grandchildren out and about. Maisie, our eldest now sleeps in the bunk slung over the cab seats, and is able to enjoy a couple of nights out with us.



Shepherd Dog Statue

It was then time for us to set off on our travels, this time to South Island. We crossed on the evening ferry from Wellington, arriving in Picton at about 0100, and spent the night with several other motor homes in the local RSA car park before setting off south. It is a lovely drive, partly beside the sea, and at other times through the rolling hill so typical of NZ. It had been suggested by the petrol attendant in Picton, that we take the Inland Scenic Route, to save driving around Christchurch with all its traffic. This was good advice, as it was a beautiful drive as well as very little traffic and mile after mile of straight road. That evening we stopped in grounds belonging to the adjacent bungalow, for just \$8 (£4) for the night.

Friday saw us continuing south, through Tekapo, where we stopped to admire the church of 'The Good Shepherd' and the monument to the shepherd dogs that made the initial farming possible just over 100 years ago.

The church has a wonderful altar picture window looking down the lake, it must be difficult to concentrate on a sermon with such a view to watch.

We arrived at Arrowtown that afternoon, meeting Liz and Geoff, friends from Ivybridge, who were house sitting there for a couple of months, having swapped homes with an family originally from Ivybridge who wanted to spend Christmas with their family.



The Church of the Good Shepherd

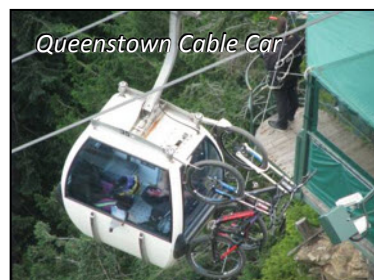


With Liz & Geoff

It was lovely to meet up on the opposite side of the world! We spent the weekend with them, Geoff taking pleasure in showing us around Queenstown where we went up the gondola to what in winter would be the start of the ski slopes and in summer had lovely walks and bike tracks, (riders take their bikes up on the front of the gondola and then ride them down the hillside).

Having had our picnic we returned down to the lake and strolled around part of the lakeside. On the Sunday we went out for a meal, and my choice from the menu was 'Rabbit and Drunken Fig Pie', very nice, not something you

would see on a menu in England! We also visited some of the old Gold Rush townships in the Wanaka valley, with one boasting a hotel in continuous use since the 1860's. It is said as recently as the sixties the landlord refused to serve ladies.



Queenstown Cable Car



Gold Rush Hotel

Monday saw our departure, leaving Liz & Geoff to have a final week enjoying the sun before returning to England, whilst we went on to Dunedin with the aim of seeing albatross and yellow eyed penguins. We spent the night on Brighton beach! (it is a small beach village south of Dunedin) another official free site.

Dunedin, is a very Scottish style town with tartan, whisky shops, and lots of Americans from a cruise ship, even the architecture seemed Scottish.

To see the full article please visit the Murvi Club website at <http://www.murviclub.org.uk>