

Hull & East Riding Group of Advanced Motorists

www.iam.org.uk/hull

Group Number 4029

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Newsletter

NEWS | VIEWS | LAW | LETTERS



Autumn 2009

From the Editor

Yes, I know it's not long ago you received your last newsletter but I'm trying to get back to some sort of normality given the preceding chaos. I expected this edition would be rather light but seeing as the new IAM Chairman has had the good grace to write a rather long inaugural letter, which is reproduced here in its entirety, the pages have filled rather quickly.

Having just got over Easter and somehow missed most of the Summer, I was surprised to discover Autumn is here. Ah well, at least I won't have the Spring lawn feed to apply. But I was even more surprised when, at the last meeting, Robert Thomson stood up and asked for volunteers to supply the entertainment for the Christmas do! If you have any ideas or X Factor type ambitions to star in your own Christmas production please contact Robert. At this early stage, the preference would be to avoid another quiz but I'm sure as Christmas nears, a quiz will become most acceptable.

We rely heavily on Robert to organise the speakers and, without doubt, he always seems to find someone from his apparently endless list of contacts to come along to our meetings to talk about some interesting subject. If you have any thoughts or suggestions for entertainment or speakers, please let Robert know. I'm sure any suggestions would be gratefully received.

Just a note about our meeting venue. In order to comply with health and safety requirements, we must ensure that should any emergency vehicle need to enter the car park at the Salvation Army Hall, it has unhindered access to the rear entrance into the kitchen. To this end would meeting attendees please refrain from parking down the centre of the car park. If there are no spaces available to either side then you must park your vehicle on the road outside. Thank you all for your co-operation.

Alan

If you would like to make a contribution to the Newsletter, the closing date for the next publication is

Friday 4th December.

You can contact me any way you like, post; phone; e-mail; call round or just hand it over at a meeting.

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President's Chat

Since the last Newsletter four of our Group, including myself, attended the IAM organised 'Skills Day' at Teeside and what a wonderful day it was. The amount that can be learned about car control with a skilled instructor and driving on a track is amazing. I have previously been on track days using the cars supplied – including a single seater racing car, but have found the time on the track very limited and only gained basic knowledge.

At Teeside we used our own cars and had a total time on the track of 1 ½ hours, in 15 minute sessions. The day was described as a skills day as the emphasis was entirely on safe but progressive cornering techniques. One came away being aware of the capabilities of your own car, but not feeling the need to driver faster on public roads.

Alan's article "Should we go that extra mile?" follows on from what I have just written. The main theme of his article is should our observers, as well as teaching traditional high IAM qualities, add a bit of spice by including snippets on how to negotiate bends quickly and effectively in complete safety. Our present guidance does, of course, include how to assess bends and position the vehicle correctly when negotiating them, but not necessarily emphasising making progress through them. "Going the extra mile" would depend entirely on the associate i.e., their capabilities and wish to move on from standard instructions. The significant point of advanced cornering techniques is to assess the bend well in advanced and therefore being able to select the cornering gear early, allowing full control of the vehicle from well before the bend, through it and leaving it. The system must still used i.e., braking should not take place after the appropriate gear has been selected.

I am going to quote Alan " It should be fun to drive with the car and allow it to express itself whilst remaining in full control".

Ivor Nicholson



Chairman's Chatter

As most of you will already know Alistair Cheyne, OBE has recently taken over from David Kenworthy as the Chairman of the IAM and you will see later on in this edition of the newsletter a message from him outlining his ideas on how the IAM should move forward. In these he is continuing the work of his predecessor to ensure that the IAM is ,to coin a business expression, "fit for purpose" both for you as an individual member and in our aim of improving road safety. The letter is quite long, running to three and a half sides of A4 sized paper and many more pages in the newsletter format),but it does cover all aspects of the IAM and contains much food for thought. As chairman of our Group, I go to IAM conferences and forums and in the last year or so it has become more obvious that Headquarters genuinely do want input from the Groups and individual members. In fact a new structure has been set up to make it easier for us to get any of our ideas and suggestions through to IAM house. Therefore please take time to read the Chairman's letter and if you have any bright ideas or thoughts then contact either myself or any committee member and we will ensure that they get an airing.

Pleasant driving,

Neil

Where's That Then?

In a desperate attempt to find some subject matter for the front and back covers for our last newsletter I opted to photograph a couple of local places. The seemingly obvious question which almost everybody would ask was certain to be, "Where's that then?". The back cover was a bit too easy so I told you where that was but the front, ahh, a bit more difficult. So much so I had the grand total of no entries. The wine was quite nice. Rather acidic for my palette and possibly a little too much tannin but very pleasant all the same. If you're really interested, the photo was taken heading almost due east on the A614 between Haisthorpe and Carnaby.

Not to be disheartened at the response to my impromptu competition, and still having to find something to put on the newsletter cover, this edition carries two photographic clues to a character who did very well for himself in the early days of motor car production. The picture on the front is taken in Beverley's North Bar Within and the back picture is the award winning housing erected on Eastgate, Beverley near to the Minster. I think this is a bit too easy, at least for the older, local members of the group, but elsewhere in this newsletter are some clues which may (or may not) help others!

Good luck!

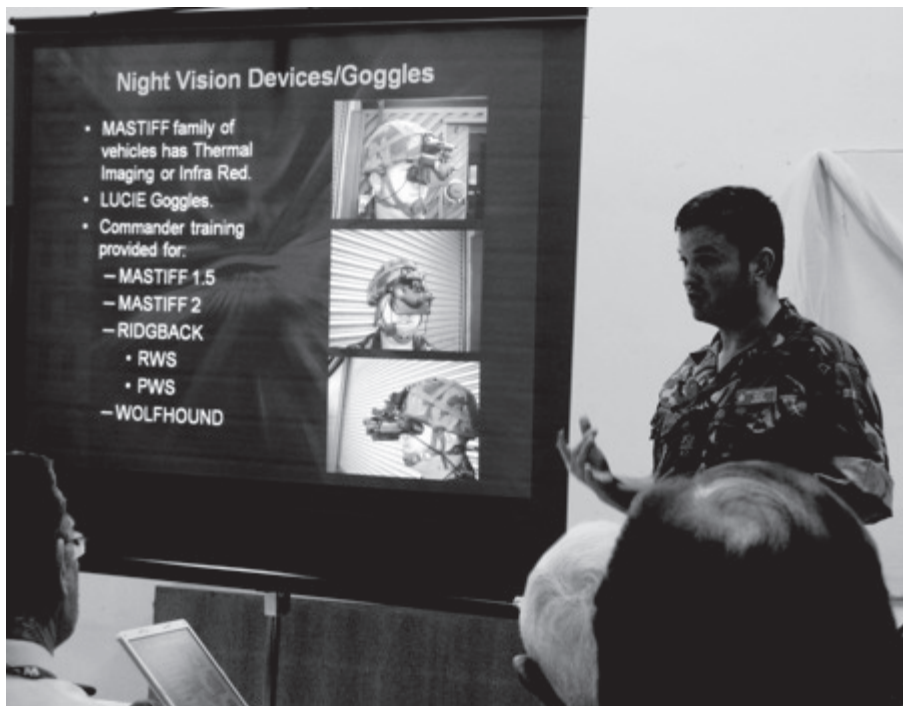
Alan

The Defence School of Transport

The members, associates and guests attending the September meeting were amply entertained and enlightened by the talk, slide and video show given by Scott Kelly from the Defence School of Transport based locally at Leconfield.

Most members of our group will have come across military personnel being put through their paces in either cars or (usually) light goods vehicles on the public roads around the East Riding. I'm sure most members will occasionally voice an opinion, if only to themselves, as to the suitability of our environment to support so many training vehicles. Most members know that the source of all these vehicles is the 'Army Driving School' at Leconfield. What most members didn't know before Scott's talk, was the scope and extent of the national and indeed international operation based at that site.

First of all the 'Army Driving School' is in fact the Defence School of Transport, the largest driving school in Europe, which provides training and testing for military personnel from all the services for all wheeled vehicles. The Army make up the lion's share of students but the establishment caters for the other military services as well. Many students come in as non-drivers and must initially undertake the DSA test in a car. As the Defence School of



Transport certifies about 50% of all driving tests taken in the UK, it has its own system, Delta, to deal with the issuing and maintenance of licenses. This is fully compatible with the civilian driving requirements and is linked back to the DVLA in Swansea and means that a license issued by the school is fully valid in the civilian world.

The site at Leconfield is based around the old RAF Leconfield and its two runways which provide a metalled surface on which much of the initial driver training is carried out but the 308 hectare site provides environments which range from 18 km of cross country tracks to water filled ditches to serious inclines which allows advanced training in specific vehicles to be undertaken. The complement of 1200 vehicles ranges from the humble small saloon car to very specialist vehicles like the Mastiff armoured vehicle with its highly sophisticated systems and a whole host of vehicles in between. Even the quad bike and 'dune' buggy have places at the school. In civilian life I suppose both are considered almost recreational vehicles but the speed and off road ability of the buggy makes it the ideal vehicle for fast recovery of equipment in a hostile landscape. The quad can provide a platform for modest loads and may be used to relieve foot based soldiers of some of the immense loads they often carry on their backs. Frequently heavy goods transport and associated handling equipment are required to be deployed in the field. Instruction in all these different vehicle types is available from the 115 courses which the school can provide.

The Ministry of Defence is acutely aware of the impact their operations could have on the local community and when the size of the operation is understood, they seem to be doing an incredible job. Yes, we all see the car drivers practising their left hand reverses around the streets of Beverley and occasionally we

are held up for a few moments by one of the school's goods vehicles but considering at any one time there are some 1500 individuals being taught to drive something or other, the impact is remarkably light. Of course not all the driver training is undertaken in vehicles. As for civilians taking the DSA test there are theory elements to



Long standing member, Doug Harrison, an ex-Leconfield instructor, reminisces with Scott Kelly.

be achieved before a licence can be earned and the school uses all the latest computer based technology to help their students. This can consist of a simple desk top computer providing scenarios for hazard perception to a large simulator which is capable of providing the occupants with the rather undesirable experience of rolling a Mastiff armoured vehicle.

From the group's point of view it was interesting to discover all these different vehicles exist so close by and also to get an insight into the size of the operation being undertaken on our doorsteps but one has to remember the ultimate purpose of the school. It is to provide all our military services with personnel who are trained to the highest possible standards in a huge array of widely differing vehicles used by those services. There are about 60,000 wheeled vehicles used by the military and they all need to be driven by people who know what they are doing. However then emphasis of the school has changed recently because of the war in Afghanistan. Pre-operations driver training has become the order of the day and the school provides on target training for personnel about to be dispatched to Afghanistan.

At present the school is limited by its ability to provide accommodation for its students. While the accommodation is functional for the three weeks most students are there it is less than ideal. Unfortunately while the current economic situation has meant there are more recruits than in recent years, it also means there is little money to spend on extra facilities like accommodation which ultimately limits the throughput of the school.

While much of the driver training is undertaken at Leconfield there are sub divisions throughout the country and while still administered from Leconfield these provide additional facilities and capacity locally.

Thanks to Scott for his most enlightening talk and video,

Alan

Corrigenda

It must be my age. The memory's going. However thanks to Dr Phillpot the record can now be corrected.

In my article in the last newsletter 'VIPs - Very Important Parts', I made reference to Boyle's law when relating the importance of measuring tyre pressure when the tyres are at ambient temperature. Boyle, an Irish physicist, determined the the pressure of a gas, air in our case, was inversely proportional to its volume at a *constant* temperature. It was a Frenchman, Charles, who found that the volume of a gas changed as its temperature changed. So I should have referred to Charles's law rather than Boyle's law in my article although the formula still holds.

Well spotted Dr Phillpot and thanks for reading the article so carefully! Your kind comments were gratefully received.

Alan

Cruise Control

As one of the 'Serious advocates of cruise control in the Group' I am sure the editor will expect a reply, from me, to Keith Lownsborough's article 'To cruise or not to cruise'.

Keith's gives an example of approaching the Ouse Bridge on the M62. With the cruise control on when the car starts to slow, due to the incline, the cruise control will increase pressure on the throttle to maintain speed and accordingly use more fuel. Keith points out that a driver on an economy run would never do that - allowing the vehicle to naturally slow down going up and gaining speed on the following downhill section. This technique is acceptable if one is on an economy run (but I have never done one in over fifty years of driving) but if used during everyday driving can caused frustration to following drivers. If I was following a driver using this technique, and I was wanting to maintain an exact 70mph, then I would need to overtake possible to be caught up by the vehicle on the downhill section. Most drivers, including many IAM ones, find it difficult to maintain an exact speed over a period of time and that is why on motorways/dual carriageways, with cruise control in use, you find the space between you and other vehicles keeps varying.

Interestingly with some vehicle speedometers over reading by up to ten percent, a conscientious driver, keeping to 70 mph, could in fact be only doing 63 mph. I have checked out several vehicles, using my portable sat nav or a GPS, and have found errors of up to ten percent (always over reading as the law does not allow manufacturers to produce a vehicle with an under reading speedometer.) Interestingly my own car is the only one I have found to be absolutely accurate at all speeds up to 70mph.

Alan's comments, following the article, on his using a cruise control for the first time and how he found he was approaching moving hazards more closely, raises the interesting issue of at what speed and on what type of roads do you use cruise control. I few years ago I wrote on how I use cruise control in 30 mph areas, when my driving plan showed it to be safe to do so. At one of our monthly talks, given by a Road Safety Officer, I mentioned my use of cruise control at speeds as low as 30 mph and was almost told off for doing so. From a safety point of view all cruise controls automatically disengage when the brake is applied or the clutch pedal depressed, but I do not wait for this to happen, instead using advanced driving techniques of forward observation to switch off when necessary. Again I emphasise the cruise is only used at low speeds when the area, for a reasonable distance ahead, can be seen to be hazard free.

Ivor Nicholson

Who's Who in the Group

This page is deliberately left blank to protect the privacy of the contacts originally listed here.

Test Passes and Achievements



Test successes over the past couple of months or so were achieved by Christopher Norton, photographed left with his observer Bill Cundill and Valerie Anderson whose observer was Tony Hunt.

Congratulations to you both and sincere thanks to your observers.

Not to be totally outdone, Valerie's observer Tony Hunt has successfully guided ten associates through to test standard and has now achieved a personal goal with a Bronze Award to mark this achievement.

A senior observer and much respected member of the group, John Pearce was also recognised for successfully guiding 30 associates through the advanced driving test. Ivor made the presentation to John with a Gold Award to mark the occasion.

Well done to Tony and John for their dedication and generous gift of time given over to helping others improve their driving standards. Your efforts are much appreciated by your associates, the group and the IAM.

Genuine Insurance Claim Form Quote

“ I started to slow down but traffic was more stationary than I thought”

Ivor Nicholson

We've all seen these quotes from insurance claim forms but I must say when I read this one, it totally cracked me up!.. Brilliant! (Alan)

Chairman's message for the IAM

It is a great privilege to be the Chairman of the IAM. Over the past eight years as a Council Member, I have come to understand and appreciate the unique contribution that, at its best, the IAM can make to road safety.

This understanding came into clearer focus during my time as Vice Chairman, when it was a pleasure to work with David Kenworthy as he introduced the essential, often difficult measures that are needed if the IAM is to fulfil its potential. We are in debt to him for his calm, clear leadership, his integrity and unstinting efforts on behalf of the IAM.

The new measures anticipated difficult times. However, like many organisations, we were suddenly operating in very difficult times. If this were to knock us off course, it might be understandable; but it would not be acceptable. The changes we are implementing are vital if we are to survive and flourish in the coming years. We've made a start but a great deal remains to be done; we cannot ease off.

IAM focus

The IAM shares with many other organisations the objective of reducing the toll of death and injury on our roads. And we all agree on the umbrella watchwords of 'Safer Drivers, in Safer Vehicles, on Safer Roads'. Each organisation brings its own special contribution to the party.

And ours? No organisation in the world is better equipped to lead on 'safer driving and riding' than the IAM. We must do just that. So, while we will support the road safety initiatives of the Government and others, safer, greener, more enjoyable driving and riding must be the focus for all we do. At the same time, we will clarify our policy on cycling alongside our central driving and riding remit.

To this end, IAM driver and rider training, IAM policy and research, and all IAM products must work together to make the IAM's unique offering irresistible. Co-ordinated, mutual support between all IAM functions, from the public-facing teams to those in essential support services, is now the order of the day. The same principle applies to the relationship between those working at IAM House and our Members and Groups. There is no 'I' in teamwork.

To pull everything together, we need a single chief executive whom we plan to appoint by the end of the year.

What the IAM does

As we set about delivering our current objectives, I would like us to review everything that we do – or could do – that will contribute to our overall success. Being around successfully for 53 years gives us neither an inherent right to survival nor does it give us 'ownership' of advanced driving.

We cannot forget that there are serious alternatives out there to what we are offering. However, 53 years have given us a bit of experience on how to survive and to do well in difficult times.

We operate in a fast-moving, predatory environment and we'll be letting the IAM down if we don't ask demanding questions about what we do and how we're doing it. This involves being more open and less resistant to change. No IAM activity can be above review.

Here are just a few examples of what we might look at:

1) Whether we can offer new routes to membership:

- Our test may have 'premier' status but does having to pass it set the current membership bar too high? Could we extend our road safety reach by boosting membership to much higher levels? What if taking, say, four IAM drives/lessons, plus some online assessment, were the entry point to membership? Once on board, could we offer members differing benefits according to their class of membership?
- Once part of the IAM, members would be fully exposed to its expertise and certain benefits. Achieving 'blue riband' status by passing the IAM Test might then become more of an exciting aspiration and less of a daunting exam – involving a staged approach at a member's discretion, with the Groups helping/encouraging him or her to upgrade?
- Having many more members would give the IAM a larger driver/rider constituency for its unique approach to road safety campaigning – and a weightier presence in the national road safety debate.

2) Whether we should be considering additional means of assessing and training drivers and riders:

- While practical training and assessment on the road is irreplaceable, no modern organisation can ignore the potential for online training and the use of driver/rider simulators. If they can help train airline pilots, why can't they be part of the training we offer?
- Could we offer online re-assessments for members who wish to continue developing their skills, combined with our core, on-road experience to encourage maintenance of good driving skill, attitude and behaviour?

3) How we can build better synergy between our commercial teams and those of the IAM charity:

- Our commercial activities operate to generate resources to enable the IAM to fulfil its safer driving objectives. Therefore, they are vital to our future and unless they are an integral part of a united, cohesive IAM, they cannot achieve their full potential. Given that a 'one IAM' – 'one team' approach must be the way forward, what would help them to do this?

4) How we can carry a varied but co-ordinated IAM offering to potential members and avoid duplication of effort:

- How do we promote the IAM most effectively to potential members?
- What about combined national sales and training teams taking to the road to bring IAM training and expertise to those who might not come to us?

5) How we can build-in continuous improvement to our premier offering – the IAM Advanced Test – to make it the advanced driving test?

What the IAM thinks

In the Chief Examiner, we have, by any measure, one the UK's top drivers/riders. Every day, around 20 million motorists take to the roads. How they do this – and how they might do it better and more safely – is his rightful area of expertise. It must be an IAM objective to make him the reference and senior port of call whenever safer driving and riding are a media or public policy issue.

Campaigns for safer cars and safer roads are rightly getting a good deal of coverage. However, unless there are better, safer drivers and riders on the road, no road safety campaign can be completely effective. To this end, future IAM research will focus on rider and driver behaviour.

The IAM may have one of the leading road safety policy and research teams in the country but it is yet to punch its weight when it comes to getting our views and expertise into the media.

Ensuring that the IAM's messages are heard by the motoring population, as well as key opinion formers such as the Government, will be the media communications priority from now on.

IAM family

Our members and our staff, together, represent a formidable resource. And our Groups are special. They are members who voluntarily make a practical contribution to road safety where it really counts – behind the wheel and on the bike. David Kenworthy made a commitment to work more closely and openly with our Groups. I intend that this commitment will continue, involving Council members and our senior management team at IAM House.

I also want the National Representatives Group to be an energetic forum in which we listen to each other and get things done together. Equally, I want to help Groups to grow, to be able to demonstrate the value of each class of membership, to manage their costs and improve communication.

IAM costs

We took some hard decisions last year that were necessary if we were to bring our costs under control and to build a secure financial platform for the future. We are not out of the woods yet. It will remain a key priority for us to generate more income from the services and products we offer – and to keep costs to a minimum. We are some way from balancing the books but we're on the right track.

IAM friends

As well as generating support among opinion-formers, such as Government and the media, the IAM needs to extend its circle of friends. The IAM has much that makes it an attractive business partner. Its top-drawer training expertise and its quality research offer excellent, brand-enhancing partnership and sponsorship opportunities to other organisations. Good brands like to be associated with other good brands. We have a good brand but we need to raise our brand profile much higher.

How the IAM works

We have a good staff team at IAM House that we will continue to strengthen but which, in the foreseeable future, we do not plan to expand. Helping our staff to improve and develop is going to be linked to how well they perform in helping to achieve the IAM's objectives.

It is our staff's job to deliver what the IAM strategy demands. It is my job, with my fellow Council members, to be informed supporters, while ensuring that the strategy is followed.

As the IAM management and staff set about their task, they will have my complete support. I believe that a consensus is growing within the IAM about what we need to do. What we must add to this – all of us – is a sense of urgency, a commitment that once we agree to do something, we will do it, and on time.

Much of what we need to do has been identified already; the IAM has no need of a 'new broom' chairman. However, with your support, I do intend to be a 'let's get things done' chairman.

Finally, I believe that:

WE must care passionately about and manage the quality of everything the IAM says and does.

WE must believe, and get others to believe, that further driver training is an indispensable part of road safety.

WE must put our members first and find new and better ways to make them feel that IAM membership is an indispensable part of their driving and riding life. This involves making member benefits more apparent and offering them better products, while building on the huge success of our IAM insurance product.

WE must increase our membership. Remember that every driver and rider in the UK is a potential IAM member; we can't say that the market hasn't room for some fantastic IAM membership growth!

By working together, we can achieve great things for the IAM.

Let's go for it.

Alistair Cheyne OBE

Chairman
IAM

Saying Goodbye to a Reliable Friend and Hello to a New One!

It was a very sad day when I finally had to leave my reliable “L” reg Honda Civic VEi at the garage after it failed its MOT. The cost of putting it right would have been about £700 and this was probably and realistically more than the car was worth. The Civic had rarely missed a beat after putting 214,000 miles on the clock. We had been hoping to keep it long enough to have put on a round quarter of a million but it wasn't to be. For days after leaving the car at the garage, I stared out onto the drive knowing that I would never see my reliable friend again.

The following weekend Alan spotted a Smart cabriolet on the forecourt of a local garage. He came home and asked if I would like to go and have a look and then if I was interested, a possible test drive. After getting used to the fact that it was an automatic, I thought how cute it was for a small car and the retractable roof was hopefully going to be a bonus in the summer.

Within a few months of getting the Smart, it turned out to be an extremely good choice of car because I broke my wrist. I was allowed to drive an automatic but not a car with a manual gear box. It couldn't have been a better choice or indeed better timing! I am sure things happen for a reason but would rather not have had the broken wrist!

The Smart is very nippy, easy to park (two to a bay!), 60 miles to the gallon and best of all only £35 road tax.

Shopping early one morning I parked the car in the supermarket car park. There were plenty of empty spaces, yet when I walked back to the car with my shopping a huge silver (same colour) Mercedes 4x4 looking just like a giant version of the Smart had parked behind me. Guess the driver had my sense of humour! I must admit you do get people looking and smiling as it is, after all, an extremely small car. The most popular comment seems to be, “Did you leave the back of the car at home?”

Until I had taken a closer look at the Smart and in fact driven one I would not have realised how much fun it is to drive and of course being a Smart I can change the colour in an hour if I so wish.

If any one is curious to know more, I would be happy to take you for a drive. I think you will be pleasantly surprised. As I don't do technical things, Alan is going to give you some more information about the Smart and its technical specification.

So, as I end this story it is goodbye to the Civic and lots of happy hours of driving and Hello to the Smart which I hope will also leave me with lots of happy memories.

Tricia

The IAM's New Chairman

You will (won't you) have read the statement reproduced on page 11 from our new chairman Alistair Cheyne OBE. This is clearly a significant statement and it was felt that members may well wish to comment on it. To that end it was felt that the subject should be given some time at the next meeting 12th October. Please, if you would like to make a comment or listen to other feelings about Alistair's statement, please come along to the meeting. If you can't attend but would like your views to be heard, you could always use the forum on our group web site or jot down a note and pass it on to a committee member or me.

Alan

Quiz Clue

Don't read the following if you're so keen to enter the quiz without any help. If you do want some assistance follow these instructions.

1. Turn the newsletter on its side.
2. If the writing still looks odd, turn the newsletter on its side twice more.

This guy used the building pictured on the front page as his motor engineering business and garage from 1907. In 1909 he built a motor car himself. He took over part of a cart and wagon works on the site now occupied by this housing development in 1917. He started to make a part used in every car. By 1938 he was making 4000 per day! This common car part is always called by the wrong name! His product was eventually made in branches all over the country. Cars today continue to use this part though, I dare say, most will now be made by our colonial colleagues.

Group Meetings

Group meetings take place normally the second Monday in the month at the Church Hall on Icehouse Road in Hull city centre. Entry is from the car park.

For those of you who might like to attend the next meeting, the Group web site at www.sentinel38.karoo.net/iam gives a MultiMap location.

In keeping with the Committee's desire to make the meetings as informal and interesting as possible the routine business is usually kept to a minimum and the rest of the evening given over to topical discussion and a guest speaker.

The meetings are open to all; Members, Associates, guests or just anyone who is interested in discovering how to improve their own driving skills and so contribute to road safety.

Disclaimer

This newsletter is a forum for Members, Associates and friends of the Kingston Upon Hull and East Riding Group of Advanced Motorists and all are cordially invited to submit articles for inclusion. It should be noted however that a contributor must accept full responsibility and liability for the factual accuracy of any article they submit. Readers should note that an article is likely to reflect the views of the contributor and its inclusion does not imply endorsement by the IAM, any other individual or organisation unless specifically stated. The editor reserves the right to edit, abridge or reject any submitted contribution.

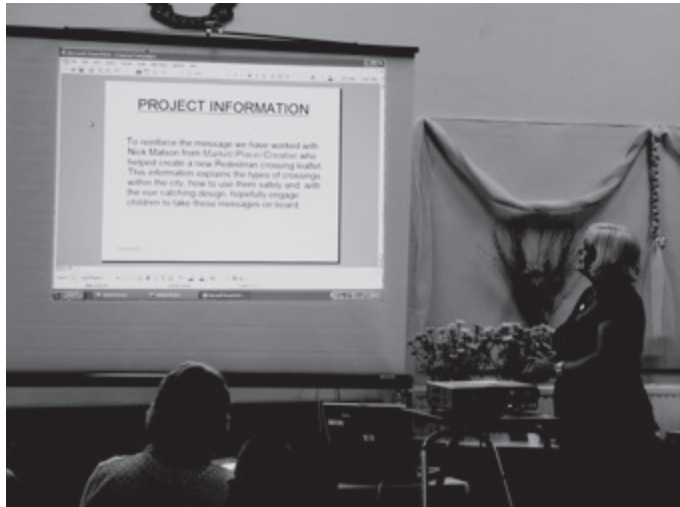
Hull Road Safety with Sue Boyeson

Sue Boyeson spoke at the August group meeting to explain how progress had been had in the education of the younger members of our society when using the public highways.

Sue and her colleagues working for Hull City Council suggest and implement many road safety initiatives aimed

at children and has previously explained many schemes which have been successful in reducing injuries to young people on our roads. The area has achieved a better than the national target result however efforts continue.

Unfortunately but as is often the case, a 14 year old was killed using the light controlled crossing outside St. Stephens shopping centre earlier this year and this instigated an investigation into the use and abuse of the double crossing over Ferensway which is adjacent to the bus station access road. Video surveillance was set up to monitor pedestrian's use of the crossing. Recordings were made between 8am and 5pm one Saturday and the recording analysed later. The video highlighted some interesting and rather alarming points. It revealed that on average 600 pedestrians per hour crossed while the red man was displayed reaching a maximum figure of 754 per hour. From Sue's point of view this alarmingly high figure negates some of the Advanced Motorists Newsletter - Autumn 2009



work she and her colleagues do as the strongest role model a child has is its parents and if children see their parents cross on the red man, blame can hardly be apportioned to a child crossing against a red man.

An unexpected spin-off of the video survey was that the timing between the two branches of the crossing was inappropriate persuading pedestrians to 'chance their arm' on the second leg perhaps after crossing with the green man on the first leg. The solution was a new chip for the crossing computer to offer more amenable timings and the job was done (albeit at what I thought was a rather inflated price for a modified PROM but business is business).

The council had had a very successful poster campaign and approaches to local department stores had resulted in no refusals.

Jointly East Yorkshire Motor Services, Stagecoach and Hull Road Safety funded a vinyl display to educate and inform the captive bus user audiences.

A new leaflet from Marketplace Creative which explains the different types and uses of pedestrian crossings has also been released.

The battle continues and in many respects it is much like the work of the IAM in that it is never winnable but every effort made may help push injury statistics in the right direction.

Thanks to Sue for her light hearted and informative presentation and congratulations on her continuing successes.

Alan

As a trucker in East Riding stops for a red light, a blonde in her car pulls up alongside.

She jumps out of her car, runs up to his truck, and knocks on the door the trucker lowers the window, and she says, 'Hi, my name is Sharon and you are losing some of your load.'

The trucker ignores her and proceeds down the street. When the truck stops for another red light, the girl again catches up. She jumps out of her car, runs up and knocks on the door. Again, the trucker lowers the window and as if they've never spoken the blonde says brightly, 'Hi, my name is Sharon, and you are losing some of your load!' Shaking his head, the trucker ignores her again and continues down the street.

At the third red light, the same thing happens again. All out of breath, the blonde gets out of her car, runs up, knocks on the truck door. The trucker lowers the window again she says, 'Hi, my name is Sharon and you are losing some of your load!'

When the light turns green, the trucker revs up and races to the next light when he stops this time, he hurriedly gets out of the truck and runs back to the blonde.

He knocks on her window, and as she lowers it, he says.....

....."Hi, my name is Bob and I'm driving a gritter!"

RHT

A Smart Decision

Most people have an opinion.

Some people laugh.

Most people smile.

But basically, we don't care. We like what we bought.

Starting off with reasonably open minds, some would say empty minds, we started looking around for a used car to replace our trusty old Civic which had finally to be pensioned off due to body corrosion.

As we were fortunate enough to have had two cars we were still mobile so there was no pressure to find another but we discussed, typically, what *sort* of a car might fit the bill. There was little merit in buying a car very similar to the one we already had and given the current situation of fuel and tax hiking, something modest and money-saving would suit.

Purely by chance, I spotted a Smart cabrio on a dealer's forecourt as I was waiting at some lights. It looked tidy in silver – like a very mini-Merc. The lights changed and I was on my way. Later on, I mentioned it to Tricia and she thought it might be worth a look so off we went, knowing that a used car may not be on the forecourt for too long.

The car was extremely small but very well built and in a tidy condition. It had more bells and whistles than its size would indicate and a rag top at that.

The test drive was 'interesting' as neither of us or the sales person knew how to operate it correctly. Switching between fully automatic and semi- is easy when you know how ...

The high seating position, which rivals some people-carriers, affords a superb forward view. My only initial thoughts being that the rear-view mirror intruded rather but manageable none-the-less.

After a few rather lurchy starts, I started to get the hang of the style of driving it demanded and that turned out to be a fairly brutal one. Initially, I treated the small engine with a degree of respect but it turned out to prefer a more aggressive driving style which resulted in positive acceleration with automatic gear changes occurring at higher revs which made the whole drive more predictable.

Given that it is a city car, cornering was fine, braking was positive and predictable and it ticked all our boxes.

We bought it.

Of course, you never really know what you've bought 'till you get it home, wash it and live with it for a few days. It does have some features with which I'm not totally enamoured but its plus points out-weigh by miles any minor deficiencies it has. By far the worst aspect of the car is the inability to see adequately when reversing – not a problem peculiar to the Smart cabrio. This also makes a nearside shoulder check less effective but bearing in mind the length of the car it's not turned out to be a real problem however the poor view when reversing is permanent.

After having the car for a week or so I found it easy to live with and developed a driving style compatible with the engine and gearbox which allowed me

to drive in any manner I wanted. The three cylinder, two spark plugs per cylinder, 700cc turbo-charged engine provides more than adequate power (71 bhp) for the size of the car and is able to accelerate with a respectable pace to an electronically limited 86 mph and yes, although side winds can make for an 'interesting' drive at higher speeds, the car retains its stability in all but extreme conditions.

In terms of economy, the car returns about 60 mpg but I must say a larger-than-planned proportion of our driving takes place at speeds in excess of 50mph and given the Smart has the aerodynamics close to that of a brick, I consider that's not too bad.

In common with any automatic gearbox there are times when a change to semi-automatic mode is beneficial. Any automatic gearbox is purely reactive and is unaware, for example, of an uphill section of road following a downhill section. It will happily shift up a gear as the downhill section relieves the load on the engine only to have to shift down again as the uphill section is reached. Popping the gearbox momentarily into semi-automatic eliminates any dubious moments. (Although not fitted to our car, steering wheel mounted paddles are available to operate the gearbox semi-automatically and would really add to an exhilarating drive should the mood take you.)

Given the car is a two seater, there's ample passenger space inside and plenty of space for nick-nacks. As for load space, well what do you expect? The current coupe model is advertised as able to take a tumble dryer and two six feet four occupants. Ours probably won't (take the tumble dryer) but it is more than capable of taking the weekly supermarket shop or the odd suitcase.

Goodies include air conditioning, central locking, electrically operated windows and roof and more hidden features like Mercedes electronic stability program. From this, full braking control and hill start assist (where the brakes continue to be applied for a while after the brake pedal is released giving time for you foot to move from brake to accelerator pedals) are derived.

Many doubt the safety claims made for the Smart and to some extent I share their doubts considering the many plastic panels used in its construction but the metal Tridion shell, a sort of three dimensional chassis, takes care of occupants and short of a significant head on or collision with a very immovable object, I doubt you are any worse off than in any other small saloon. I would probably be less enamoured if, as a pedestrian, I was hit by one at speed. There is little distance between the front of the car and the windscreen, which is almost head height. That said, the same is true of many 'people carriers' and metalwork in the case of almost all 4 x 4s.

So now when others ask, "What do you drive?" I reply, "a two seater, turbo-charged, six spark plug, rear-wheel driven soft top with tiptronic gearbox" and let them work the rest out for themselves! I could almost be an estate agent. Don't you agree?

Alan

Welcoming Home The Troops

When the Yorkshire Regiment were making an appearance in Beverley as a celebration of their return from Iraq, I thought the least I could do was to support the day. So first things first, got the Union Jack flags in readiness for the event.

The build up to the event was very emotional, just looking at the sheer number of people who were gathering to pay their respects to the Regiment was overwhelming. As the time drew nearer to the beginning of the parade, the crowds started to swell in numbers and it was also nice



to see the police officers taking time out from their duties to come out of the police station to lend their support to the well deserving regiment.

As the troops passed through Beverley there was such a wonderful atmosphere and I am sure the regiment would be able to sense the pride that the people of Beverley and surrounding areas had in them. I managed to get some photos – a few of them are here for you to share of that historic day when the regiment were given the freedom of the town of Beverley. I did manage to sneak in between the many heads of the crowd to get a photo of



the door to the Bar in Beverley actually being closed before the ceremony took place of freedom of the town being given to the regiment.

It was a lovely day which I was proud to have been a part of and I am sure the regiment could not fail to soak up pride as they marched through the streets of Beverley.

Tricia

National Circuit Race Championship

A rainy evening was likely but we decided that this wouldn't dampen our spirits as we made our way into Beverley to support the National Circuit Race Cycling Championship. Complete with waterproof clothing we made our way into Beverley for the start of the race. With the cyclists at the ready they raced round the town centre course riding with speed and precision over the very wet and no doubt very slippery cobbles of Beverley's Market Place.

The race was very entertaining and competitive with every cyclist giving his all. The racing positions seemed to change frequently: one lap one cyclist would be out at the front and the next time round he could be in the mid field.

It was good to see that despite the early rain, support from the cheering spectators certainly encouraged the cyclists as they sped around the circuit.

A little like my day out at Silverstone, my photos turned out to be more about the one that got away! However, I did, towards the end of the race get the hang of capturing more than one cyclist! So here's a photos with more than one cyclist in the frame!

Tricia



Renault World Series Day

Imagine my delight when my brother phoned to say that he had managed to get 4 tickets for the Renault World Series Day at Silverstone. Silverstone is somewhere I have always wanted to visit but for one reason or another never got round to getting there to see the Grand Prix. So what an opportunity not only to see the Renault cars and a Renault Formula one car racing around the track but also to soak up the atmosphere of Silverstone. I was also aware that 2009 was going to be the last year for the F1 Grand Prix at this circuit and wanted to take lots of photos for posterity!

Although we had just got back from our holiday in Northumbria, well I think we had a holiday in Northumbria as it was shrouded in mist for most of the week and we had to guess where Holy Island and the Farne Islands should have been off the coast! So grabbing a few hours sleep, we made our way to Silverstone. An interesting journey but at least the sat nav got us there without taking us to York first! My brother and partner were actually travelling in their own car and set off 40 minutes after we did, yet we arrived in the same car park, at the same time and parked six cars apart!

As there was such a lot to see and do we tried to make a plan as to how we were going to fit everything in. We did go over to the pit lane but as there were so many people in the queue and it was only open for viewing for only one hour, we only managed to see one garage containing only a pile of tyres. Never mind. We then moved on to take a seat in the Grandstand and managed to bag really good seats right opposite the podium.

Before the race started, there was all the glamour of the girls parading out onto the race circuit followed by an entourage of team supporters along with enough tyres to keep Quick Fit supplied for a year or so. After a lot of activity and press photography it was time for everyone to retreat back to the pit lane ready for the race to begin.

It was not long before the Formula Renault cars were under the red lights ready to become competitive and hopefully com-



plete the race and win!

The roar of the engines and the smell of the fumes as the cars raced off into the distance was a moment to savour. I tried to get some photos but most of the cars had left the grid before I managed to get the camera button pushed!. Overleaf is a photo of the one that didn't get away!

We decided to walk around the whole circuit so that we could get different views of the cars on the circuit. Each race was very exciting and the competitiveness of the drivers certainly raised the support of the crowd.

The day was truly memorable and well worth the journey even though we were still feeling tired after the drive from Northumbria.

Tricia

Swine Flu Paranoia Getting Out of Hand



Sorry, this was one of those well circulated e-mails so I can't pass on the credits other than to say the photographer has a great sense of humour. However, if you get a Department of Health warning via e-mail about eating tinned pork, don't worry it is only spam!

Tricia

