

Hull & East Riding Group of Advanced Motorists



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Affiliated to

Group Number 4029

Registered Charity Number 1070176

Newsletter

NEWS | VIEWS | LAW | LETTERS



Spring 2008

RIVERSIDE MOTORS

HULL AND DONCASTER

Volvo for life



From the Editor

Another decent edition I think this quarter. A sincere thank you to all contributors but please, keep your articles and jokes coming in. The more the merrier. The only person who complains about a big newsletter is Neil who has to staple it together but seeing as maximum letter weight has now increased from 60g to 100g, I think we should get as much in as we can and buy Neil a professional stapler!

Since asking if members would be prepared to take their newsletter electronically and receiving only a handful of replies, several members have asked to be added to the email list. For the time being, I will send out the newsletter as an email attachment as soon as the edition is complete but you will continue to receive your paper copy as well. I am still keen to promote an electronic copy as postage is a significant expense to the group but accept that a paper copy will still need to be produced for publicity purposes. If you want to try it electronically, just email me.

I've bought a book about punctuation: how to do it and how not. Perhaps, when I've absorbed it, future commas might be in the right places and I might even include the odd semicolon. If not, it's because I don't understand it. I would say though that some of the rules I learned, and remember clearly from school, have changed. Never use a comma before a conjunction like and or but. Now it appears that this is one place they should be used! Hey ho.

We have been graced, this edition, with an article spotted on a discussion forum by Jonathan. Material like this is spot on for our newsletter as it relates directly to motoring, is safety related, and interesting. I am pleased to accept such articles but I must obtain permission from the author to reproduce their work. If you spot something like that, if you could let me know the source then I can request permission. As a motoring and road safety charity, I would like to include as many relevant articles as possible. I often write something technical, because that is where my interest and ability lies. If you have any particular interest or inside knowledge, please think of putting something together, if you have the time.

Alan

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

Friday 6th June.

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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Cassie in her cabriolet!

We were waiting at temporary traffic lights, ours obviously at stop, the others presumably at green, when Cassie in her cabriolet and sun-glasses drives towards us and waves her hand in a thank you gesture! I am sure she had no idea that she had just passed through traffic lights!!

Tricia

Now This Is Real Business Acumen

A businessman walked into a London bank and asked for the loan officer. He said he was going to France on business for two weeks and needed to borrow £5000. The loan officer said the bank would need some security.

The business man then handed over the keys to a Rolls Royce that was parked on the Mayfair street in front of the bank. Everything checked out and the loan officer accepted the car as collateral for the loan. An employee then drove the Rolls into the bank's underground garage and parked it there.

Two weeks later the businessman returned, repaid the £5,000 and the interest which came to £12-50.

The loan officer said, "We do appreciate your business and this transaction has worked well but we are a bit puzzled. While you were away we checked and found that you are a multimillionaire. What puzzles us is why you would bother to borrow £5,000?"

The business man replied: "Where else in London can I park my car for two weeks for Twelve pounds and fifty p?"

JMSP

Keep Going 'Till You Reach the End

A friend of mine rang to ask for directions to a crematorium as she was going on an induction course!! I didn't even want to think about what this was all about but soon all became clear. She had taken a job in a hospital department and as she would be expected to deal with bereaved relatives, they thought she need to know what went on beyond the hospital. Anyway, as I started to give directions, which went something like, "After travelling a mile take a right turn then left at the roundabout ..." etc. etc. "You will then see the crematorium on the left. Take the second turn not the first marked 'cul-de-sac' as that is a dead end but then again taking the second left is no better. That's a dead end too!

Tricia

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A Sunday Afternoon Scenic Drive

What nicer way to start the New Year than with a Sunday afternoon scenic drive. It was Dave from Cleethorps (yes, all the special permissions were sought and obtained from the immigration department, providing it was only a short visit) who got the year off to an ambitious start with his talk misleadingly titled 'A Sunday Afternoon Scenic Drive'.

Dave, as well as being an Advanced Driver is also a keen motorcyclist and it was by this means his Sunday Afternoon Scenic Drive was completed. I say the title is misleading and in no small way. His drive was from the tip of Argentina to Alaska and then on to New York – a total distance of 22,000 miles and taking almost five months!

Dave explained how he had had his bike, an 1150cc BMW (sorry, I don't know the model but it was yellow!), crated up and shipped from Grimsby to Buenos Aires to meet him when he arrived later. The trip had clearly been well planned and because of this, he was able to ride his bike soon after arriving, having employed a local organisation to get his bike through customs quickly.

Now, the tip of Argentina, a place called Ishwaia and the true start of Dave's scenic drive, is quite a long way to the south of Buenos Aires so off he set in his epic north south drive, in a southerly direction. Having already clocked up 1500 miles, his drive could begin.

A major advantage that Dave had over me when he spoke to the Group, is that he had a wonderful set of photographs to project to his audience and I have nothing but words and a single picture but even from that single photograph, it is just possible to begin to



imagine the sort of journey on which Dave was about to embark.

He arrived just five days after the celebrations to mark the anniversary of the end of the Malvinas war with the UK and commented on the friendliness and generosity of the Argentinians. (At the time, he was unaware of the anniversary.) Accommodation was mainly by camping and staying in hostels, which in South America is more like a private hotel but the price of a nights camping at a site with all the normal facilities one would expect in Europe was about £1.50 a night.

The roads in the south are unbelievable empty although of mixed quality – some fully tarmaced and in a good state of repair while others were little more than a gravel driveway and pretty much everything in between. Dave rode north to Tiera del Fuego, the most southerly city in the world and continued on towards the Andes. It is now you must either start using your imagination, get out some books or get onto the internet to see some of the sights depicted in Dave's photographs as he rode the Punto Miranas glacier which is the largest in the world, past Lake Baraloche, travelling along the Routa Valenta up the west side of the phenomenal mountain peaks of the Andes.

The most significant hazard on these scantily used roads is that presented by the wild animals until an image appeared on the screen of a stupendous series of hairpin turns as the road falls from high Argentina at some 4000m, to the lowlands of Chile. Although Dave didn't suffer from the lack of oxygen at this altitude, his bike did and he had to demand less of it than he would at a lower altitude.

Now travelling along the Pacific coast road, the spectacular mountain scenery gave way to the Atakahna desert. A 20 minute border crossing, then into Peru. As if to compensate for the quick clearance, a puncture. A local 'garage' (you need to have seen the photograph!) was able to repair the damage and the offer of a bike swap. (Again you need to have seen the photo!) The offer was declined – with a smile!

Taking some time out at Cusco for a two and a half hour train ride to Machu Pichu to see the historical ruins (not to be missed), past the Nascar lines, he met up with an Argentinian bike rider who was to share most of the rest of the ride with him. A photograph showed Walter filling in some of the paperwork required to get through the border crossing between Ecuador and Columbia.

There is an almost impenetrable strip of jungle called the Darian gap and the bikes had to be airlifted north into Central America. Landing in Costa Rica, they hit the wet season (rain mainly at night but never-the-less wet). The pair continued further north into Belise before reaching Mexico and busier roads and poorer driving standards. Dave said he didn't like the area and rode a huge 765 miles in one day to get out of it but only before witnessing a two car head on!

I'm sure Dave's journey didn't speed up too much but a time schedule for his talk forced him to abridge the second half of his trip but suffice to say, he

continued north along the west coast, through North America and Canada into Alaska and Fairbanks, the spiritual end of his scenic drive. He turned right (for the first time!) and headed for the east coast of America finally ending up in Time Square where a local cop was kind enough to take his photograph as a final reminder of an epic journey.

Thanks to Dave for an interesting presentation and for taking the trouble to come across the border to entertain us all.

If you are offered a yellow BMW motorcycle, registration number Y337VES with less than 22,000 miles on the clock and advertised as one, careful lady owner, never raced or rallied, beware, it may not be the deal you are looking for!

Alan

True story

From the State where drink driving is considered a sport, comes a true story from the Sunshine Coast, Queensland.

Recently a routine police patrol parked outside a local neighbourhood tavern. Late in the evening the officer noticed a man leaving the bar so intoxicated that he could barely walk. The man stumbled around the car park for a few minutes, with the officer quietly observing. After what seemed an eternity and trying his keys on five vehicles, the man managed to find his car which he fell into. He was there for a few minutes, as a number of other patrons left the bar and drove off.

Finally he started the car, switched the wipers on and off (it was a fine dry night), flicked the indicators on, then off, tooted the horn and then switched on the lights. He moved the vehicle forward a few centimetres, reversed a little and then remained stationary for a few more minutes as some more vehicles left. At last he pulled out of the car park and started to drive slowly down the road. The police officer, having patiently waited all this time, now started up the patrol car, put on the flashing lights, promptly pulled the man over and carried out a breathalyser test. To his amazement the breathalyser indicated no evidence of the man having consumed alcohol at all! Dumbfounded, the officer said "I'll have to ask you to accompany me to the Police Station this breathalyser equipment must be broken."

"I doubt it." said the man, "Tonight I'm the designated decoy"

RHT

Data Protection Act

Members names and addresses are kept on a computer held by the Membership Secretary for the sole purpose of mailing group related correspondence and will not be made available to other organisations or individuals.

Who's Who in the Group

Honorary Life Member	Doug Harrison Dennis Blackburne Eileen Found	
President	Ivor Nicholson	875791
Vice Presidents	Stuart Donald Ken Harbert	871443
Chairman	Neil Scruton	01964 552932
Secretary	Andrew Noble	627497
Treasurer	Beryl Day	833351
Associate Coordinator	Angie Bird	01262 488425
Publicity	Wendy Robinson	
Minutes Secretary	Wendy Robinson	
Meetings Coordinator	Robert H Thomson	844764
Host	Bill Cundill	643429
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Chief Observer	Ivor Nicholson	875791
Senior Observers	Angie Bird Bill Cundill John Pearce	01262 488425 643429 654165
Senior Observers (Advisory)	Stuart Donald Doug Harrison	
Group Shop	Ivor Nicholson	875791
Refreshment Sales	Geoff Beecroft	781876

The Cost of White Lines

Some 2 years ago the council re-surfaced a road very close to where I live... and put up a sign ... no centre road markings ... and to this day it is still the same. I wonder why they never completed the job? Is it that the cost of white line painting is too expensive? If the lines had been painted back then there would be no need for the sign telling you there were no white lines and it would be one less sign for the motorists to have to be looking at and therefore could be concentrating more on what was happening on the actual road! I suppose if they had put the lines back it would have saved on making a sign telling us that there were no white lines!!

Tricia

PS have a look at 'There are 9 million bicycles in Beijing'

There Goes Another Tree!!

Recently I had to return an item to Staples because it was damaged - merely a straight exchange was all I needed. Quite simple you might think but spare a thought for the trees as you read on. I brought a replacement item to the till and the assistant took a photocopy of the original receipt, then put details of my name, address etc. into the computer and then produced another receipt, adding two further items that I had decided to purchase. Was as this paper really necessary? After all, I was only exchanging a faulty item that they had sold!!

Tricia

Flying Sandpits!

My friend had just taken delivery of her new car and brought it to show me - all sparkling and new. Very nice. A few days later she went to baby sit for her daughter and asked if she could park her new car in the drive rather than leave it on the main road, fearing that someone might bump into it as it is only a narrow road. Her son-in-law made way for her car on the drive and all was well. During the night the wind became stronger with a lot of loose objects blowing around. When they awoke the next morning, they woke to a sandpit wedged between the car door and the house wall. The impact of the sandpit hitting the door and the sand itself being rubbed into the door caused enough damage for her to have the car door repaired and re-sprayed.

Sometimes it seems that no matter how many precautions we take, we still end up with a problem we could never have envisaged.

Tricia

Matrix Explained

I received an email from Jonathan a couple of weeks ago. He had spotted an interesting thread on the RAC Motoring Forum and felt it worthy of inclusion in our Newsletter.

I read the article submitted by Biffo and completely agreed with Jonathan. Biffo is obviously in-the-know and explains in detail the why's and wherefore's of the matrix displays used on our motorways and some primary routes.

Biffo generously granted us permission to reproduce his article and expressed his opinion that this sort of information and background should be more readily available to the motoring public. How often have you passed a matrix sign only to continue down the motorway to find - nothing? It's frustrating and the consequence may be that other signs are ignored with the attendant danger that can present.

The whole various types of signals and signs are referred to as "Matrix" but breaking it down a little, the ones that show text are called "Variable Message Signs (VMS)" and the ones that show only speeds /fog, are just called "signals" if they are just the old fashioned ones, at 1.5 miles apart in the central reservation, or over each lane of a busy part of the motorway network, Newer types of VMS are now coming in, that show pictures similar to road signs, these are "pictograms or pictographs" (not sure as we don't have them yet)

I can explain why there sometimes is nothing there as I am one of those persons that now-a-days sets these signs & signals.

When we get a call from anyone, often via the police because someone's phoned in on 999, we MUST set some sort of warning signs.

If the call has come from a member of the public (MOP) and we cannot confirm that the problem, obstruction, accident actually exists at the location given, we set 50 mph on the signs.

Unfortunately, most people have no idea where they are on the motorway exactly, they know which junction they've got on at, and they know which junction they will be getting off at, but anywhere in between will usually be a stab in the dark.

If on the other hand, the call comes from a "reliable source" ie. Police or HATO officer, a recovery agent, Highways Agency contractor, or CCTV, then we take that as confirmed, and set whatever is required, eg. lane closures or more severe speeds.

If a MOP calls in from an emergency roadside telephone (ERT) and they can actually see the incident from where they are at the phone, we can set speeds down to 30 mph just prior to the scene.

*NOTE; if you call in from an ERT we know exactly where that phone is, so will know exactly where any problem is. (ERT phones are free, and come

directly into the Highways Agency Control Rooms, and are answered within 20 secs.)

Once a patrol (police or HATO) gets to the scene the incident is quickly assessed, then all sorts of things can happen, including the update of the signals, either more severe, or cleared.

ALL signals are only cleared on the say-so of a patrol at scene (Police or HATO), no-one else can give that authority.

As you can see, it's much more exact if you call in from an ERT, rather than calling 999 on your mobile. You will also speak to someone in a motorway control room, who knows about the motorways and the locations, whereas with 999, often you'll speak to a police call taker who probably knows nothing about motorways, and doesn't know just what questions to ask you. That's another reason why you can get miles of signals set, with nothing there! We often get (especially from a couple of police forces) between junction X and junction Y, now the average distance between junctions on the M6 is about 5 miles, but there are some that are 13 miles. I rest my case!

People sometimes stop in the live lanes for the craziest of reasons! This is then called in by good citizens. The next thing, the muppet who stopped, realises the wisdom of his ways, and drives off, meanwhile we have signals set, patrols on route to sort things out, and there's nothing there, but we can't clear the signals until it's checked to be clear, just in case.

You just wouldn't believe the things that are "dropped" on the carriageway requiring initial signals set at 50's until confirmed with the patrol etc. How about: a complete single bed, a settee, garden shed, garden fish pond (the plastic bit that you sink into a hole), ladders (regularly), bags of cement, paving stones, full HGV wheels, (HGV tyre bits are many times a day), car spare wheels, push bikes still attached to the roof-rack, top-boxes, suit cases, flat-pack furniture, in fact anything and everything, so if you see 50's (debris/incident) be aware, slow down, drop back and leave a good bit of room between the car in front and yourself. Watch in case he swerves for anything, but most of all, be prepared for anything.

Roadworks are a little different, the signals are set when the foreman of the roadworks "gang" asks for them. They then start to put out the large "hard signage" (ie, the yellow signs showing which lanes are closed). Once he has those in place, and has coned off the lanes that they are closing to work in, he calls for the matrix signals to be cleared, as drivers should be taking notice of the "hard signage". But still manage to drive straight into a bank of cones with flashing lights on!

When they are ready to remove the roadworks, he calls for the matrix to be reset.

Then when all the lane closure cones, and the hard signage have been removed, he calls for the matrix to be cleared once more.

Any signals/VMS showing anything to do with "Queue" and a speed restriction, are set automatically by MIDAS (Motorway Incident Detection and Automatic Signalling) these are sensing wires set into each lane of the motorway (on busy motorways, with VMS type signals) that can sense the speed and amount of traffic that goes over it. Should the average speed of the traffic fall below a certain level, it automatically sets "Queue" and a speed restriction, normally this is either 50 mph, or 40 mph. (It will only set lower if the HDS has been altered but I'll not go into that.) It looks at the readings of that midas pad approx every 4 mins. If the average speed has increased over the set speed, then it will switch off all the signals.

This means that if you see signs and signals saying "queue" you can bet that there is or has recently been a queue.

One other thing that will trip these signals, is a slow moving HGV, so you could be driving up the motorway at 70 mph, with nothing else on the road, and see "queue" signals, thinking they are stuck, you ignore them, only to find yourself hurtling up behind a slow moving abnormal load doing 10 mph! OOPS!!

We are measured for how quickly the signals are set once we are told of something, and we are also measured how quickly they are cleared once instructed by a HATO or police patrol.

The signalling system is a computer system, now and again the odd signal won't go off and the engineer has to go out to fix it, but that is a very seldom. you will only see just one signal on it's own when this happens.

The police are now actively booking people who go through lane closures, so beware! don't do it.

One other thing, it takes sometimes up to 2 minutes to set signals (depending on if the system that day) a busy motorway will come to a standstill at the rate of 1 mile/minute if the road is blocked!

I hope that I've managed to explain how the system works.

On today's morning shift, we've had numerous incidents of HGV tyre debris, a full size wooden pallet, a set of ladders, 2 x sheep, pieces of wood, a suitcase full of clothes that burst open spreading them around, a mans jacket, 16 RTC's, 1 person changing his tyre in the live lane! (Muppet or what!!) a couple of pedestrian jobs, and that's only those that I can think off the top of my head, all those in 1 control area, on 1 shift!

Stay safe everyone, believe the signs, at least until you've passed the "end" sign.

Biffo

Score So Far - Minus Nine

The recent re-painting of the road markings to the north of Beverley town centre has certainly caused serious confusion to motorists and cyclists alike.

The scheme appears to be implemented to provide cycle ways through a series of traffic lights, a roundabout and along Manor Road.

Part of the roundabout island has been removed to slightly widen the carriageway but apart from that, the exercise is more artistic than functional.

Apart from the expense of the project, it seems to have helped few, if any, road users and serves only to urbanize what used to be a pleasant market town.

Most of the confusion seems to arise out of car drivers being uncertain as to the purpose of on road cycle lanes. Basically, most drivers see them as the exclusive domain of the cyclist. If cyclists thought the lanes were their exclusive domain, things might be rather more tolerable but we all know road markings, any mandatory traffic signs, and particularly cycle ways do not apply to them.

At the entrance to Manor Road from the roundabout, the imposition of very wide cycle ways on both sides of the road persuades drivers to take a more central line. The problem created here is that this occurs in both directions and with so much going on at that junction, it won't be long before a head on collision occurs there.

The Highway code advises a motor vehicle driver he **MUST NOT** drive or park in a cycle lane marked with a broken line unless it is unavoidable. (Rule 140.) From my observations of road users in the area, most drivers do appear to try to avoid the use of the cycle lanes but without the degree of flexibility afforded by the Highway Code the practise is dangerous unless the view of the road ahead is good - frequently not the case at that roundabout exit.



Additionally the presence of a school on Manor Road and the rash of parent's vehicles waiting at lunch time and the end of the school day requires parents to wait or park over the cycle lane at the very time the more eco-aware school children on cycles are also using the road and one or two even trying to use their designated lane.

The whole scheme is, in my humble opinion, confusing, dangerous, totally unnecessary and an eyesore. It smacks of a council trying to achieve some performance requirements by putting into place so many metres of cycle lane this year.

The works did involve the placement of a new pedestrian crossing on the continuation of Manor Road near to the playing fields and the new doctor's surgery and pharmacy which had been required for a number of years so well done there, one point, but as for the rest five points away.

I hope the bus stop is about to be relocated as it is presently within a few yards of the new pedestrian crossing. Another five points away.

Alan

Why Change the Shape

Some years ago a clever individual came up with the sensible idea of using the shape of a road sign to indicate its relevance. A triangular sign indicates some sort of warning with its symbol indicating the type of warning. E.g. A picture of a fence is a warning of a gated level crossing. A round sign is mandatory and carries a symbol which indicates something must be obeyed. A rectangular sign gives information. We all spent some significant time learning all the different signs when we learned to drive and since.

Despite the fact the Highway Code has recently been revised, the shape of these signs still forms part of the foundation of the road sign system. Why then is it that an unbelievable number of important road signs have been relegated to information status by appearing on rectangular plates.

Speed limits, hill gradients, stop signs often appear these days on rectangular shaped plates.

I remember being told that there are a couple of important signs which have unique shapes so that even when covered with snow, the shape alone will tell a knowledgeable driver of its relevance and meaning.

Perhaps because of global warming no more snow is expected so the shape of these road signs no longer matters.

The stop sign at the tee junction from Walkington on to the South Cave to Market Weighton road near to Rudston Manor is such an example. Mind you, you can hardly fail to miss the plethora of signs on the approach to the junction as you travel down the hill. At night sunglasses are recommended. Perhaps that is what that new sign at the top of the hill means.

Tricia



For those of you who were there, there was some discussion as to whether or not one of Ivor's hobbies is train spotting.

This was going to be the final slide of the night, courtesy of Mr Thomson. It's a good job Ivor has a sense of humour!

Wife From Hell

A police officer pulls over a speeding car. The officer says, "I clocked you at 90 mph, sir." The driver says, "Sorry officer, I had it on cruise-control at 70, perhaps your radar gun needs calibrating." Not looking up from her knitting, the wife says, "Now don't be silly dear, you know that this car doesn't have cruise control."

As the policeman writes out the ticket, the driver looks over at his wife and growls, "Can't you please keep your mouth shut for once?" The wife smiles demurely and says, "You should be thankful your radar detector went off when it did." As the officer makes out the second ticket for the illegal radar detector unit, the man glowers at his wife and says through clenched teeth, "For God's sake, woman, can't you keep your mouth shut?"

The officer frowns and says, "And I notice you are not wearing your seat belt, sir. That's an automatic £55 fine." The driver says, "Well you see offic-

er, I had it on, but took it off when you pulled me over so that I could get my licence of of my back pocket." The wife says, "Now dear, you know very well that you didn't have your seat belt on. You never wear your seat-belt when you're driving."

As the police officer is writing out the third ticket the driver turns to his wife and barks, "WHY DON'T YOU PLEASE SHUT UP?"

The officer looks over to the woman and asks, "Does your husband always talk to you this way, madam?" "Only when he's been drinking."

RAT

Crazy isn't it?

I travelled up to Scotland before New Year and came back just after and I decided to go by car. I hear some of you shouting 'What about conservation and global warming?' Well I live in Beeford so it would cost me a taxi ride to Driffield to catch the train to Hull. Then I would have to catch a train to Doncaster and change to a train for Inverness from whence I would be picked up by the holiday firm and driven 30 odd miles to my eventual destination of Nethy Bridge. Well not so bad you are saying but to do this all in a day would mean be leaving VERY early in the morning and not arriving until after dinner (which is 7pm). Added to which there is the hanging around on drafty rail stations with luggage for a weeks birdwatching; travelling in hiking boots so I would not have to pack them, and carrying a tripod and telescope. Then around Edinborough of course we would be transferred to a coach because of engineering works on the line. Not only that, I would have to survive railway food! I roughed out the price of travelling by train and with taxi fares etc. it would amount to about £160. So my decision was to DRIVE! I left about 6.45am and arrived about 4pm having had at least two good breaks at my choice of food outlet; Oh and done some shopping in Aveimore. I left with a full tank of petrol and sticking to speed limits (too many cameras to do anything else) I arrived after 380 miles with some petrol left in the tank. It cost me about £100 pounds there and back in the comfort of my own car and with the flexibility to visit places on my journey and without any restriction on luggage. No wonder the government is going to find it VERY HARD to get me out of my car!

Angie Bird

Taking Chances

I think the speed cameras force people to slow down to ridiculous speeds which causes frustration to other drivers. I think this is putting more people at risk of accident. A prime example of this is Market Weighton hill - more people seem to slow down to 45/50 mph and this is forcing drivers who cannot wait to overtake to do the overtake on double white lines!!

Tricia

6 Metres - No less

I recently went to purchase 2 metres of ribbon in 3 different colours but the assistant said, "so you cannot buy less than 6 metres!" O.k. I thought, no problem, I am sure the other 4 metres will come in handy some day! Once choosing the colours, one colour did not have a bar code - so when the staff put it through the till they used one of the other colours barcodes ... so sometime soon they will have no white ribbon but excess metres of green!

Tricia

Bunny Update

The two bunnies have settled in well and now know their way around the house, however, we have lost them a couple of times!! You would think that when they are missing you would expect them to be found at ground level but you would be wrong ... the dining table is not a problem!! They are also good at shredding books - Alan now has difficulty ordering from the screwfix catalogue half the book in shreds and the other half in the rabbits ... there vocabulary should be quite good!!

Wondering what will happen when they go out in the garden in spring - guess tunnelling is not out of the question!!

Tricia

Mixed Up Word

I was talking with a friend whose dad had recently been to the hospital for some test. As she was explaining one of the procedures she said, well they should have the results of the Anagram in about 7 days time and will be writing to the doctor. Couldn't help but wonder how he would interpret the results - mateuhrdoi rhtisria!!

Tricia

Observing the Speed Limit

A police car pulled up a Nissan Micra that was crawling along the A12 at less than 20 mph,

“I’m sorry”, said the elderly lady behind the wheel, “but it said 12 on the last sign.”

“No madam”, said the Officer, “that was the road number, not the speed limit, You’re allowed to do 60 mph here.”

The P.C. Looked across at the woman's elderly passenger, ashen-faced and cowering in the front seat.

“Are you all right?” he asked.

“Not really.” she replied. “We’ve just come off the A132!”

Geoff Tee

Lest We Forget!

Talk about unnecessary road signs, this one recently appeared in Beverley town centre. I’m sure the reason for it being there is to confirm it is a second, separate set of lights in a close sequence of two but for crying out loud!

Tricia

Who took that photo? It’s a bit crook isn’t it?

Ok, it was me and there was a juggernaut bearing down on me at the time so it was taken in a bit of a rush. As they say, “Time and juggernauts wait for no man.” - Ed



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.

Observer's Training Night

Ivor arranged a training session for all the Group's Observers for 4th February at our usual meeting place, the Salvation Army Hall, Icehouse Road.

Apart from the opportunity for anyone to ask questions, the main topic for discussion was the Driving Assessment Report all Observers use to record the performance of an Associate after a guided run. The present form has been in use for a number of years and despite proving quite adequate for all that time, it did have some shortcomings which it was felt should be addressed.



Photo courtesy of RHT Studios

Following on from a suggestion of Angie's, Ivor, Angie and John Pearce came up with a completely new report which simplified some areas and brought into focus some points which have become more important recently. The new form had previously been distributed to all Group Observers for consideration and the meeting was thrown open to the floor for discussion.

With very minor adjustments and a change from the tick or cross score to a scaled score, the new report was accepted as a good move forwards and will be distributed to Observers shortly.

It was felt that the prime purpose of the report is to allow an Associate to reflect on his drive and to practise points which were reported in need of improvement. With the addition of optional, freeform notes on the rear of the sheet, it was felt the new design would perform this role admirably.

Clearly, there had been a significant amount of work done to produce the draft of this form and I would like to thank Ivor, our Chief Observer and his Seniors for providing such an improved document.

It became clear to me that some procedures of car control are changing quite rapidly and it is likely that some of the 'old' standards which most of us

hold dear will become either redundant or will need to be varied depending on the vehicle being driven. I'm thinking particularly of handbrake ratcheting where some manufacturers driver's handbooks now instruct to apply the handbrake and to allow the action to ratchet and the use of automatic gearboxes, both of which were mentioned in discussion.

With the introduction of fully automatic gearboxes with performance preference selection controls or semi-automatics with 'paddles', it makes it very difficult to examine 'automatics' *generally* and therefore for an Observer to offer guidance to Associates as to how to use the various features of their car. Providing an Associate under test is able to explain the different settings of the automatic box, that is sufficient to satisfy the Examiner of the candidates competence to use these settings even without demonstration.

It is likely as cars develop, old features like lever handbrakes will disappear and new features, yet to be released, will appear. All this makes it necessary to adapt to the changing world of car driving and our procedures, techniques and methods will need to be reviewed on an almost continual basis.

Consider perhaps as an Advanced Driver of many years, whether you may need to refresh your methods and techniques.

Alan

There are 9 million bicycles in Beijing

Well, I think they are on their way to Beverley. Just cannot believe the recent cycle lanes that have been put down and as if that isn't bad enough, they are very wide. Some people have now taken to driving down them with the white marker line as if it were the centre line. Some people are using them as parking bays which means the cyclists have to move out to overtake the cars in the cycle lane!

As well as all the new white lines there are areas that have been covered in green paint. If you get the chance have look at the junction of Manor Road. How anyone can make sense of this is any ones guess. I may be wrong but I think there is an accident just waiting to happen.

Following on from an article in the last newsletter, I commented that there was a sign in Beverley which said "no road marking" and thought it was because they were short of white paint as it had been like it for months. Apparently all is now revealed, they have been saving it to paint cycle path markings and stenciled cycles all over Beverley.

On a personal note I am really saddened by the way Beverley has just become a mass of painted roads.... An historic town daubed in paint!

Tricia

Presentations

Full Member, Alison Grant is pictured with her Observer, Dave Allum after Ivor, our Group President, had presented Allison with her Advanced Driving Test Certificate. Congratulations and well done to Alison!



Jennie Gillyon was clearly pleased to receive her Advanced Driving Test Certificate. Unfortunately, her Observer Stephen Mills was not able to attend the meeting so Jennie is photographed with Ivor.



Well done Jennie. Your efforts have paid off.

Thanks to both Observers for giving their time freely. Their only reward is knowing they have done their bit in attempting to improve the safety of all road users.

Subs Explained

The only time I have ever received a County Court summons was when I lived in York.

It came on behalf of Yorkshire Water and demanded payment, within the next few days, of my now overdue bill for the supply of sewage and environmental services. You note I say 'the only time' and that is because I always pay bills on time. With this one exception, no one has ever had to ask me again to pay a bill. What had gone wrong?

I checked back through my records and sure enough, there was the bill - with no record of payment. 'But I'm *sure* I've already paid the water bill.' That lunchtime, in I went, cheque book in hand and settled the account - along with hundreds of others.

That evening, I (re-)discovered what the reality was. York is a rather special case in that Yorkshire Water (bless 'em!) supply the sewage and environmental services for the area but within the immediate York area, the water supply comes from the York Waterworks Company. At the time, each company sent out two bills per year and I'd failed to pay the Yorkshire Water second bill. I deserved the slapped wrist.

A couple of days later, the local rag revealed that Yorkshire water had become so disillusioned with the situation they had taken out 14,000 County Court summonses in an attempt to shock York residents into remembering to pay their bill. (I really can't remember the number but it was a lot.) It worked.

I'm sure by now you're asking yourself what *is* he on about but the reality is that because of the structure of the IAM, its membership finds itself in a similar position to that illustrated above in that we pay our annual subs to two different organisations.

In order to remain a member of the Institute of Advanced Motorists, be permitted to display the IAM badge and benefit from the discounts and schemes negotiated by the organisation, you need to pay a subscription to the IAM in London. This is currently about £18 per year or less if you pay by direct debit and is due on the anniversary of your test pass month.

Much of the educational work and entertainment provided to IAM members is carried out through the Groups affiliated to the Institute. Each group then has its own membership and has the right (and need) to a group membership fee for the supply of such services. Our group subscriptions become due 1st February and currently stand at £7.50. Membership of a group is not a requirement of being an IAM member but to attend the entertaining group monthly meetings regularly and receive this wonderful publication quarterly, does require you to be a group member.

IAM members may not vote at a group AGM unless they hold group membership and although guests are very welcome at the monthly gather-

ings, it is a bit churlish to attend regularly and not contribute to the costs through group membership.

Please support our group by ensuring you have paid your annual group subscription. After all, for a whole year, it is only about the same as the cost of decent oil needed to top up your engine's level from minimum to maximum.

Alan

See How Our Role Models Do It

I always wait patiently throughout the year for our own Vice President's presentation and at the February meeting, Stuart Donald didn't fail to entertain and inform our members.

Stuart is a Chief Superintendent with Humberside Police and is also the Divisional Commander for North Lincolnshire. He has, over the years and in his own words, 'done most of the jobs in Humberside Police' and his experience and position make him almost uniquely able offer an insight to Humberside's approach to Police Driver training.

I know Stuart is more than happy to see the increased presence of police on the roads as Humberside try to regain the position they enjoyed before they abandoned their dedicated road policing team. With more traffic police



present and the national unified appearance of their vehicles, the presence of the police on the roads is now becoming more apparent to the public - which is, after all what it's all about.

The second slide of Stuart's presentation showed an array of police vehicles, all damaged in some way or another as a consequence of their work. Some had clearly been involved in high speed crashes others less so but the point to be made is the although fully trained police drivers are probably as good as it is possible to get on the public highway, even they have crashes. The theme of his presentation was to explain some of the training courses these drivers have to experience before they are privileged enough to use the exemptions permitted under the law to carry out their policing duties on the public highways.

All police employed staff who are permitted to drive company vehicles are required to undergo an initial assessment which is not unlike the initial assessment which is the first drive out with a new Associate. It is not intended to do anything more than to ensure the candidate is safe and has a reasonable attitude to driving. This is carried out to national standards but is essentially at a level all current road users *should* be at to drive on the highway. In the event of a police employee failing to reach the required standard on this assessment, the candidate would complete further basic training before being allowed to drive in the course of their work.

Police Officers may then progress to the Standard Course, which about 150 Officers per year complete and this qualifies them to respond to incidents. These Officers typically drive the Proton cars we commonly see on the streets in the area and are clearly permitted to use blue lights and sirens to assist their way through the traffic. The IAM Advanced Test may be viewed as approximating this standard except for the higher speed elements which, to us as members of the public, is not relevant to lawful driving on the highway. (Sometimes, just sometimes I would really like to 'have a go' and although occasionally I might push the boundaries a bit, it would be really nice to have a blast through busy streets like the boys in blue do! All a consequence of 'Police, Camera, Action!' I must say, so Alistair Stuart, it's all your fault!)

About 20 Officers per year are trained to an Advanced standard. These Officers then take up positions in divisions like traffic, armed and major crime units. This is a high risk area where only the best drivers are good enough.

Along with car driving, there are courses for advanced motorcycle riding. It is these Officers who are best suited to attending incidents where traffic congestion would hamper other types of vehicle causing extend response times or exerting undue pressure on car drivers to attend resulting in potentially unsafe driving practises. Humberside Police hold two courses a year with two riders to one Instructor.

More specialized training courses exist for categories like four wheel drive, personnel carrying, pursuit management, trailer towing and a VIP

course which teaches the skills necessary to minimise the danger to persons perceived as being at risk, whilst using the public highways.

Police drivers are encouraged to experience driving in different conditions and in different vehicles and are required to be knowledgeable in the police driver's handbook, 'Roadcraft' and of course, 'The Highway Code'. (Have you got your copy of the latest version yet?) Mental attitude is crucial to all drivers but particularly in the circumstances encountered by the police when pressure from colleagues requesting information and the nature of the call itself all take a slice out of a driver's capacity to think. It is precisely at times like this a driver is required to perform with speed and precision and remain safe for himself and others. It requires an aptitude which can only be developed with practise and a clear, unflappable mind is essential to perform in such a way.

Stuart then presented the group with a couple of papers which tested our knowledge of 'Roadcraft' and 'The Highway Code' - just for fun (or so he said!). The questions were thankfully mostly straightforward and I am pleased to say as a group, I think we got the correct answers although do you know the precise time between which you should not sound your horn? If you do, well done, 'cos I didn't - not precisely.

As a closing element, Stuart showed a pursuit recorded from on board one of the Force's Imprezas as it followed a target car through the roads and towns of North Lincolnshire. The recording was interesting in that positioning for hazards could be seen and if run at half speed, I did wonder whether it would make a good training video for Associates but then both the target and police vehicles went the wrong way round a roundabout. I revised my thoughts.

As always, thanks to Stuart for an informative and entertaining evening. If I was 30 years younger, I might consider signing up.

Alan

Getting those words right!

Going back to when I was a young girl, I remember visiting my best friends' house for the first time. As I nervously sat with her and her Mum at the dining table her Mum asked if I would you like a light snack? "Thought we could have welsh rarebit.", she said. Oh, I thought to myself how can anyone possible eat rabbit? As I sat and thought about it, her Mum said really it won't take me long to prepare it, I can soon get the toast ready under the grill. Oh, no that is even worse, the poor rabbit is going to be put on toast! How was I going to say that there was no way I could eat this? "Would it be ok if I just had the toast, as I really not that hungry?" "Sure!" she said, "Not a problem." Imagine my relief when she brought my toast and the welsh rarebit was actually cheese on toast!

Tricia

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 or just anyone who is interested in discovering how to improve their own driving skills so please invite a guest or two.

Seeing Colour

During my many night driving missions, I am really surprised at the number of differently coloured headlights that now seem to adorn our roads - there are pink ones, blue ones, green ones, cream ones and occasionally white ones! I think the variety of colours can be very distracting and feel that all lights ought to be of one standard colour - white.

Tricia

As somewhat of an authority on headlights having just replaced mine (big ed!) and mugged up on some of the details of beam colour, maybe I could shed some light on Tricia's comments. (I don't get paid for this, you know.)

The colours to which Tricia refers come mainly from two different sources.

The first is the colour of the light produced by the light source. This is measured as colour temperature and has units of temperature from the Kelvin scale (K). Note for the meticulous, no degrees as in degrees Celsius or degrees Fahrenheit, just Kelvin. Colour temperature is used all over the place. Most computer monitors have some setting relating to colour temperature and a typical setting would be 6500 K or 9300 K and relates to the blueness of the display. There is the clue. In this sort of range, the higher the colour temperature, the bluer the colour of the light. So what is colour temperature and why is it measured in Kelvin?

For colour of light reference purposes, we go back to basics. Most light, like that from the sun, comes from some sort of material which is so hot that it glows and produces light, like red or white hot metal. Imagine a lit candle. The useable light from that candle comes from the soot particles heated by

the flame maintained by the gasses produced by the vaporizing wax around the wick. The temperature of that flame is relatively low so the colour of the light emitted is an orangey yellow towards the red end of the spectrum (colours of the rainbow with the red end being the lower temperatures and the violet end, higher).

The Kelvin temperature scale was named after the British physicist William Thomson. Odd you might say. Why not Thomson temperature scale? Because he was William Thomson, Baron Kelvin. ☺

Zero Kelvin represents a temperature at which molecules have no internal kinetic energy and can, well for this week at least, get no colder. Zero Kelvin is often referred to as absolute zero. Heating an object up simply increases internal kinetic energy. The object then feels warmer. When the internal kinetic energy starts to get very large, light is emitted. Heat a piece of iron to red heat and you'll know what I mean. Heat it more and it will produce a whiter light as it is heated from red to white heat.

The Kelvin scale really just suits the concept of emitted light. In practise any temperature or energy scale could be used.

Do you remember magnesium ribbon from your school days. It's probably banned now like almost all fun things but when lit with a match (also probably to be banned shortly), this chemical element, a metal, burns with a very bright white light indicating a much higher combustion temperature. Not recommended and don't try this at home (included for litigation purposes only) but a burning match can easily be extinguished with a quick nip between a thumb and forefinger with little or no damage to the digits involved whereas the burning magnesium ribbon would probably successfully remove a thumb and one forefinger.

So colour temperature is defined as the colour of the light emitted by a black body heated to that temperature. In the case of the sun, the black body is the mass of the sun, the heating effect is mainly nuclear fusion and the resulting light appears at the surface of the earth on a clear day at about 9300 K. That is the sort of light you get high up on the mountain peaks and is well towards the violet (referred to as the blue end of the spectrum).

Photographers are aware of this because most film emulsions respond adversely to such a high colour temperature so they fit a UV filter to remove light of the very highest colour temperatures and so produce a better balanced photo. Conversely, the same guy might add a blue filter to remove some of the lower colour temperature (orangey yellow light) when taking photographs with electric light.

Wow, that was a bit of a diversion from headlights but I hope it starts to explain what is meant by colour temperature.

A typical 'old fashioned' 12 volt headlamp bulb of the 1960's would be made like an ordinary domestic light bulb with a tungsten filament heated electrically in a near vacuum or some inert gas to prevent the filament from vaporizing and would produce a yellow light of about 2300 K. The halogen

headlight bulb allowed the tungsten filament to be heated to a higher temperature because of the halogen gas and the quartz glass envelope and will typically produce a light much whiter than the earlier bulb, about 3300 K. - still much less than daylight which is why even halogen headlights still appear yellow when used in daylight.

The 'high performance' replacement halogen headlight bulbs push the colour temperature up to something like 3600 K.

The set I fitted to my car uses a different method to produce the light. Conventionally, a filament is heated electrically to emit the light but the high intensity discharge (HID) lamps I fitted, rely on an electric arc passing through ionised xenon gas. There is no filament present so that doesn't limit the temperatures which can be achieved. The highest temperatures produced in the arc can be typically 8000 K but reduce as the distance from the arc axis increases. By fine tuning, the manufacturer can produce a range of devices which can produce an overall effective colour temperature between 4800 K and 12000 K which represents a beam colour from slightly yellow to a really blue white light.

HID bulbs are now being fitted by vehicle manufacturers and are available as replacement kits and as the costs fall, it is likely that we will see more and more of these headlights used.

The second reason for colour fringes from headlights is caused by refraction. This can occur in the material of the reflector or in the case of projector type headlights, in the lens used to focus the beam.

Back to school, do you remember messing about with prisms and admiring the colours produced when a beam of sunlight or electric light was passed through the prism? Well, the same thing happens in headlights when the light from the bulb is reflected and/or refracted to form the beam. Often the light strikes the lens or reflector at an angle and any material the light passes through causes it to refract (bend) and split up into the colours of the rainbow. Most of the light appears to be white but at the edges of the beam some of the refracted light remains and appears as narrow bands of colours.

The projector lights suffer quite badly from this phenomenon as all the light passes through a quite crude lens. In photography, if the lenses used in a camera suffered from the same phenomenon, the photographs taken with that lens would suffer from the same colour fringing due to refraction - chromatic aberration. In fact, all lenses suffer from this fault but camera lens designers use different glasses for individual lens elements to minimise the aberrations. Clearly, there is a significant cost implication to the photographic lens when the aberrations are designed out whereas the simple lens systems used in projector headlights do not allow for these expensive correction hence the colour fringes remain.

Alan

Chief Observer's Column

February 4th was the date of our Observer Training Night and a big thank you, from me, for the superb turn out. It is always gratifying to see the excellent response for this annual event. This year it was a discussion and information giving night.

The main part of the evening was the approval, discussion and introduction of a new Driving Assessment Report. The previous report has been in use since 1998 and it was felt needed updating. When ideas were requested from observers Angie Bird 'put the cat amongst the pigeons' by suggesting, rather than a revising the existing report, a completely new format be introduced.

Meanwhile John Pearce had sent me his ideas on updating and I arranged to meet him to discuss them. Being impressed with Angie's idea, I spent most of a Saturday, with her, examining it in detail and felt, subject to approval of the observers, we should adopt the new format. When I had my meeting with John he also liked the new report so we spent time looking at it in detail and came up with some possible alterations.

Having received, prior to the meeting, a draft copy of the new report all the observers agreed to it being adopted on a trial basis - subject to review later in the year. An interesting discussion took place on the draft report and suggestions agreed have been incorporated in the final one.

The Group has recently undertaken preparing some Territorial Army personnel for the IAM Test. Initially five took part, of whom three have already passed, one is waiting test and one has moved out of the area and is continuing with another group. The associates were split into two groups, one of three, with myself observing and one of two with Peter Richardson. This was probably the first time the group has given guidance with more than one person in the car but using an army vehicle this was possible. All the drivers went out together, taking it in turn to drive or be a passenger. This method of carrying out observed drives undoubtedly meant the candidates reached the required standard quicker than on our normal one to one basis. All the army personnel were volunteers and had real enthusiasm. Although army financial limitations will restrict the number of future candidates, following on from the initial five, seven more started in February. The observers being myself, John Pearce and Dave Allum. Another new innovation - for our group- was having a 'class room' session before the drivers started the road sessions. With only an hour available the session was limited to giving information on the IAM, the Group, the observers and the examiners plus explaining the aims and objectives of the course and some basics on the system, driving plans, braking, use of gears etc.

The group's previous experience of taking out company drivers - when we had many drivers who did not completed their guidance - made us think twice about taking on this project. However the enthusiasm of those initially

taking part has overcome this reluctance and I for one am delighted to be involved.

Ivor Nicholson

New Group Web Site

A couple of years ago now, I replaced the group web site with a new one. I thought it wasn't too bad and was consistent with the national IAM site in its muted colours and general tone.

Within a couple of months of completing that, bug*** me

if the IAM didn't revise their site with a modern, punchy appearance and rather more interesting and relevant content!

Well, it's taken a little while but now our new site is about to be released. Access is the same as before but the appearance is more consistent with the national site and now incorporates improved feedback and request facilities.

I need to replace some photos with others of better quality and now the weather is getting better, glinting chrome always photographs better in bright sunshine, I hope to release the site very shortly.

The site address, as always, is www.sentinel38.karoo.net/iam or it can also be accessed from the national site under groups.



Alan

Annual General Meeting March 2008

As always, this year's AGM started off with the approval of the previous AGM's minutes and continued on with matters arising before the Chairmans speech:

The Chairman's Speech

I aim to keep my report as short as possible and primarily I intend to use it to thank the many people who have expended significant time and energy on what, I think, has been a very good year for the Group. Without exception I think the standard of the speakers at our monthly meetings has been tremendous. The range and variety of topics they have presented has been stimulating, educational and thought provoking. I believe this has been, perhaps, the biggest factor in not only keeping our attendance levels steady but on average increasing them. For my sins I am secretary of the Cottingham Garden Club and have the job of organising speakers for their monthly meetings and so I have some idea how difficult and time consuming this can be.



Therefore can I thank on your behalf, Robert Thomson for his unstinting efforts in this area and hope that he will continue to pull the rabbits out of the hat. As an aside, his presence at our meetings is vital since he is the only person who can fold up the projector screen without trapping his fingers.

My report also incorporates the Secretary's report, and, as most of you will understand, the Secretary along with the Treasurer are the two people who primarily keep the Group on an even keel. Andrew took over as Secretary last year and has done a splendid job and I am delighted that he is standing for re-election. Andrew with assistance from Alan Clark, has brought the Group records bang up to date with everything being stored electronically. This should make his job a little easier in the future.

As some of you will probably know, Paul is standing down as Treasurer this year. Paul has been our Treasurer for a considerable period and has made sure that we have stayed financially on the straight and narrow. I will say more about Paul's work for the Group a little later if I may.

Now for those with a mathematical bent a few facts and figures for you. At the end of February we had had 44 Applicants. Of these there have been 20 passes. At the moment we have 21 associates under guidance and 3 awaiting their tests. All in all a successful year, helped towards the latter part of the year by the appearance on the radio of Bill Cundill giving advice about winter driving, and Ivor appearing in the motoring supplement of the Hull Daily Mail. Without doubt this higher level exposure brings significant benefits to the Group and IAM and it is something your committee will focus upon even further during the coming year. Thanks, then to Angie for coordinating the training and all the observers for giving so freely of their time.

Also standing down from the committee this year is Alan Clark but fortunately for us he is continuing to be our Newsletter supremo. Those with long memories will remember that last year we won the national award for our Newsletter and I think we all agree that its content and presentation are first class. Don't forget that this is your Newsletter and Alan will gladly accept contributions at any time. If a few more of us made contributions, the Newsletter would only get better. We are also hoping for new glossy covers this year courtesy of the efforts of Robert Thomson. Once more our thanks go to Alan and Robert for all the effort that they put in.

A few more thanks before I finally shut up. To the committee in general for all the work that they do to ensure that the Group runs as efficiently as possible. Geoff Beecroft for slaking our thirsts at our monthly meetings and our President for the myriad things that Ivor does for the Group and his wealth of experience which he will gladly share with anyone. Finally I would like to thank, you, the members for attending the meetings and contributing to the healthy debates that we have.

Neil Scruton

The Treasurer's Report

In his final year as Treasurer, Paul explained the Annual Accounts and responded to a question from the floor.

He advised that the Group finances were in a healthy state and with prudent future spending, should remain so for years to come.

The President's Address

Neil has covered the very justified thanks, to hopefully all the members, who have contributed to the successful running of the Group during the last year, which I would fully like to endorse.

Can I also add my thanks to Bob who has travelled some way to be with us tonight.

Like ourselves, his time is given on a voluntary basis. Thank you Bob

On behalf of all members I would like to thank Neil for the excellent way he has carried out his first year in post. He has followed up on our previous chairman Frank's record of almost a hundred percent chairing of both the committee meetings and the monthly member's meetings, as well as attending the National Conferences and Region 4 meetings. So thank you Neil.

I would like to add my thanks to Paul, who is standing down as Treasurer after 13 years in post. As a professional accountant his accounts have always been to the highest standard. I am delighted he is standing for committee and know he will be helping our new Treasurer, to get into the IAM accounting routine.

In my role of Chief Observer, I would like to thank all the Observers for the work they carry out. Their role is so important to the group, allowing us to give guidance to associates, which is of course, the reason main function of groups.

When I gave my speech, at the 40th Anniversary Meal I spoke about a future where, amongst other features, a vehicle's speed would be automati-



cally controlled by satellite, thus always complying with speed limits. I now feel the future, I talked about, is arriving quicker than expected, but not as quick as an article in the paper the other week suggested. It was headed the car that cannot crash'. Whew! I thought no more need for our services as observers - more time for me to indulge in my other hobbies. However, on reading the article, I soon came back to earth as it was about active cruise control, which theoretically means a vehicle cannot run into the back of another one, but as we all know this is only one of many ways vehicles collide and we are nowhere near having a 'crash proof' car. Cars are now advertised with ACC, SC, TC, BLIS, AODS, ESA, DMS, etc. I wonder if anyone here tonight knows what all the letters stand for? I suspect not. Previously manufacturers were happy with simple abbreviations for mainly accessories such as HRW : Heated rear window, EM: Electric mirrors, AC: air conditioning etc.

Well what do some of the new initials stand for?

ACC Active cruise control. Dial in required speed and it is maintained up and down hill, plus keeping correct distance from any vehicle in front.

SC Stability control. Varying power to each wheel, particularly on bends when the driver has 'got it wrong'.

TC Traction control. A simpler form of stability control.

BLIS Blind spot information system. Usually on the offside mirror.

AODS Advanced Obstacle Detection System. Radar plus camera.

ESA Emergency Steering Assist. If collision is deemed likely, the steering ratio is automatically adjusted to enable a rapid evasion manoeuvre and stiffer damper settings are adopted.

DMS Driver Monitoring System. A camera mounted on top of the steering column plots the features on the driver face and constantly monitors side-to-side head movement. If it recognises that the driver is looking away, when a hazard is detected in the road ahead, an automatic warning buzzer is sounded and the brakes are applied briefly.

We also have Night Vision where thermal imaging can increase the view in the dark from 150 metres, with normal headlights to 300 metres.



Collision warning. If the vehicle in front suddenly brakes and the system senses that a collision is likely to happen it will alert the driver, by sound and vision. Then pre tensions the brakes.

Pre tension braking. If due to reducing the throttle pedal suddenly, the car senses a possible use of hard braking it responds by pre-charging the brakes. Will the art of practising acceleration sense no longer be possible?

New safety features are being added all the time, to cars, with increasing numbers of air bags etc. A fairly recent addition is Rear Pre-crash Safety System, where a rear view camera constantly monitors the area around the back of the car. If it detects an imminent collision, the front seat headrests are automatically moved up and forwards and the seat belts pre tensioned.

Safety features must be a good thing, as even the best driver is not completely immune from being involved in a crash and anything that can save or reduce injury has to be applauded. However, I remember when safety belts were first introduced, it was said driving standards would possibly drop because some drivers would feel more secure. The way some drivers perform today I wonder if this will apply even more with the new safety features.

How will the introduction of all the driver's aids I have mentioned change drivers habits? Will drivers take less care when driving say round bends, assuming, if they judge it wrong, the car will get round safely. There is a limit to how these systems can correct bad judgement. However clever the new systems are they will never fully avoid crashes such as two vehicles colliding head on, say on a bend when one driver is on the wrong side of the road.

I will finish with a final thought. How many years will it be before observers will no longer required to give advanced driving guidance as vehicles will drive themselves?

Thank you.

Ivor Nicholson

Election of Officers and Committee Members

Briefly, Neil Scruton remains in office as our Chairman, Andrew Noble continues as Secretary and Paul Tee stands down and Beryl Day takes the office of Treasurer.

Alan Clark and Adam Wilson stand down from the Committee, while Paul Tee retains his involvement by joining the Committee.

Rachel Garth continues as Auditor.

Increase in Group Subscriptions from 2009

In order to offset rising costs of (mainly) postage the meeting approved an increase in the annual group subscription from the current £7.50 to £9.00

Presentation of Awards

The more formal part of the evening over, the meeting went on to the presentation of awards.

Paul R Tee was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from Head Office for his unstinting service to the IAM and the Hull Group in particular in his position as Treasurer which he has held for 13 years. It is well deserved and Paul has brought a level of professionalism that most organisations would be proud of let alone a charity manned by volunteers. A sincere thank you, Paul.

A double whamee for Peter Richardson who received two awards. The first, the Harry Bell Trophy and the second, a Group Gold Certificate acknowledging his achievement of guiding 30 Associates through the IAM test.



Ivor took great pleasure in presenting the President's Cup to a stalwart of the monthly meeting. A very warm welcome is always to be had whenever a cup of tea or coffee is purchased. Geoff Beecroft's coffee is legendary, well at least within the Group, and very welcome as you step out of the winter cold into an IAM meeting.

Geoff is photographed here with Ivor, the Group President.

Of course one of the reasons the Group exists is to guide Associates through the Advanced Driving Test and Bob Rowles took pleasure in presenting his well earned Test Pass Certificate to our latest success, Graham Francis.

Graham and Bob are photographed here together. Thanks to Neil Scruton, Graham's Observer, for giving his time freely to assist him in achieving test standard.



Bob Rowles, Divisional Committee Member

Bob Rowles is known to the Group as he kindly attended last years annual general meeting with David Stringer as guests of honour.

Bob started his talk to the meeting by expressing his pleasure in returning to Hull and continued to congratulate the group, as a whole, for a successful year. As Bob put it, 'And to Paul for his escape after sterling service to the group and the IAM over 13 years holding the post of Group Treasurer.'

The theme of Bob's speech was that of 'fleshing out' the article in the recently published Advanced Driving headed 'IAM Council Changes'.

He briefly reminded us that the IAM is largest road safety organisation in the country and is part way through a five year re-organisation, with the aim of doubling the membership, becoming relevant to 10% of the motoring public and to increase its influence in the corridors of power. The core of the organisation is the group movement and it is through this, so much of the work of the IAM is achieved.

As part of the five year plan, external consultants suggested an update to the higher structure of the organisation. Our chairman, David Kenworthy, is keen to introduce change whilst strengthening the organisation and pursuing the goals set out previously.

In recent years, the responsibility of charity trustees has increased significantly and it was felt that a reduced number of trustees would be better suited to running the complex IAM organisation incorporating the trading arms of Fleet Training.

To that end the number of trustees has been reduced from 20 to 11 and that involved the National Group Council members standing down. The four Divisional Council Members would take on a new role improving the communication, in both directions, between the Council and the groups. This explains, for the very observant, the new title Bob Rowles now sports. While still casually being referred to as a DCM, the C now stands for Committee not Council, having now (gratefully) relinquishing trustee status.

The immense responsibility undertaken by the late Christopher Bullock as IAM Chief Executive and Managing Director for the Fleet Companies is now shared between Simon Best; responsible for Group Services (the IAM as we know it) and Sebastian Golding who takes on the managing directorship of the professional training arm. The position of Chief Executive presently remains unfilled but has been advertised and response has been good and the successful candidate will shortly be appointed by the Council.

As far as we as a group are concerned the upshot of this reorganisation should be that the acknowledged value provided to the IAM through its 200+ groups is rewarded through better support and communication. This will be achieved through the advisory role now taken on by the Divisional Committee Members.

Alan

A Final Celebration

On completion of the AGM, Robert Thomson took the floor and continued:
Good evening.

My congratulations to all the members who have received awards or certificates this evening. Well done to you all.

I understand the final presentation tonight is yet another first for our group.

I've been asked to announce this anniversary celebration, on your behalf, owing to this person having been very helpful to me, as your Meetings Coordinator, over the past two or three years.

After a lot of trouble and effort we managed to have three words printed on the front cover of the latest IAM magazine, 'Advanced Driving'. We only wanted two, but it appears we have a 'whistle blower' somewhere in the group. (At this time Robert held up a copy of 'Advanced Driving' showing the front cover bearing the words 'Happy 50th Birthday', referring to the 50 years of motorways in the UK.)

Robert continued, 'So would Jonathan come forward please to collect your Birthday Card to celebrate your 50th birthday.'

Jonathan responded and was presented his birthday card and a birthday cake, which later Jonathan generously shared.

Closing the meeting, the Chairman invited all to join the Committee at a buffet in the adjoining room.

AGM's are rarely anyone's favourite meeting and perhaps as a carrot to attend, the Committee again arranged for a buffet after the main proceedings had been completed.

I'm sure everyone would join me in thanking the Salvation Army crew for all their efforts and the excellent food they prepared for us.

Alan

Still No Change

As we have now moved into another year, albeit only just, the sign on the Dunswell Road still says 105 casualties in the past three years and have done for the past five. Obviously all the new speed limits imposed five years ago are not working. If anyone know anything different, please let me know. Any surprise people don't take any notice of many road signs?

Tricia.



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