



Hull & East Riding Group of Advanced Motorists

Winter 2007

NEWSLETTER

skill with responsibility

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From the Editor

I'm sure by now that most members will have heard the sad news of the death of Christopher Bullock, our Chief Executive. The IAM news release announcing Christopher's death is reproduced overleaf.

I'm certain all members of the Hull and East Riding Group would join me in extending our sincere sympathies to his wife and children.

Winter is upon us and I've not really included any articles about keeping your car windows and lights clean and fog free for driving in these rather more difficult conditions, so I mention it now. Probably the most important point is to make sure your wipers are in good nick and you've added sufficient windscreen washer concentrate to prevent freezing. After all, if you can't see a hazard, you can't deal with it.

Again, for the second time things are perhaps on the up, thanks to all our newsletter article contributors. We seem to have a reasonable mix again this edition so thank you all very much. All contributions are gratefully received and notwithstanding my only grey cell forgetting to put an article in, most (of the printable ones!) get included.

A message from Tricia to say we have now obtained a couple of house bunnies which, to some extent have filled the gap left by Hunnee who sadly died a few months ago. They are called Fenby and Kia. Fenby, from my great, great, great grandparents (can't you tell who's been researching his family tree?) and Kia because we don't have a car of that make and it sounds nice.

I can now look forward to some support while working on the newsletter. I'm not sure whether that will make things better or not but the deal's already done!

Have a happy Christmas!



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

Friday 7th March.

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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IAM New Release, 20th November 2007

The IAM regrets to announce the death yesterday (Monday 19 November 2007) of Christopher Bullock MBE, Chief Executive of the IAM. Christopher Bullock, 60, became IAM Chief Executive in 1994. Mr. Bullock led the IAM as it grew in size and influence; it is now the largest single organisation dedicated to road safety and by far the largest provider of advanced driving tests. Mr. Bullock was also Managing Director of IAM Fleet, Drive & Survive and IAM Fleet Ireland which together make the IAM the largest provider of risk management and company driver training services. Before joining the IAM Mr Bullock had a long career in Shell which he joined after leaving the University of Sussex with a BSc with honours in Physics and Mathematics in 1968.



While he was with Shell International he held various Marketing and Public Affairs positions in the UK and overseas. During the 1980s he was responsible for Shell's charitable giving - at that time the largest corporate donor in the UK - and for sponsorship of environmental, arts and other community organisations. This included founding Age Resource, which aimed to harness the benefits of an ageing society and is now the "younger arm" of Age Concern. Mr Bullock was seconded in 1991 to the then Department of Energy and before taking up his role at the IAM, he was for two years the Director of Public Affairs at the TAC (Tobacco Advisory Council). When he was awarded his MBE earlier this year, Mr. Bullock said that he saw the award as recognition of the valuable and growing work of the IAM. In particular, he said the honour acknowledged all those who through the IAM dedicate their time and expertise to helping people improve their driving and motorcycling, and to saving lives on the road. Mr. Bullock lived in Fulham, West London. He is survived by his wife Linda and their two sons Nicholas and George.

The Committee and members of the Hull and East Riding Group of Advanced Motorists would like to express their sadness at Christopher's death. A larger than life character whose leadership and enthusiasm will be sadly missed.

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Stick A Ticket On!!

We decided to take the newsletter to Ivors when the schools in Cottingham were just leaving for the day. Despite the signs saying that cars and 4x4's should not park outside the school, it doesn't seem to make any difference as they park on the pavement or moreover, on the yellow zigzag markings!! After weaving our way through the mayhem, I could hardly believe that at the next roundabout near the new police station was a traffic warden, simply gazing around. May be it was the end of the shift - who knows but if he had walked to the school he could have issued a lot of tickets and well deserved too. A suggestion perhaps for the police is to get tough by their presence outside schools, issuing tickets. O.k. there may be more paperwork to do than fixing a camera to a pole which passively catches motorists for speeding but think it is about time the real motorists who cause so much grief, are brought to justice! After all if little Jimmy gets knocked down, they will be the first to complain yet it is more than likely that they have contributed to the accident by parking in such close proximity to the school.

Tricia

A Christmas Brainteaser - find the message

Not as interesting as the centrefold!
The feeling after completing a marathon!
Usually essential repairs but annoying to motorists all the same!
They form a network with different classes.
A popular, small Toyota car.
Your car could end up like this if you don't pay your car tax!!
Toot with this! (Horn).
Racing colour of Ferrari.
Wilberforce might help you with this!
The sixth wheel in the car.
They come in different sizes and patterns but only one colour.
Old fashioned assistance in getting from A to B.
Weight bearing and can be twinned.
Who says "Make a U turn if it's possible?"

Tricia - see page 36

Hakomatic Test Report

The Hakomatic B750R is not the most elegant way to travel but the vehicle does have some excellent features and I was privileged to drive one over several days recently in the course of my work.

The B750R is a three wheeled, one wheel drive, single seat, open topped vehicle. Out in the open the lack of a windscreen almost makes a hair blow, with your right foot hard to the boards as you approach top speed at somewhere just less than four miles per hour. Speed isn't the Haks best point but the acceleration has to be experienced to be believed and wheel spin, particularly on a damp surface can be a problem as there is evidently no traction control fitted.

Handling is exemplary, with it's hard suspension, especially in tight spaces where it can turn in it's own length although consideration must be given to overhung bodywork. Care has to be taken to steer smoothly as lock to lock is only about two and a half turns of the sports diameter steering wheel so exaggerated steering moves anywhere near top speed could potentially cause problems especially considering the relatively high centre of gravity. However, with the driving position being so high up, in practise, this doesn't seem to pose a problem as fear limits enthusiasm.

The driving position is well chosen with a clear view in all directions and, as I already mentioned, the open top configuration and lack of windscreen means no pillars to obstruct the driver's view. There are no rear view mirrors as they are totally unnecessary. The single seat is comfortable, if a little lonely and eminently practical in its waterproof, easy wipe plastic over an injection moulded foam base. The steering wheel is well positioned which is lucky as the driver's seat doesn't have any adjustment on it!

The controls are so simple, anyone with any driving experience could manage the vehicle adequately. Steering is conventional, if a little quick lock to lock as noted earlier and the accelerator is normal. The brakes however are left foot operated and are what could only be described as a bit snatchy. O.k., that's an understatement. On or off would be more accurate but 'engine' braking using accelerator sense is more than adequate in all but an emergency situation. The automatic transmission is controlled electronically by means of a single, three position lever with neutral (not a lock as a parking brake is still required for inclines), forward and reverse positions. One nice point is an audible warning and motion lock-out if you try to drive off with the parking brake on. This, however, has the disadvantage of announcing to all and sundry that the driver doesn't know what he (or she) is doing.

All auxiliary controls fall easily under the right hand and consist of battery charge indicator lights, tank contents, water flow rate, brush up and down and headlamp and warning beeper.

As a bonus, as you drive around, there are a couple of big, rotating brushes mounted underneath which are fed with water (or a cleaning fluid if you prefer), which clean the floor as you drive around. A big squeegee at the rear clears up all the dirty water as you go.

No license is required to drive the vehicle, only a couple of minutes familiarisation are really necessary although if you do sweep up any Tesco's customers as you drive around, a P45 immediately ensues.

The all electric vehicle has a range of about two and a half hours (about three miles) between charges and attracts no vehicle tax and so is environmentally friendly and cost effective to run.

Would I buy one? Well, if I'm being honest, I would be a bit disappointed if I got one for Christmas but it has provided some substance for this silly article hasn't it!

Alan

Group Meetings

The Group monthly meetings continue to take place at the Salvation Army Church at the corner of Icehouse Road and Adelaide Street in Hull city centre every second Monday in the month.

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.

Bumperty bump!

Listening to the news recently, it was reported that the RAC said that the number of bumps in car parks were costing drivers £2.5 billion per year!! The average cost of each bump being £300!

There were some more details on GMTV about the number of bumps we have mainly in car parks and one tenth of drivers drive away without leaving any details and half the motoring population have either been bumped by another car or have bumped another car themselves.

Tricia

Tips for Handling Telemarketers

Three little words that work! The three little words are: 'Hold on, please...'

Saying this, while putting down your phone and walking off (instead of hanging-up immediately) would make each telemarketing call so much more time-consuming that boiler room sales would grind to a halt. Then when you eventually hear the phone company's 'beep-beep-beep' tone, you know it's time to go back and hang up your handset, which has efficiently completed its task. These three little words will help eliminate telephone soliciting.

Do you ever get those annoying phone calls with no one on the other end? This is a telemarketing technique where a machine makes phone calls and records the time of day when a person answers the phone. This technique is used to determine the best time of day for a 'real' sales person to call back and get someone at home.

What you can do after answering, if you notice there is no one there, is to immediately start hitting your # button on the phone, 6 or 7 times, as quickly as possible. This confuses the machine that dialled the call and it kicks your number out of their system. Gosh, what a shame not to have your name in their system any longer!

RHT

Wanted - Dedicated slide scanner

Robert is looking for a dedicated slide or negative scanner.

A Nikon Coolscan V Film Scanner or similar would be ideal !

Please contact RHT at the next meeting or e-mail RHT@macmail.com

Thanks



RHT

Who's Who in the Group

**This page has been removed to protect the privacy
of individual members.**

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.

Ivor Comes to the Rescue

It was sadly due to a bereavement that the speaker Robert had arranged to talk to the group in September was unable to attend. Please accept our sympathies at your loss.

Fortunately, Ivor pulled yet another white rabbit out of his hat and quickly managed to transpose some old car advertisements from VHS to DVD so that we could be entertained for the evening. So, many thanks to Ivor for that. The evening was really quite entertaining as most of the 'regulars' are now over 21 and were able to remember many of the car ads when they were current and for those who were too young to remember, the 'quaintness' of these ads was something to amuse and entertain.

I heard a few comments about having owned 'one of those' so I'm sure a few memories were awakened.

Alan

The Big Squeeze

Sort of inspired by Jo's article last edition about her skid car experiences and considering we are now in the depths of winter, my mind pondered on an article I read many years ago about how much water a tyre has to remove from a wet road surface to allow the rubber to contact the tarmac and grip it. After all, a skid can develop in several ways but one of them is when it is overwhelmed by water and unable to contact the road adequately to transmit steering or braking forces. I've no idea where the article has gone to so I thought I'd re-do it. So here goes.

A typical tyre on a typical car is likely to be 155 millimetres (mm) wide. Some are much wider and some are narrower but I would guess a 155 to be average. As a tyre rolls along on a wet road surface, a smooth or slick tyre as the racing fraternity call them, would have to squeeze all the water in its path out of the sides of the tyre which, for a drop of water in the centre of the width, would be half of the tyre width - some 78mm or 3 inches for British readers. Now when you consider the tyre might be travelling at say 30 mph, that sounds like a lot of water to squirt out of the way. After all, if you think about a car which has just driven past you on a wet road, there are two relatively dry strips, each the width of the tyre, which have been cleared of water as the car proceeded. All that water has had to be removed from the road surface for the tyre to grip so how much water has to be shifted?

The answer is really quite simple. If you travel at one mph, each hour each of the front tyres clears a strip one mile long by the width of the tyre and assuming a water depth of 2mm, the calculation is as follows :

Each strip is 1 mile long = 1760 (yards) x 3 (feet) x 12 (inches) x 25.4 (mm per inch)

=1,609,344 mm long

The area of each strip is =1,609,344 (mm long) x 155 (mm wide)

=249,448,320 square mm

If the water is 2mm deep, the volume of water removed per mile is :

=249,448,320 (square mm) x 2 (mm deep)

=498,896,640 cubic mm or

Almost 500 litres per mile

So travelling at 70 mph, the volume of water which each tyre needs to move is :

70 (miles per hour) x 500 (litres) = 35,000 litres per hour or

=9.72 litres per second per tyre !

Or for more normal people, a couple of gallons per tyre per second !

O.k. the rear tyres generally follow in the path of the front ones so they aren't faced with a wet strip of road but in total the front tyres together have to shift almost four gallons of water per second at 70 mph to retain grip.

Fortunately for us, Messrs Dunlop, Pirelli, Michelin et al have helped the situation by providing us day-to-day motorists with treaded tyres which reduce the contact area and provide an 'escape route' for all this squeezed water and additionally sipes or narrow slits to help reduce the problem still further but there is still an unbelievable amount of water to move.

So next time the heavens open as you are driving at speed, just think of all that water your tyres are squeezing out of the way just to allow them to grip the road and keep you in control.

Alan

The Green Machines

Most cars use a fuel like petrol or diesel to provide motive power. So when we press the accelerator, we burn fuel to produce power to make the vehicle increase in speed and for the moment, there is no getting away from that - a fuel must be supplied to provide energy to accelerate the vehicle. However the present crop of green machines, typically hybrids, use a rather sneaky way of reducing this virgin fuel requirement by introducing a bit of recycling.

In a conventional car, we burn a hydrocarbon fuel for power which by now we all know contributes to the greenhouse effect so anything that can be done to reduce our consumption of hydrocarbons should be a good thing, shouldn't it? The designers of the more environmentally friendly cars use a

source of energy to supplement the hydrocarbon fuel and so reduce its consumption.

When a car has used fuel to increase its speed, some of that fuel energy is used up in friction and inefficiencies but a decent proportion is stored in the energy of motion called kinetic energy and this remains stored in the mass (or weight) of the vehicle while it remains travelling at speed. There are many other considerations which are far too complicated for this simple article and I will ignore but a worthwhile amount of energy is stored as kinetic energy.

Conventionally, we use brakes to slow the vehicle by removing that energy. The way the brakes do that is by applying pressure to a friction pad which rubs against a moving surface usually in the form of a disk or drum attached to the wheels. This produces a large amount of heat (and some destruction of the friction surface and disk or drum surface) which is lost to the air surrounding the brakes. The important word there is *lost*.

The green machines, rather than waste all that lovely energy use a technique called regenerative braking to capture the kinetic energy of motion and store it for later when, conventionally, more hydrocarbon fuel would be needed to accelerate the car back up to speed.

Rather than allow brakes to convert all that kinetic energy into waste heat, present technology regenerative braking converts kinetic energy into electricity which is stored in a more or less conventional battery for use later on. An electric motor running in tandem with a fairly conventional car engine can then return some of that stored energy to accelerate the car and reduce the amount of work which the conventional engine must do. This in turn reduces the amount of virgin fuel required to accelerate the car.

The whole process is automated and the driver just carries on as normal but in the knowledge his car is working on his behalf to recycle energy normally lost to the environment and in so doing, reducing his consumption of hydrocarbon fuel.

Alan

PS As advanced drivers, we are all familiar with the technique of accelerator (or acceleration) sense. Using this method we allow the vehicle to slow, in anticipation of a hazard, by taking our foot off the gas 'early'. The effect is that the vehicle loses speed slowly without the use of the brakes. In reality what you are doing is using up some of the vehicle's reserve of kinetic energy to overcome energy losses, mainly wind resistance. As this energy is used up, the inevitability is that the vehicle will slow. However none of that energy has been 'wasted' as heat at the brakes so by using accelerator sense, you are also recycling some of your car's kinetic energy and although not as dramatic as the regenerative braking of the green machines, it is still a much greener way of driving and comforting to know you have reduced your fuel bill in the process!

DVLA to Trial Electronic Licence

I was reading recently that the DVLA plan to trial electronic driving licences which it hope will cut down on driving test cheats. Consultation on proposals for the trial of the smart card provisional driving licences are seeking to establish public opinion on the potential wider uses of the smart card driving licences.

The trial will apply to about 30,000 provisional licences issued in Wales and is schedule to begin in 2008 and last for a year. The trial is intended to look at the concept of using an electronic chip embedded into a provisional driving licence to improve its security and to stop the increase in the number of experienced drivers fraudulently taking tests on behalf of learner drivers.

The cards will go out of circulation when the learner driver passes a driving test and their provisional licence is replaced with a full licence.

The data contained on the chip (which is read only) will be the data currently shown on the photocard licence. The quality of the colour photograph will be much improved as the new format driving licence incorporates a black and white version of the photograph.

As part of the trial the Driving Standards Agency will be given card readers to allow them to access a larger and higher quality photograph of the learner driver presenting for the driving test. The Welsh Police will also have this reader so that they may get a better picture of the driver is they carry out roadside checks. If the drivers themselves wish to have access to the data stored on the card, they can inspect this data as a reader will be available at the Welsh DVLA local offices.

Tricia

Well Done - North Yorkshire Highways

There have been a lot of road works taking place near Reighton. They have just opened a long awaited by pass and I have passed the road works on several occasions recently and have been very impressed with the minimum disruption the works had caused to road users. One thing which really struck me as excellent was a large electronic display board (I think from Solarsigns UK), advising drivers, in a sequence of messages, what was happening e.g. slow, bend ahead. Solarsigns really believe their displays have an important part to play in road safety. 'They are so much more visible than many more conventional signs. They provide much greater impact to the motorist. They are also extremely flexible and can be programmed to show whatever messages are re-



quired and can be fitted with speed detection radar. They are also solar powered, so are environmentally friendly to!

Tricia

Our October Speaker

It was with great pleasure that I was permitted to include in the last edition of this Newsletter, an article written by someone who really knew what they were talking about. The article on overtaking impressed me because it successfully put down in very digestible words the correct execution of an overtake manoeuvre - something we all do



from time to time (some more frequently) but I don't think ever really perfect because most of us don't do it often enough. (Overtaking that is.) I was really pleased when, thanks to Adam Wilson's efforts, that writer came over the Pennines to speak at our group meeting.

John Gregory introduced himself and told us of his 17 years with the police force. He is now an instructor with Lancashire Police and his talk took us through some of the aspects of police driving which would be discussed at the start of the second week of a typical three week Police Standard Response Course.

John reasoned that the police need exemption from some of the rules and regulations that encumber the average motorist but emphasised that any vehicle must be driven in a 'competent and careful manner' and that 'liberties' taken by a police driver must still fall within that premise. Should an officer appear in court as a consequence of allowing his or her driving to fall below that level, the full weight of the law could be applied as would be the case for any member of the public. I suppose to some extent the police course allows an officer to develop his skills in deciding what is and what is not considered to be competent and careful.

One fairly obvious exemption a police officer attracts is that of being permitted to exceed the signed speed limits. We have all seen police vehicles travelling at speeds in excess of the posted limit, usually with their blue lights showing and siren wailing. Most people will accept that one day they them-

selves may be in need of assistance quickly and accept that as part of the rôle of a police officer. What was less obvious was the need to do the same without the lights and sirens warning. In, for example, a covert pursuit, several unmarked police vehicles may be used in turn to follow a suspect vehicle to avoid detection. However, when one vehicle is replaced, it must then leapfrog the suspect using another route in order to take a further turn as the pursuit continues. This will often require the officer to exceed the speed limits in an unmarked car.

At this level of competence, a police officer is offered advice as an ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) recommendation that a posted speed limit should not be exceeded by more than 20 mph. Incidentally, the next time a police officer jumps into your vehicle and says, "Follow that car!", your vehicle also attracts the same exemptions so do make the most of your albeit brief opportunity to push the limits!

The ability to drive through a red traffic light is also extended to police officers although, as you would expect, the officer is expected to proceed with the utmost caution and John suggested the junction be taken as a 'stop' or 'give way' and progress is made at walking pace. The normal 'keep left or right' signs can again be ignored providing the driver continues in a competent and careful manner.

Picking up a copy of 'Roadcraft', a publication I would only recommend to someone who has already developed some 'advanced' skills, the first chapter is devoted to driver attitude and mental state and a phenomenon referred to as 'red mist' is addressed. This can and does happen to anyone in a wide variety of circumstances but it is in driving it commonly has the most serious consequences. We have all heard of 'road rage'. Well, this is the sort of thing that can result from a 'red mist' incident. Essentially, the driver is subjected to stimuli which mentally push the driver beyond the point at which a competent and careful drive can be made. Typically in the police context, information is coming in over the radio whilst the officer is pushing himself towards his limits of safe driving. If that information is emotionally disturbing (or exciting), the officer's adrenaline levels will rise and rational control becomes more difficult and risk taking becomes a problem. Part of the officer's job is to put aside any thoughts of the situation at his destination and concentrate only on the drive to that destination. After all, an officer who doesn't arrive at his destination will not be able to help anyone.

It was interesting to hear John's comments about the reaction of the public to the sight and sounds of a marked police vehicle making its presence felt. He said the general motoring public don't always do the correct thing which is to allow the emergency vehicle to pass when it is safe to do so and not to compromise your own vehicle or break any laws, they are generally predictable. It's the pedestrians which cause the most problems. As John pointed out, every driver has had some training on how to behave on the road whereas no pedestrian has.

As a one liner, he emphasised the importance of space around your vehicle. As members of the IAM, we adopt the two second rule for following which is fine for most circumstances but consider the space behind as well. You can't directly control that but you can smooth out your speed changes to allow for a tailgating vehicle. Space to the side is often much reduced but give yourself as much space as possible through hazards by firstly prioritising and then, if appropriate, adjust your line past the hazard to maximise clearance at the side.

An interesting talk by someone with a friendly manner and clearly loads of experience of driving under stressful circumstances. Thank you John and thanks also for making such a long journey for our benefit.

Alan

68 miles in 2 hours

My brother had just taken delivery of his new car. It was just 2 hours old and 68 mph on the clock and as he was driving it home, he had cause to slow down on the motorway. The car behind had a different idea and kept on going. The rest is history. Luckily only the car was damaged and not my brother. As his car needed to be repaired he was given a replacement car of very high spec - around £43,000!! Now follow this.

He had had a hectic morning at work and was running out of time for lunch but realised that if he went without, he would probably have a noisy stomach when he delivered his presentation that afternoon. He drove to a nearby take away for some food and put in his order. "Do you want to go large?" Oh why not, "Yes please!" As the girl handed him a large cola drink she missed his hand and dropped it on his head! His white shirt turned brown and the rest of the liquid headed down to his shoes. As he got out of the car to try to sort out the problem, the manager came to apologise and by means of compensation, offered my brother a free doughnut! Realising that the problem had extended to the seat of his car, he got some fresh clothes he happened to have with him and tried to sort things out. At this point, the manager extended his apologies with a voucher!

Luckily my brother went on his way in a clean shirt and a pair of jeans. Not quite the right attire for delivering a presentation but better than the alternative. As he delivered the presentation he had to keep his back away from the audience as he could feel the coke from his underpants slowly soaking through his jeans and his socks were drying out and feeling rather stiff and sticky. When he got back to his car later that day, he had to sit in a seat that was sticky and his hands stuck to the steering wheel!

Better luck next time on your trip to the drive through.

Tricia

How Far Do You Want To See?

A recent visit to the opticians revealed that my eyesight is very good for my age!! I only need glasses for really small print so was about to change my prescription to cover this when the optician suggested that varifocals might be the best option so that when trying to multi-task, it would save taking glasses off and on. Good idea! I'll give it a try. The optician thought he would show me the difference by putting alternative lenses in the examination glasses. Yes, I could definitely see the difference. Continuing the conversation the optician commented and said, "You have really good distance vision." "Yes, I would agree with that. I can see the moon and that's a good few miles away so I'm really looking forward to my new glasses. What will I see next, Mars, Uranus?"

I'll let you know.

Tricia

3 Balloons!

Once upon a time there were three balloons; mummy balloon, daddy balloon and baby balloon.

Baby balloon could not sleep and decided to get into bed with mummy and daddy balloon but there was not enough room so baby balloon let out some air out of mummy balloon but there was still not enough room so baby balloon let some air out of daddy balloon. Alas this didn't make enough difference to get baby balloon into the bed so baby balloon let some air out of himself.

By this time mummy and daddy balloon woke and asked, "Just what are you doing?" Baby balloon explained.

Daddy balloon said you naughty balloon, not only have you let me down and your mummy down but worst of all you have let yourself down!!!

Tricia

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.

Oops. Automatic, Not Manual

As my dad was getting ready to go out, he noticed a fire engine turning into the close nearby. He looked outside but couldn't see any smoke so thought as it was Sunday, the fire brigade may be carrying out some routine maintenance. The following day my dad's neighbour asked, "Did you see the fire engine yesterday? Well it wasn't putting out a fire or doing any routine maintenance. The crew were called to shore up a garage after it had collapsed on the car which was embedded in the back wall of the garage. If you've read the title, you might by now have guessed. However, read on for the full story.

The couple involved in the saga we will call Malcolm and Maud. Malcolm had recently visited the doctor who advised him a hospital test had shown that he had a heart problem. He was to be put on medication to help the problem but advised to rest and that extended to not driving for a few months. As Malcolm was the main driver he thought that he better take his wife out for a practise drive so that she could get used to being behind the wheel again - at least for the next few months. Everything went well until they returned home and turned into their drive. The point of note here is that the car in question ~~is~~ was an automatic! The manoeuvre into the drive went well apart from the fact that Malcolm thought the car needed to be parked a little straighter. A comment he now regrets. Maud put her foot on the accelerator and not the brake. The rest, as they say, is history. After taking out all the fence posts down the drive, the car shot right through the garage door and embedded itself in the far wall of the garage causing the roof to collapse onto the car. Luckily the noise from the incident caused neighbours to come to the rescue and the fire brigade were called to get Malcolm and Maud out of the car. Fortunately, the rescue operation was carried out successfully and at the moment no one is driving.

Malcolm got a lift from a family member when he returned for a check up at the hospital. The doctor asked, "How are you doing, Malcolm? Leading a carefree, stressful life?!"

Tricia

Under My Umbrella!!

We invited some friends to look around Hull and the new shopping centre. We walked around the town and it began to rain, so the male in the party put up his umbrella and walked inside the undercover bus station, umbrella still over his head!! A lot of people looked and smiled but the friend unaware, as he got on the bus, turned to his wife and said, "We did well to keep dry." Guess you would keep dry with an umbrella up and undercover at the same time!!

Tricia

Presentations

In October, it was with great pleasure that Ivor presented Dave Allum with his Group Qualified Observer's Certificate. Well done Dave!. Dave is photographed right, with Ken Harbert, one of our Vice-Presidents proudly displaying his new certificate.

At the November meeting, Richard Salvage was presented with his Certificate after successfully passing his advanced driving test. Photographed with Ivor, the Group President, Richard was guided to success by his Observer, Peter Richardson. Well done to Richard and thanks to Peter for guiding another associate to advanced standard.



I suppose the phrase 'better late than never' best suits the next couple of photographs!

Apologies for not including these at a more appropriate time - like the last issue! - but as age creeps on, I have a habit of forgetting things.

Now, what was I doing?

Oh yes. The winners and runners up of the Great Navigational Scatter have finally made it into the newsletter, Nice to remember that glorious day which graced the event. Well done to both teams!



New Highway Code Could Help Cut Congestion

Roadworks misery and the congestion that goes with them could be radically reduced, according to the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists), if UK motorists take on board new advice in the Highway Code published today (28 September 2007).

For the first time, the Highway Code has a rule on 'merging in turn' under the section on lane discipline (Rule 134; Highway Code 2007).

"We are pleased to see this as we believe it will ease many pinchpoints at roadworks," said IAM Chief Examiner Peter Rodger.

"Too often we see a long, empty lane leading up to roadworks, doing nothing, because drivers have been told to get in lane too early. Then there is a tension with people perceived as 'pushing in'. The new recommendation to merge in turn in the Highway Code will encourage drivers to use all the available lanes - right up to the lane closure - and could make roadworks less of a problem," he said.

"It will avoid frustration and mean everybody gets through the restriction that much quicker."

Mr Rodger, a former Metropolitan Police driving instructor, said that the IAM had long campaigned for merge in turn recognition in the Highway Code.

"We are convinced everybody will get through sooner if they merge in turn. If drivers try it, encouraged by the Highway Code, it could be the end to the 'I'm first, you're next' attitude that slows everybody down.

"We now need to see this initiative supported by physical 'merge in turn' roadside signs as well, because we know many drivers don't bother with the Highway Code once they have passed their test."

A survey in 2006 supported by the IAM found that in a test, only 29 out of 1000 motorists recognised all of the ten Highway Code signs they were shown.

The Highway Code is a best selling title in the UK. The new edition - last revised eight years ago - now describes smoking as a distraction for drivers, an increasing problem following the UK wide indoor smoking ban.

"If you are on a long journey, then it makes sense to combine your rest break away from driving with a smoking break. While it is not as big a distraction as a hand held mobile phone, it is not worth the risk. Just think of the consequences of a cigarette dropping into your lap while you are driving," added Mr Rodger.

News Release Issued: 28th September 2007

Fathers Beware

One day a 10 year old boy was walking down the road when a car pulled up beside him.

"I'll give you a bag of lollies if you get in the car" the driver said.

"No way; get stuffed", replied the boy.

"How about a bag of lollies and £10?" asked the driver. "No way", replied the irritated youngster.

"What about a bag of lollies and fifty quid, eh"? quizzed the driver, still rolling slowly to keep up with the walking boy.

"No, I'm not getting in your car!" answered the boy.

"OK, I know what you want, I'll give you £100 and a bag of lollies", the driver offered. "No!" screamed the boy.

"What will it take to get you into the car"? asked the driver with a long sigh.....

The boy replied, "Listen Dad, you bought the Skoda, you live with it."

RHT

I know this is one of Robert's jokes and some of his jokes are, well, not bang up to date, if you know what I mean but even though a Skoda is today one of the best value, decent quality cars around, everyone still gets the joke! It just shows how difficult it is to change brand image. - Ed

Even or Odd? - That is the Question

Early one winter morning while listening to the radio, Leroy and his wife Carol hear the announcer say, "We are going to have 4-6 inches of snow today. You must park your car on the even numbered side of the street, so the snowplough can get through." Carol goes out and moves her car.

A week later while they are eating breakfast, the radio announcer says, "We are expecting 6-8 inches of snow today. You must park your car on the odd numbered side of the street, so the snowplough can get through." Carol goes out and moves her car again.

The next week they are having breakfast again, when the radio announcer says, "We are expecting 8-10 inches of snow today. You must park... Then the electric power goes out. Carol is very upset, and with a worried look on her face she says, "Honey, I don't know what to do. Which side of the street do I need to park on so the plough can get through?"

With love & understanding in his voice, Leroy says, "Why don't you just leave it in the garage this time.?"

Adam Wilson

For a Holiday, Alan Would Propose Slovenia

I have been in the IAM since 2002 and have been on observer for the last two years. Despite many pleas for newsletter articles I have always struggled to think of anything to write about. A recent holiday in Slovenia with my girlfriend, Claire, has provided the inspiration to finally put pen to paper and write about my driving experience there and how their roads compare to those in the UK.

Covering an area about the size of Wales, Slovenia was part of the former Yugoslavia and gained independence in 1991. Apart from a war lasting 10 days it escaped the conflict that blighted many of the other Yugoslav states. In 2004 the Slovenes achieved their goal of NATO and the EU membership - the Euro was introduced in January 2007. The country has a network of 12,570 miles of roads of which 270 are motorways.

We had planned to hire a car at the airport having booked though the broker, Holiday Autos. (The supplier was actually National). Prices are broadly the same as the UK but by booking through Holiday Autos we secured a significant saving over National's locally published rates. We were given a four door 1.2 litre Opel Corsa. Despite being seriously underpowered it was adequate for our needs. The rental agent was, to say the least, very unhelpful. Fortunately I checked the car over as there were a number of scratches not noted on the paperwork which she sullenly made note of. Furthermore there were no maps or information on local driving regulations. Luckily we had done some research beforehand.

Apart from driving on the right, the major difference from the UK is that vehicles are required to use dipped headlights at all times. This is a rule that I am personally against, believing it to be, at best, unnecessary and, at worst, an increased danger to non-motorised users. There was recently an EU plan to introduce so-called "Day Time Running Lights" across the continent. It was vehemently opposed by local MEPs and cycling organisations who pointed out that car drivers would get into the habit of looking out for lights rather than people and objects. There is also the matter of increased fuel and bulb consumption. Fortunately (in my opinion anyway) the plan was dropped. What do other members think?

The journey from the airport to our hotel, near Lake Bled, was quite a stressful one. As a member of the IAM I take driving very seriously and try to achieve a high standard. It is a number of years since I last drove in Europe and that was in the Territorial Army - normally in large convoys with police escorts waving you through red traffic lights and just following the vehicle in front. This was different - an unfamiliar car, different regulations, not being fully sure of the way and darkness falling. Fortunately we made it safe to the hotel but only after I had cursed myself for a couple of errors that back home would have failed an L test. I sometimes think being an advanced driver causes extra headaches. Most non-advanced drivers would have not even

realised their mistakes but as an advanced driver you are always checking yourself and I feel down after doing something that falls below the standard. On the other hand I didn't make the same mistakes again - perhaps that is the difference.

The countryside in Slovenia is stunning and some of the twisting mountain roads make excellent but sometimes scary driving. Following the 'limit point' round bends I felt progress was being made smoothly and safely but frequently there were queues of cars stacked up behind. Perhaps most frightening is the way oncoming drivers take corners at high speed often encroaching onto your side of the road. On at least two occasions we were almost forced off the road - luckily I wasn't going too fast as well. Despite the third-party being solely to blame the local police would probably give the natives the benefit of the doubt!

Speed limits are broadly similar to the UK: 130kph (80mph) on motorways, 100 mph (62mph) on rural roads and 50kph (31mph) in built-up areas. Apparently the alcohol limit for driving is 0.05% but having no idea what this means in practice I stuck to soft drinks at all times when out on the road. The Slovenes seem to broadly obey the speed limits although the 40kph limits through roadworks get regularly ignored. In fairness when they do overtake they usually wait for a safe section of road rather than rushing to overtake on blind corners or with oncoming traffic. Confusingly repeater signs are non-existent and speed limits, especially through roadworks, are not cancelled at the end. Although it never happened to us, stops by the police are not uncommon and on-the-spot fines can be issued for speeding. Quite rightly, drink driving results in confiscation of your license.

Petrol is slightly cheaper than the UK at around 90 cent (62 pence) per litre. However tolls are charged on the motorways and a journey broadly equivalent of Hull-Leeds costs about 14Euros (£10). The coastal town of Piran charged us about 7 Euro (£5) to drive into the town centre but this did include parking. Elsewhere parking is around 1 Euro (70 pence) per hour.

The day we visited the capital, Ljubljana, I chickened out and we took the bus. Although it took a little longer it was worth it to avoid driving into an unfamiliar city - and trying to park of course! I was also able to enjoy a nice bottle of the national brew! Having found the road to be narrow in our Corsa I was all the more impressed by the skill of the bus drivers who seemed able to squeeze through the tightest of gaps. Traffic into the capital is actually relatively light. On our trip to Piran we passed what might be described as Ljubljana's M25. 30 minutes of slow-moving but progressive traffic was as bad as it got!

As we both enjoy cycling we hired bikes from our hotel and found it to be a pleasant experience. Many of the roads are quiet and despite some reservations about Slovene drivers they are not at all aggressive towards cyclists and I felt safer than on UK roads. Walking is not always so good. The 2km road from our hotel to the centre of town had no footpath and some cars

came frighteningly close. More worrying, a green man at a pedestrian crossing is no guarantee that there will be no traffic as vehicles on the side road get a green light to come across you at the same time.

Overall I would say that the roads are slightly more dangerous than the UK. A recent survey listed Slovenia's motorway construction sites as the second most dangerous in Europe. (The UK's were the safest!). However this is offset by the low traffic levels which generally make driving there an enjoyable experience once you get used to it. Certainly we had an excellent break that would have been difficult to do purely on public transport. If you enjoy lakes and mountains I would thoroughly recommend a visit. For me though, the highlight of the trip was Claire accepting my marriage proposal!

Alan Gribben

The November Meeting

The group was pleased to hear of the successful projects undertaken by the Road Safety Department of Hull City Council from one of the departments star employees, Sue Boyeson.

Sue, who has kindly spoken to the group on previous occasions, was proud to say that the scheme, Teddy Takes a Tumble, now introduced some years ago, continues to be used in schools and continues to inform and educate the younger members of society of the importance and practise of using a seat belt when travelling in a car.

The novelty to the children of being instructed in a real car with real seatbelts and a 'real' teddy probably adds to the value of the lesson as the whole experience becomes more memorable.

Sue and her department are grateful for the generosity of local car dealerships for providing her with vehicles to use in her project. Initially, the local Rover dealership, Welptons, were approached with a request to supply a child booster seat which was received by Welptons with enthusiasm. The booster seat was supplied - and a car to put it in!

Since that time, Sue has had the use of cars from other dealerships including a Daewoo Tacuma, a City Rover, a Honda FRV which was particularly useful for educating some larger Asian families, a Honda Civic which proved particularly attractive to the press so helping the cause and her current car, supplied by John Roe, a Toyota Prius Spirit hybrid to reflect the now greener Hull City Council's policies.

Additionally, the department works with groups of children in road crossing techniques and provides simple, clear instruction on how to cross the road. To some extent the traditional way, find somewhere clear to cross, has been put to one side as frequently there is nowhere clear so, despite some criticism, road crossing techniques are practised on straight stretches of road, at junctions and between parked cars.

Other initiatives include Be Safe - Be Seen presentations in Princes Quay shopping centre ably supported by Spike the hedgehog who continues to supply appeal to the children. The Casualty Reduction Team also had a presence in Victoria Square which proved to be a successful campaign.

Despite her modesty, Sue did manage to sport a very flashy dress at her presentation of the award of Front Line Employee of the Year 2006 at the London Hilton and proudly finished her talk leaving her presentation photograph on the screen.

Well done Sue. An honour well deserved and thank you for your entertaining talk.

Alan

A True Story from the Other Side

This article was submitted by Adam Wilson who wrote, "I just thought it was a suitable piece to allow us to see the other side of an accident. Considering the article was taken from a car enthusiasts website, PowerHeads, dedicated to speed, there are plenty of people who have said it has shocked them and made them think before they overtake etc. If we get the message to just one person and save an accident, it must be worth putting in."

With sincere thanks to the author, 10 Pence Short, for allowing us to reproduce his article.

I caused an accident after losing control of my car. It was sideways straddling both sides of a B road, a motorcyclist coming the other way came around a blind bend to be confronted with a car blocking the road. The impact launched him over my (destroyed) car and dumped him on the middle of the road, unconscious. His bike had been thrown some 14 metres back the way it came. My car dangled precariously over the edge of a drop past the verge.

After about a minute or so of getting my breath back following the airbag deploying, I realised I'd caused a very serious accident. I'd seen the motorcyclist only for a split second before the impact imploded against the B pillar behind my head and shattered every window on the car. My sunglasses had disappeared from my face, glass from the door window was mingled with blood dripping from my face.

There was no way of opening the drivers door, I clambered over the passenger seat and observed one of the worst sights of my life.

For about 50 metres down the direction I'd come from, were the tell tale black lines of a skidding car. These were only interrupted by gouge marks on the road surface where car had met bike. In the middle of this lay the biker, motionless, unconscious, a mess. Onlookers, other motorists, were out of their cars but nothing more than background fuzz.

By the time I got out of the car, some other bikers had begun trying to help the badly injured guy laying on the centreline of the road. For a long minute, he didn't move, he didn't seem to breathe. I'd just killed a man. Then some movement, some spluttering. Blind panic from someone who's just woken up to wish that he hadn't. His girlfriend, who had been a few minutes further behind on her own bike, arrived. Screaming and wailing, wondering how this has come to happen. No doubt a million thoughts all arriving at once. Most of them fearing the worst.

First aiders helped on the scene, I didn't know how to help medically. I was guilty, impotent and wondering how I'd gone from an enthusiastic drive to a potential killer in the space of 50 metres. It only took three or four minutes for the Police to arrive, I volunteered myself immediately as the guilty party. I was breath tested and questioned on-scene, sat in a Volvo, bleeding on the back seats whilst in full view of the prone motorcyclist, by this time being worked on by the paramedics who'd arrived, hoping the patient could last long enough for the air ambulance to arrive.

I'll never forget that poor man, lying there screaming for his helmet to be taken off, his girlfriend in tears and despair and me, not badly injured, no reason to have caused this, other than wanting to enjoy the road.

The motorcyclist spent days in intensive care, being treated for most of his right arm being smashed to pieces, his collarbone wrecked, serious head injuries, damaged eye socket, chipped bones on his ankle and a massive nerve injury. A year later and even after a number of operations, he still has many to go to correct his broken body and his impaired eyesight. The nerve damage to his dominant right arm means he'll never regain full use of it. He can no longer support his children by working on the rigs as he did beforehand.

My car was impounded by the Police and kept from the day of the accident, 30th April 2006 until the July. I was first formally interviewed in June 2006, then again in September. I was charged via postal summons in November last year. Magistrates passed the case to Crown Court on 13/12/06, as their sentencing powers were not sufficient and at that point I knew I was going to prison.

Ten days short of a year after my accident, I pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment and banned from driving for 3 years, for dangerous driving. Aside from the odd speeding conviction (I was driving 65,000 miles a year for the previous 10 years), I had never been in trouble with the Police before.

There was no feeling, no shock, no crying or anger when I was sent down from that court room. Just numbness. As the judge finished his sentencing, I had just one opportunity of shouting to my other half how much I loved her, before being lead into the downstairs of the court. The guard, a nice guy in his late 50s, explained that he had to handcuff me to himself and down I went. Immediately down, through a number of locked, barred gates, to a booking in counter. All my possessions, and my belt, taken. My height measured. All

my details recorded. Then 4 hours in a windowless cell with nothing but a wooden bench and contemplation for company.

4.30pm on a sunny Friday afternoon, leaving a happy looking Carlisle but for me, in the back of a paddywagon. Watching people leaving school and work with a smile on their faces, looking forward to a weekend of choices. I was heading to HMP Durham.

You can say what you like about prison and how easy it is, how great you think the facilities are, how prison is like a holiday camp. It's none of those things. It's a demeaning, soul-less place full of sad and sometimes evil people who have lives none of us would ever want or even imagine. All the freedoms you take for granted are removed in the name of control and security to the point that you're constantly reminded how little value society as a whole places on your miserable little existence.

I could write reams and reams about the prison system and the feelings being in it evoke but I fear to do so would be heavy reading for the casual PowerHeader. I would be happy to answer any questions people have about prison or my ordeal, though.

Could Only Happen in an American Courtroom

Lawyer: "Did you blow your horn or anything?"

Witness: "After the accident?"

Lawyer: "Before the accident."

Witness: "Sure, I played for ten years. I even went to school for it."

Lawyer: "Officer, when you stopped the defendant, were your red and blue lights flashing?"

Witness: "Yes."

Lawyer: "Did the defendant say anything when she got out of her car?"

Witness: "Yes, sir."

Lawyer: "What did she say?"

Witness: "'What disco am I at?'"

Lawyer: "How far apart were the vehicles at the time of the collision?"

RHT

Watch Those Lights!

I recently came home in the darkness of the morning and as I turned into the estate realised that I had just seen a young cyclist turn into the same road. As I looked around could not see him, then I saw a glimmer of red from the back light on the cycle and then it had gone again. He was a paper boy and the bag he was carrying with his papers in was obscuring the bike light and could it only be seen when he moved and the bag moved away from the light. The young cyclist would think he had his lights on and could

be seen but to anyone following, it was quite a different story. May be worth checking out the length of the bag you are carrying if you are a paper boy – it will certainly help other road users see you more clearly.

Tricia

Chairman's Chatter

I have recently visited relatives in Canada. Since they were well spread around Toronto, I hired a car believing this to be the best way of getting around to visit them all. In addition I wanted to take Olive to Niagara Falls, which is only some hour and a half's drive from Toronto (Toron'o in local speak). I was quite looking forward to experiencing driving in Canada. I assumed, reasonably correctly as it turned out, that it would be similar to driving in the US, of which I had had some experience.

In general I found the standard of driving to be about the same as the standard here on our urban roads. Not so on the expressways, the equivalent of our motorways. Around Toronto, which is the biggest city in Canada, these roads are permanently very busy. Not a problem for the IAM member you would think, except for two things. The first was 'tailgating'. Because of the density of the traffic, cars and big lorries (sorry, that should be trucks and they do not seem to have small ones) appear to fill all of your mirrors perpetually. I accept that I probably exacerbated the problem by sticking to the speed limit but it was uncomfortable to say the least. By comparison I would opine that 'tailgating' on our roads is less of a problem.

An even worse problem was that overtaking on either side is allowed. It is quite disconcerting when you overtake a lorry that is in the middle lane and just as you are about to pull back into that lane from the outside lane, a car has overtaken the lorry on the inside lane and proceeds to pull into the same space that you were going to occupy. Or alternatively you are overtaken on either side by two lorries, both going well above the speed limit and in heavy rain. (And yes, I had to be in that lane to make my exit). Time and again I saw cars repeatedly zig-zagging from inside lane to outside lane (and vice versa) and then back again with what I would consider scant regard for the safety of other road users. Lane discipline was poor to say the least! Interestingly enough, my opinions on Canadian driving were backed up by another relative who went to Toronto about a month after us. Frightening was one word she used.

The point of this 'Chatter' is to give members some insight into how other countries driving standards compare or differ from ours and how different laws affect driving standards. Mostly I enjoyed driving in and around Toronto but the experience has convinced me of one thing. Overtaking on either side is not something I think should be tried here.

Neil

Fitting a Xenon Headlight Conversion Kit

I don't know what it is about Honda headlights but ... Oh yes I do. They're not very good. That's it!

We have two Honda Civics and although the later (2002) one's lights aren't all that bad, they definitely don't come into the good class. The other car (1994) now has 198,000 miles on the clock and candles for headlights, must surely be coming to the end of it's life (I'm just waiting for the second big bang in the history of the world) and so doesn't justify any serious money being spent on it but the 2002 was about to get replacement headlights.

A bit of talking to Halfords' staff and a bit of research on the world wide web persuaded me to buy a xenon upgrade kit from HIDS4U. The company bump read well and despite not being the least expensive, it was UK based and available on the other end of the phone if I had any problems so off went the email to order a kit.

The next day (!) the kit arrived. The contents were inspected and all seemed ok so having read the comprehensive instructions, off I went too fit my new headlights.

Conventional headlights for many affordable production cars consists of a halogen bulb or bulbs depending on the headlight configuration. In my case, the Honda uses the H4 type bulb which is a dual filament bulb in a reflector - one filament for dipped and a second for high beam. The light is generated by heating the filament electrically to some incredible temperature so that it glows almost white hot and produced prodigious amounts of light which are then focused into a beam by means of the reflector. The halogen gas which surrounds the filament in its quartz glass envelope prevents to filament from burning up.

The xenon light works in a completely different way. The xenon is a discharge lamp and operates on a similar principle to the fluorescent tube in your kitchen. The xenon gas in the bulb is excited by an electrical discharge which cases it to flash as the electricity is conducted through the gas. This is repeated many times a second to provide what appears to be a steady light. The problem is that the voltage required to maintain that light is about 85 volts but the start up voltage is 23,000 volts. This requires a box of tricks which must be mounted somewhere under the bonnet reasonably out of the way of serious water spray and excessive heat.

Location found for the two boxes, one for each headlight, the rest of the fitting was unbelievably simple as the H4 bixenon kit I had bought was all plug compatible and incidentally easily reversible on the roadside in the event of a failure (heaven forbid!).

The new bulb units simply replaced the existing bulbs and although a little care was needed when refitting the rubber boot around the bulb base, the operation went very smoothly. The high voltage and relay control cables plug into the box of tricks and the lead from there plugs directly into the sock-

The photo right shows one of each operating on dipped beam. The xenon is clean and crisp with significantly less scatter than the halogen bulb. The colour difference could be seen if it was a colour picture so you'll just have to take my word for that!



et which would normally fit onto the spades on the base of the halogen bulb so no need to cut or interfere with standard vehicle cabling.

Checking the light pattern revealed the beam angle had changed quite a bit so headlight adjustment was necessary to provide correct beam alignment. I could do so much but it really needs to be done professionally with the right equipment so a visit to the dealership is required.

One benefit of the H4 bixenon kit is that you get dipped and main beam replacement. Frequently kits offer a xenon dipped beam and a halogen main beam unless you buy two kits. Another benefit is on of instant light on switching from dipped to main or t'other way round as the bulb mounted relay simply switches the current from one gas gap to the other - there is no need to start up a second set of electronics with the attendant stabilisation time involved.

Overall the lighting performance is significantly improved both on main and dipped beams and night time road illumination is so much better, the light produced is much whiter than that produced by a halogen source and that also helps. I would point out that the light colour has no tendency to blue and this accessory, although I think does make the car look aesthetically better, it is definitely not a boy racer purchase. It really does improve headlight performance without causing oncoming drivers a problem with excessive scatter and glare.

I would say the H4 kit was very simple and neat to fit but is also probably the easiest. Some more modern (exotic) arrangements may be more complicated but for the reasonable do it yourself mechanic with some basic electrical knowledge, I think most kits should be able to be fitted even if some advice is required from the supplier.

Incidentally, if you modify your vehicle in such a way, it is wise to tell your insurance company of the change. It didn't make any difference to my premium but it is a condition of insurance such modifications are reported.

Alan

Readers Write

Hi Alan

Ray Grange here, catching up on your note re electronic versions of the newsletter. If it saves time and money, I'm happy to receive my copy that way, so please make the appropriate change to your mailing list. Whilst I'm writing to you, I'd just like to mention that my absences from the monthly meetings are not because I have lost interest - far from it - but I have been very heavily committed with tourism projects and, frustratingly, in the evenings of the second Mondays in the month. If it hasn't been work, it's been a meeting of either Neighbourhood Watch (for which I am the Chairman of the Beverley & District N.W. Co-ordinators) or the Beverley Guilds & Crafts Town Trail, which is about to be launched. And I'm away in Spain on the next IAM meeting, on the 12th November - I don't get back until the 14th. So, please don't write me off - which I'm sure you haven't done! I value being a member of IAM and our branch, and the information I take away from each meeting is equally valuable.

Now, to sing the praises of yourself and Tricia - I know how time and mental occupying putting together a newsletter is. I do this, on a less frequent basis than you do, for my local Neighbourhood Watch group, which has about 55 members, and much as I would like to pass it over to someone else, there just isn't anybody who wants to rise to the challenge! (I wonder why?!) And can I heck get more than three members out of the 55 who want to admit their e-mail addresses to me, to make MY publishing life easier! I think Hull & E.R.'s newsletter is great and I am sure all active members of the branch would agree with me. I know how discouraging it can be when nobody responds to requests, to submit news, views and blues. So, with empathic thoughts, I do hope that you and Tricia can keep the newsletter alive, and, hopefully, the increased contributions you have received recently, from members, will be maintained. Please use any part of this e-mail for your next issue, and edit according to your needs, space, etc. Cheers!

Ray Grange

Thanks for those kind words Ray.

With regards to the electronic version of the newsletter, you are one of only five members who have replied and are prepared to take the newsletter electronically. I feel considering the small number concerned, rather than make exceptions, I think we should continue to fell trees for all.

Alan

A cement mixer collided with a prison van on the Beverley Bypass.

Motorists are being asked to be on the lookout for 16 hardened criminals

RAT.

Chief Observer Column

I always read, with interest, Tricia's articles in our newsletter and am pleased I do not have to be a passenger in some of her colleagues cars, as she has to be. Some of the stories she has told come under the heading of 'horrendous'. Many drivers do not make good passengers - even more so when they are advanced drivers. Although I attempt to 'shut off' when being a passenger it is difficult not to be thinking about the faults being made (and of course not commenting on them). One of our observers, who works well away from home, belongs to a car sharing scheme and has to 'suffer' being a passenger with a really bad driver. Thank goodness I do not have to be in that position. The other side of the coin is when your passengers, knowing you are an advanced driver, are looking for any errors to gleefully point out. Following on from this, how often are we asked, 'What is advanced driving?'. I find this a difficult one to answer, unless being in a position to take the questioner out on a advanced demonstration drive. It is, of course, essential a good commentary is given or the question will still not have been answered. Following Tricia's example of writing about bad driving situations - recently I was riding on my motor cycle through Hunmanby and on the left side footpath a mother was walking with her young child. Naturally I slowed down and moved away from this potential serious hazard. Then what happened? A open topped BMW, driven by a lady with two teenage boys in the back decided that, as I had reduced my speed below the 30 mph speed limit, she had better pass me!!! She then turned left at the next cross roads and turned into her driveway, so was obviously not in a hurry. It would be interesting to hear her reply if asked what a driving plan is. I am sorry to say some of the most inconsiderate driving you see is by parents when in the vicinity of schools or children. Perhaps, in this issue, this should not be called 'Chief Observer Column' but 'Grumpy Old Man Column', so continuing in this mode can you blame many children from not showing road sense when their parents are such a bad example? I make this comment following my observations at the traffic lights in the centre of Cottingham. Many years ago, after much petitioning, pedestrian control (green/red man) was added to the lights. Is this facility used? Possibly by 1 in 20 people. Who are the non users - elderly people, parents with prams, parents with walking children. When the parents do not use the lights correctly, are the children going to when they are on their own? Of course not. Can I finish by ,with my Chief Observer's hat on, thanking all observers for the work they carry out for the Group and with my President's hat on wish all members a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Ivor Nicholson

Chief Observer

Your Favourite for Dinner Tonight, Darling



'When I said park it in the shopping centre, I meant the shopping centre car park!'



So, the Police are Short of Funding, eh?



Thanks to Adam for spotting the photographs on this page.

I suppose the police could have just got lucky (very!) when they ordered their new Volvo.

The Subaru (UK) Drive Experience

"Learn to drive like a champion with Prodrive and Subaru and it will help to make you safe on the road" These words attracted my eyes to an article in Auto Express early in July. Continuing on it said "for your money, you get to try much of the Japanese company's range, including the 300hp Impreza WRX Sti, the Legacy Spec B 2.0R and the Forester 2.5XT. Professional instructors will teach you key rally driving secrets. As well as having fun, the aim is to highlight skills for use in everyday driving. The experience takes in a 1.5 mile high-speed circuit, a tarmac rally stage and an off road course". The comment from the writer that "the cost of £250 was excellent value for money, taking into account the amount of actual driving you would have", had me picking up the telephone to book a session. The possible accommodation problem, due to an early start, was resolved when I found the test facility was in Kenilworth, Warwickshire which was only twelve miles from where my brother lives - so a further telephone call informed him I would be making an unexpected visit! So at 9.00am I arrived at the gates of the test facility, expecting to be with probably a dozen other drivers, to find a long line of vehicles ahead of me. With the superb organisation, that was present all day, we were directed to a large car park and quickly chauffeured the ½ mile to the hospitality building. After signing the usual indemnification forms and being issued with colour coded name badges, we were invited to partake of food in the form of bacon sandwiches, fruit and hot drinks. By 10.00am the room was full with approximately ninety people. The number actually driving was about sixty, varying in age from early twenties to myself (I believe I was the oldest), the others being their friends who had come to watch. After an interesting briefing we were split into four groups, based on the colour coding of our name badges. The day was to be split into four sessions:-

- # '1.5 miles of High Speed Exhilaration'
- # 'Your very own Tarmac Rally Stage'
- # 'Tame the Skid Pan'
- # 'Extreme Off Road'

The group you were in governed the order of completing the four sections.

Our group started with the 'Tame the Skid Pan' experience which the brochure describes as:- "One of only two calibrated grip surfaces in the UK, testing braking, traction and stability. Feel the Subaru All Wheel Drive system tested to the limit...it's like skating on ice!" We were split into three per vehicle with an instructor and drove on both a circular area and a very special surfaced area of about 100 yards by three vehicles wide. The circle was slightly disappointing as the vehicles four-wheel drive plus the various electronic devices made it difficult to slide. However the straight area was altogether different, as the exercise entailed making the vehicle swerve from one side to another provoking slides and it was all too easy to get out of control.



Quite nerve racking when you were not driving. We then moved on to the '1.5 miles of High Speed Exhilaration' which the brochure describes as:- "Learn the art of high speed car control through chicanes, high speed bends and tight technical corners. Develop the skills of throttle control, smooth cornering, road position and balance". We all got into the car, with the instructor driving, on one of the most thrilling drives I have ever been on - touching about 100 mph on the short straight and what appeared to be not much less speed on some of the bends (but I am sure it was quite a bit slower!!). I am pleased to say when it came to our turn to drive we drove singly with just the instructor, thus removing any temptation to impress the other drivers. I did several laps of the circuit using an Impreza Sti and a Legacy Spec B. and was amazed with the road holding of both the cars and how forgiving they

And just in case you can't see the silly grin on Ivor's face in the photo above ...





were to my not perfect cornering techniques. My speed and smoothness did improve after each lap and, as is usually the case, when I felt I was getting the hang of things my time was up. I did glance at the speedo once to see 90 mph indicated, a speed I have not driven my car at for many years. Session three was on to 'Your very own Tarmac Rally Stage', again the brochure description:- "A maze of narrow, tight and

twisty tarmac with adverse cambers to test the car's dynamic capabilities to the extreme. The perfect environment for scuttling through hairpins, your instructor will have you doing things in second gear you never thought possible". As before a few laps demonstration by the instructor with us all in the car, then driving with the instructor only. The circuit was so narrow it was more suitable for a go-cart - thus the reason for not getting into a gear higher than second. As an advanced driver I am so used to non-overlap pull/push steering that I did not even attempt to try the racing driver cross arm technique used very impressively by the highly skilled instructor. There was certainly more skill required to make progress on this circuit than on the much faster high speed one. Again we completed several laps, changing cars so we all had a go in the much faster Impresa Sti. Session four was possibly a bit of an anticlimax, but still enjoyable, being the 'Extreme Off-Road Experience'. Brochure description:- "Designed to test the capabilities of a 4 x 4 to the full. Test your nerve through deep water-filled gullies and hold on as you take on the extreme ascents and plummet down steep descents. There's plenty of thick mud and adverse cambered tracks to catch you out - it's unlike anything else." Not quite a true description as, other than one steep descent when the vehicle was at a precarious angle, the experience was much less nerve racking than some of the earlier ones. However a very enjoyable final driving experience. While waiting to change cars during session three we kept hearing the scream of tyres on the main circuit and wondered what was happening - we found out on returning to start when we were offered the opportunity to be a passenger in a special Black edition of the RB320 driven by a very skilled instructor. This was definitely the most thrilling drive I have ever had and was where the scream of tyres had occurred. An incredible finish to the day. We all then moved into the hospitality building for refreshments and debriefing. Several prizes were given out including one to a driver who

had been bought the experience, by his family, as a retirement present. One special prize was given to the only driver to have an accident. Apparently he had spun one of the cars and hit something solid, resulting to some damage to the rear of the car, fortunately not too serious, His prize was the rather damage rear light cluster!!

A fantastic day.

Ivor Nicholson

A Christmas Poem

Merry Christmas to you one and all,
As family and friends begin to call
To share the season of good will
And Santa's sack begins to fill
With all the presents that abound
Round the Christmas tree will soon be found.

As we tear off the paper with anticipation,
Hope it's not a book on treating constipation.
No, it's really not as bad as that
Auntie Mary has knitted a hat!!
This wouldn't be so bad if it fitted
But she increased too many stitches as she knitted.
I sure one day it'll come in handy
Well, yes, of course, it'll suit cousin Mandy.
(Come on admit it ... how many of you have done that?)

Once Christmas day has been and gone
And the carol singers are out of song,
It's time to welcome in the new year
As we send best wishes to those held dear.
Have a peaceful and prosperous year ahead
From Trish and Al, your newsletter Ed!

Tricia

Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year to everyone.

A Christmas Message - Solution

Manifold, exhausted, roadworks, roads, yaris, Crushed, horn, red, insurance, steering, tyres, map, axle, sat nav.

