

# Hull & East Riding Group of Advanced Motorists

[www.iam.org.uk/hull](http://www.iam.org.uk/hull)

Group Number 4029

Registered Charity Number 1070176



# Newsletter

NEWS | VIEWS | LAW | LETTERS



Winter 2009

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## From the Editor

Welcome to the Winter edition of the Hull & East Riding Group Newsletter 2009.

May I thank all contributors to this edition for their submissions - they are all very welcome and apart from occasionally forgetting to put one in (see the last entry in the contents in the last edition), for which I apologise and correct this edition, it makes my life so much easier and the newsletter much more rounded.

Correct replies were received from two members to the 'covers' question and they have now each received their prize of a bottle of bubbles - for consumption on a none driving day of course. The solution to the question is briefly answered in an article elsewhere in this newsletter.

Although there are no prizes for this edition's question, we should all have already spotted what's wrong in the front cover photo taken on Norwood in Beverley recently. And no, it's not the wording on the road! Perhaps I'm expecting too much but I think you will either spot it immediately or, if not, a short study of the detail in the picture should give it away. If you're still struggling, the photo on the back cover, taken from the opposite direction should give it away but don't look initially. See if you can spot it from the front cover piccy alone. Despite the error, the road surface has been mended a treat. Thanks to Tricia for turning out to take the photos after I called her from work.

As always it's a bit of a race to get the Winter Newsletter out before Christmas and if we do, it's down to Ivor for proof reading in double time and Paul Tee for rising and turning in for work early one morning, priming the photocopier and feeding it with copious amounts of paper before carefully packing the results for transport. Both need to be done without delay otherwise you will be reading this after Christmas. Thanks to Ivor and Paul for pulling out the stops when needed. Of course, I could prepare the copy earlier but then it wouldn't be much of a challenge for them would it?

On the assumption this reaches you before Christmas, Tricia and I and the Committee would like to wish you and yours a very happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year otherwise Happy New Year!

Alan

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If you would like to make a contribution to the Newsletter, the closing date for the next publication is  
**Friday 12th 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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## Contents

From the Editor.....	1
Who's That Then?.....	3
For Your Amusement ... (This Takes Time!).....	4
Banned Drivers In International Agreement.....	7
Who's Who in the Group.....	9
A Hopefully Illuminating Article.....	10
Test Passes and Achievements.....	12
Top Gear to Romania.....	15
Doug Recalls .....	16
I Want To Be Young Again.....	19
Talking Is Still Probably The Best Way.....	20
The Bridge Over the Humber.....	21
Mark Jessop, at the November Meeting.....	22
Berks in Mercs and Dreamers in Beemers.....	25
Chairman's Chatter.....	26
October Meeting.....	26
President's Chat.....	28
Christmas Bash.....	28

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## Quote From Motoring Insurance Claim Form

I inadvertently entered the wrong drive and hit a tree which I haven't got.

Ivor

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## Data Protection Act

Names, addresses and supplied information from members, associates and individuals requesting information, is kept on a computer held by the Membership Secretary, or assigned persons, for the sole purpose of Group related business. This information will not be made available to other organisations or individuals except when disclosure is required by law.

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## Who's That Then?

The Autumn newsletter cover featured photographic clues to a local business man who built his empire as the motor car became popular in the second quarter of the 20th century. The front cover would, I'm sure, have been a significant clue to identifying Gordon Armstrong as the man in question as this was his original garage and engineering works. Certainly for the group's more mature, local members this should have posed no problem at all and seemingly it didn't. The answer was guessed within a day of Tricia dropping the newsletters in the post.

Filling in a few more details, the product for which Armstrong became famous which was, and still is, used on every car in some form or another was the shock absorber. This part of a suspension system is, in fact, the damper of a spring-damper system; a means of controlling vibration and movement passed through to the car body as the wheels encounter undulations and bumps in the road. It is true that the spring-damper system appears to 'absorb' shocks from the road, and this is probably where the incorrect name 'shock absorber' came from, but it is in fact the spring which reduces the transmission of a shock load to the body. It is the damper's job to reduce the duration of spring oscillation making the ride more comfortable for the vehicle's occupants and by using valves to keep the wheel in more continuous contact with the road.

As his business out-grew his garage and engineering works in North Bar Within, Armstrong took over a part of the William Crosskill & Sons Cart & Waggon Works, part of the East Yorkshire & Crosskills' Cart & Waggon Company and it was from here he started to produce his shock absorbers. This site is now occupied by the award winning housing development photographed for the back cover of the Autumn newsletter.

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## 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](http://www.sentinel38.karoo.net/iam) gives a MultiMap location.

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

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

## For Your Amusement ... (This Takes Time!)

Fill the spaces with the name of either a car make or the model. Each dash represents a missing letter. The answers, a mixture of literal and phonetic matches (precise or sound-a-like), are at the end of this newsletter.

It was a 1) \_\_\_\_\_ day in Paris as the Italian playboy 2) \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ stepped off the 3) \_\_\_\_\_. His mind was on the love of his life, the beautiful 4) \_\_\_\_\_ whom he was to 5) \_\_\_\_\_ that evening to the 6) \_\_\_\_\_ reception. How could he demonstrate his true feelings? "Of 7) \_\_\_\_\_" he said, in the way only Latins can, "I will buy her a 8) \_\_\_\_\_ engagement ring".

Things had not always been thus. He remembered the time in Jamaica's 9) \_\_\_\_\_ Bay when he had been 10) \_\_\_\_\_ compromising situation with the wife of an American politician. The Republican 11) \_\_\_\_\_ from 12) \_\_\_\_\_ in Texas had greeted him with an 13) "\_\_\_\_\_ Pardner" but had gone for his 14) \_\_\_\_\_ 45 when he found our hero trying to get his wife into the 15) \_\_\_\_\_ position. He thought back to the days when he had become a 16) \_\_\_\_\_ in his own lifetime. He had made his fortune rounding up cattle on the 17) \_\_\_\_\_ of Wyoming, but had lost it playing 18) \_\_\_\_\_ in Argentina. In Spain he had flown from the island of 19) \_\_\_\_\_, landed at 20) \_\_\_\_\_ airport then crossed the 21) \_\_\_\_\_ to dance the 22) \_\_\_\_\_ at a 23) \_\_\_\_\_ in 24) \_\_\_\_\_.

When he reached the concert hall he knew his 25) \_\_\_\_\_ attitude to women must change. He left her at the stage door. "I'm concerned about my performance" she said. "Don't worry" he said. "You are a professional artiste, a real \_\_\_\_\_, 27) \_\_\_\_\_ be alright on the night". 28) \_\_\_\_\_ and park the car" she said "and don't forget to pay the 29) \_\_\_\_\_ the booth". Once inside, he took his 30) \_\_\_\_\_ and looked around at the other celebrity guests. A Monaco 31) \_\_\_\_\_ waved and blew him a kiss. Accompanied by a 32) \_\_\_\_\_ his finance gave a moving rendition of Lily of 33) \_\_\_\_\_. In fact, it was a complete 34) \_\_\_\_\_ which was met with universal 35) \_\_\_\_\_.

Back in her apartment, he sensed all was not well. As she brought him some food from the 36) \_\_\_\_\_ she said, "It's no good darling, I can never marry you, I'm not 37) \_\_\_\_\_ your lack of height means that our whole relationship is simply a 38) \_\_\_\_\_". His reaction was typically 39) \_\_\_\_\_ but with a broken heart he collected some of his 40) \_\_\_\_\_ belongings, his 41) \_\_\_\_\_ jacket from his days on the African 42) \_\_\_\_\_, his 43) \_\_\_\_\_ balls and his copy of 44) \_\_\_\_\_ by James Clavell. Sadly, he kissed her goodbye and walked towards the distant 45) \_\_\_\_\_

Keith Lownsbrough

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# The Haynes Manual Dictionary

## Molegrips For Ever

*This is a snug fit.*

Clamp with molegrips then beat repeatedly with hammer.

*Using a suitable drift.*

Clamp with molegrips then beat repeatedly with hammer.

*Rotate anticlockwise.*

Clamp with molegrips then beat repeatedly with hammer anticlockwise.

*Lightly.*

Start off lightly and build up till the veins on your forehead are throbbing then clamp with molegrips then beat repeatedly with hammer.

*Compress.*

Squeeze with all your might, jump up and down on it, throw it at the garage wall, then find some molegrips and a hammer.

*Apply moderate heat.*

Unless you have a blast furnace, don't bother. Alternatively, clamp with molegrips then beat repeatedly with hammer.

## Ratings

*One spanner rating.*

An infant could do this so how did you manage to f\*\*\* it up?

*Two spanner rating.*

Now you may think that you can do this because two is a low, teensy weensy number but you also thought the wiring diagram was a map of the Tokyo underground (in fact that would have been more use to you).

*Three spanner rating.*

Make sure you won't need your car for a couple of days.

*Four spanner rating.*

You're not seriously considering this are you?

*Five spanner rating.*

Ok - but don't ever carry your loved ones in it again.

## And The Other Choice Phrases

*As described in Chapter 7.*

That'll teach you not to read through before you start. Now you are looking at scary photos of the inside of a gearbox.

*Pry.*

Hammer a screwdriver into.

*Undo.*

Go buy a tin of WD40 (giant economy size).

*Retain tiny spring.*

PINGGGG. Where the hell did that go?

*Press and rotate to remove bulb.*

OK - that's the glass bit off, now fetch some good pliers to dig out the bayonet part.

*Weekly checks.*

If it isn't broken don't fix it.

*Routine maintenance.*

If it isn't broken, it's about to be. Be warned.

*Inspect.*

Squint at really hard and pretend you know what you are looking at, then declare in a loud knowing voice, 'Yes, just as I thought. It's going to need a new one'.

*Retaining nut.*

Yes, that's it, that big spherical blob of rust.

*Get an assistant.*

Prepare to humiliate yourself in front of someone you know.

*Turning the engine will be easier with the spark plugs removed.*

However, starting the engine afterwards will be much harder.

Once that sinking pit of your stomach feeling has subsided, you can start to feel deeply ashamed as you gingerly refit the spark plugs.

*Refitting is the reverse sequence to removal.*

Yeah, right. But you swear in different places.

*Prise away plastic locating pegs.*

Snap off.

*Everyday toolkit.*

RAC card & mobile phone.

Keith Lownsbrough

Source unknown

As a member of the IAM and being so inspired to do-it-yourself by Keith's article, don't forget you can send away for Haynes publications at a discounted price - ed.

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## Thanks To You All

I would just like to say a big thank you to all those wonderful young people who stand on motorway slip roads (and in any weather) holding up boards telling us motorists where they lead to.

RHT

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## **Kids ALWAYS Tell the Truth**

A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup out of the jar.

During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer the phone.

'Mummy can't come to the phone to talk to you right now. She's hitting the bottle.'

RHT

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## **And So Do Drunks**

A man who had more than just a half of shandy was driving home. Obviously his car is all over the road and attracts the attention of the local Constabulary.

"So," asked the Officer. "Where have you been, and where are you going?"

The man replies "I've been to the pub, and now I am trying to get home without too many interruptions".

"And how much have you had to drink?" enquired the Officer.

"About Sheven pintsh and sheveral shorts" slurred the man.

"And did you know," said the Officer, standing tall and folding his arms across his chest (as they do!!!!). "That a couple of junctions back, your wife fell out of the car?"

"Oh thank Heaven for that" said the man. "For a minute I thought I had gone deaf"

Keith Lownsborough

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## **Banned Drivers In International Agreement**

A deal to keep disqualified drivers off UK and Irish roads will come into force in February 2010.

UK drivers disqualified for an offence in the Republic of Ireland will no longer escape that punishment when they return home. Likewise, disqualifications earned by Irish drivers while in the UK will be recognised and enforced when they return to Ireland.

The measures are the result of a deal agreed between British, Irish and Northern Ireland ministers and represent the first practical step of its kind in Europe.

Paul Clark, road safety minister, said: "If a UK driver commits a serious offence while in Ireland their ban should still apply when they return home.

"These measures will keep dangerous drivers off our roads by ensuring that disqualified drivers are not able to escape their punishment.

RHT

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## **A True Irish Ghost Story**

This happened a while ago in Dublin and even though it sounds like an Alfred Hitchcock story, it's true.

John Bradford, a Dublin University student, was on the side of the road hitchhiking on a very dark night and in the midst of a storm. No cars were travelling that night. The storm was so strong he could hardly see a few feet ahead of him. Suddenly he saw a car slowly coming towards him and stop. John, desperate for shelter and without thinking about it, got into the car and closed the door, only to realize there was nobody behind the wheel and the engine wasn't running!

The car started moving slowly.

John looked at the road ahead and saw a curve approaching. Scared, he started to pray begging for his life. Then, just before the car hit the curve, a hand appeared through the window and turned the wheel. John, paralyzed with terror, watched as the hand repeatedly came through the window but never touched or harmed him.

In a while, John saw the lights of a pub appear down the road. So, gathering strength he jumped out of the car and ran to the pub. Wet and out of breath, he rushed inside and started telling everybody about the horrible experience he had just had.

A silence enveloped the pub when everybody realized he was crying and.....wasn't drunk. Suddenly the pub door opened and two other people walked in from the stormy night. They, like John, were also soaked and out of breath.

Looking around and seeing John Bradford sobbing at the bar one said to the other, 'Look Paddy. There's that idiot that got in the car while we were pushin' it.'

*Ray Grange*

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## **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.

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## **Who's Who in the Group**

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

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## **A Hopefully Illuminating Article**

To be seasonal, I thought I would take a look at street lighting, hence the corny title. We all take it for granted only noticing it when a familiar lamp fails but when you consider there are about 7.4 million street lamp stands in the UK, they probably deserve more attention.

After the gas lamps of earlier years were superceded by electric lamps, the development of different types of lamps has continued to the present day.

The first electric lamps for use as street lamps were developed in 1875 by a Russian, Pavel Nikolayevich Yablochkov, (yes, your guess is as good as mine!) who succeeded in using his electric candle, a carbon arc lamp, to illuminate Grands Magasins du Louvre, a Parisian department store and, shortly afterwards, the Holborn Viaduct and the Thames Embankment in London. The main problem with the arc lamp is that the carbon rods across which the high voltage arc strikes continually burns away and they need to be replaced periodically resulting in high maintenance costs. The other point is the the arc lamp produces a very bright but harsh white light which is not easy to live with.

1879 brought the enlightening experience to Mosley Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne which was lit by the new Joseph Swann incandescent lamp. This used a carbon filament which was heated electrically to glow brightly but the carbon filament was not as durable as the tungsten version introduced shortly after its development in the early 1900's.

The incandescent lamp, the normal household lamp for the past 50 years or so, was retained until the development of discharge lamps which essentially passed an electric current through a tube filled with various gaseous materials which allow conduction causing light to be emitted.

One of these is the low pressure sodium discharge lamp which produces the characteristic yellow light we see from many of the streetlights around the country.

For those of you interested in how things work, the lamp operates by passing an electric current (simply a flow of high energy electrons) through a tube containing heated sodium vapour. As an electron in the electric current collides with a sodium atom, it temporarily knock the outermost orbiting electron of the sodium atom into a higher orbit as the atom absorbs some of the energy of motion of the impacting electron. This now unstable atom returns to its previous stable state as the outermost orbiting electron re-takes its normal position. However this results in a release of energy which shows as a flash of yellow light and also the release of some infra red radiation or heat. To conduct the electric current the process requires the sodium vapour to be maintained at a temperature of 260 degrees Celsius and to help with that there is a metal oxide coating on the inside of the containing glass tube

which partly reflects back some of the infra red radiation which in turn helps to maintain the vapour temperature.

The main advantage of this type of lamp is its efficiency. Street lights of this kind come in various power ratings between 18 and 180 watts and a typical urban street lamp might be only 35 watts. Considering this modest power consumption, the light given out is huge making the low pressure sodium discharge lamp the most efficient in common use.

The biggest disadvantage must be the fact that the excited sodium vapour produces only two wavelengths of visible light at 589.0 and 589.6 nanometres which, fortunately, is close to the most sensitive part of human sight making it appear very bright. However because the light is essentially monochromatic the view we get from these lamps is also monochromatic. A surface lit only by this light and no other will simply appear black unless it reflects light at either of these two wavelengths. In other words if you looked at a red car it would appear completely black as red doesn't reflect back any light at either of these wavelengths. Likewise green fails to reflect either of these wavelengths and hence also appears black. A white or yellow object will reflect much of this yellow light back and so will appear very bright.

Over the past few years there has been much discussion about light pollution, much of it from street lights. One of the more vocal parties has been those people who observe the heavens. The low pressure sodium lamp scores well here because any light spillage skywards can be removed very successfully by using optical filters on telescopes which absorb the two frequencies of yellow light produced by this lamp.

There are other types of discharge lamps in use but none as efficient as the low pressure sodium lamp,

Today we are starting to see solid state light sources being used particularly for street sign illumination where extreme brightness is not required. I would imagine the light emitting diode will continue to be developed and its light output increased further yet still retaining its characteristic very low energy input. The reliability of these light emitting diodes is very good and so maintenance costs are minimal. They are already being introduced by some manufacturers as side, brake and indicator lamps on vehicles and of course are very popular as cycle lamps due to their very low power consumption.



Alan

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## Test Passes and Achievements

Valerie Anderson was presented with her IAM Advanced Driving Test Pass Certificate at the October meeting and is photographed with her Observer, Tony Hunt, who also received a Bronze Certificate in acknowledgement of his achievement of successfully guiding ten Associates to Advanced test standard.



Unfortunately, David Langley, Observer Neil Scruton, was unable to attend the meeting to receive his Test Pass Certificate however I would like to extend the group's congratulations to David and Valerie on successful test passes.

Jo Cross's most recent Associate, Katherine Brown couldn't make the meeting to receive her Advanced Driving Test Pass Certificate but Katherine was Jo's tenth Associate successfully guided to advanced standard. Consequently, Jo received her Bronze Award in recognition and appreciation of all the time and effort freely given to assist Katherine and others to improve their driving standard.

Jo and Neil are photographed opposite, above, having received their Bronze Awards earlier from our Chief Observer and President, Ivor Nicholson.

Marilyn Howarth is photographed opposite, below, holding her recently presented Institute of Advanced Motorists Test Pass Certificate along with her Observer Dave Allum.



Graham Parkin is clearly very pleased to be the proud owner of his Advanced Test Certificate and Angie, Graham's Observer, is sharing in his delight.




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## Answers for the Frustrated (Hello Everyone!)

- |              |               |             |             |              |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1) Sunny     | 2) Alfa Romeo | 3) Metro    | 4) Mercedes | 5) Escort    |
| 6) Civic     | 7) Corsa      | 8) Sapphire | 9) Montego  | 10) Cortina  |
| 11) Senator  | 12) Austin    | 13) Audi    | 14) Colt    | 15) Lotus    |
| 16) Legend   | 17) Prairie   | 18) Polo    | 19) Ibiza   | 20) Malaga   |
| 21) Sierra   | 22) Samba     | 23) Fiesta  | 24) Granada | 25) Cavalier |
| 26) Trooper  | 27) Ital      | 28) Yugo    | 29) Fiat    | 30) Seat     |
| 31) Princess | 32) Maestro   | 33) Laguna  | 34) Triumph | 35) Acclaim  |
| 36) Lada     | 37) Talbot    | 38) Charade | 39) Galant  | 40) Favorit  |
| 41) Safari   | 42) Savanna   | 43) Golf    | 44) Shogun  | 45) Horizon  |

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## Top Gear to Romania

I received this email recently from Keith Lownsborough.

Recently the Top Gear TV. programme went to Romania to experience the 'best driving road in the world'.

This tugged at my heart strings quite closely. I've been there but not on that road, as my wife and I along with a few others, run a charity to help orphanage children who are still in need. She worked there for two and a half years in the early 90's before we met, so this is quite a personal submission.

Keith writes:

What is the most unusual experience in your motoring career?

In the new series of Top Gear the boys took modern super cars on the 'best driving road in the world'. They ended up in the Transylvanian Mountains of Romania on a road built to mimic the corners of the best racetracks of the world.

My wife worked in the Northern Romanian Orphanages in the early 1990's before we met, and we still run a charity which provides neglected children with education and support. This was where I went for 10 days in 1997 and we went up into the Transylvanian mountains for a couple of nights. It was truly spectacular countryside and a memorable occasion to be surrounded on all sides by so much natural beauty and so much man made poverty.

Someone we knew, through our charity work, drove us up into the mountains. His car was technically known as a banger. The rust held the paint together. It made a 1970's Fiat look like it had excellent corrosion protection. The seat belts were best not used as in an accident these frayed straps with the inertia reel not locking on would probably have strangled you. It didn't turn corners, the suspension was so clapped out it bounced round leaning at an angle of about 45 degrees. And when you stopped, it had to be left pointing down hill as the starter motor didn't work so it needed bump starting every time.

Needing a lift home the next day we flagged down, not a taxi but a driving instructor, and agreed a petrol contribution, this being a normal thing to do. We agreed on 40 000 lei (about £3). When we arrived at the bus station a few miles down the mountains I only had a 50 000 lei note. The instructor said he would bring me the 'change' (worth less than a quid) after he had been round the corner and filled up with petrol. Needless to say that was the last we ever saw of him.

To this day I have met no-one who can say they have been ripped off by a Romanian Driving Instructor in the Mountains of Transylvania.

Keith Lownsborough

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## Doug Recalls ...

Having just seen the photo of Scott Kelly and myself chatting in the Autumn News letter, I think Alan should have said, "outstanding", rather than "long standing". I didn't realise I was still carrying that much weight.

The evening did bring back many memories though, some nostalgic, some funny, and having seen the article, my oldest daughter suggested I write an article for Alan to help swell his excellent publication. Way back around 1980 the first time I became chairman of the group it was decided the chairman, vice chairman, secretary and treasurer write a potted history of their driving experience and experiences. I vaguely remember that they were all quite successful and I kept all issues of the newsletters for many years.

Sadly to say, there was a change of secretaries who borrowed my collection of minutes and newsletters and failed to return them. Being unable to merely hand over the old copies and ask Alan to do a reprint I decided to write another potted biography.

I left school at Christmas 1944 and moved into a variety of jobs over the next three years. Starting as an apprentice tool maker, through drivers mate, cinema doorman, coal trimmer on tugs, galley boy and decky learner on trawlers for a while, finishing as a demolition worker; eventually going into the army in December 1947. For the younger members, jobs were a lot easier to come by in those days, one could pick and choose.

My first attempt at driving was as an apprentice, in a tiny Morris van down New Garden Street. I was shown into the seat, how to keep the clutch dipped, engage first gear, increase rev's and slowly let the clutch out. MIS-TAKE, I bounced forward about five yards in three leaps, stalled, leapt out and was twenty yards down the street before the foreman could yell stop. That was it for nearly three years.

Having joined the army I completed my basic square bashing, rifle drill and map reading etc and went on to driver training. One instructor and three students in a Bedford 15cwt desert truck. Open cab, no doors, and two tiny windshields about 8 inches high and 12 inches wide. No heaters by the way. After nine or ten days I sat my driving test, passing it first time. I then went on to the Daimler armoured car, which having a Wilson epicyclic gear box was a complete new ball game for me. Remember, way back then all commercials and the majority of cars were crash gearboxes.

I was a bit of a comedian even then. In the Daimlers were only two students, one driving and one stood in the turret with the instructor (I will see if I can get a picture so you may understand the following better). The driver was sat in between the front wings, with only a tiny visor to look out of, almost invisible to other road users. The Daimler had two steering wheels, one as normal and one on the rear turret wall for the commanders use in case of emergency. He also had a hand throttle, and a very feeble hand brake. The



driver controlled the transfer box for forward and reverse, also the gears. It was useful if being shot at.

I had taken out the rear steering wheel and stood up in the turret with the wheel stuck in the top of the periscope cover and was making great exaggerated movements in and out of the traffic. We were just outside the Underground station in Uxbridge when I waved the wheel in the air and shouted MOVE. I have never ever seen a street clear so quickly in all my life. Ah, the joys and follies of youth. Looking back, we didn't get much money but we did see life.

Finishing driver training I was sent straight to stable duties, that was not why I enlisted, so I was up in front of the squadron leader to air my grievances, and ten days later I was in Brighton attending a basic vehicle mechanics course. That was April to August 1948. Finishing basics, I then went to the RAC school at Bovington to complete my armoured vehicle course. Imagine being stationed in Brighton during a long hot glorious summer, but being paid on a Wednesday, the princely sum of £1 a week. As I said, not much money but we did have fun.

Early in 1948 whilst on leave, I bought my first bike, a 1934 Rudge Rapide. I wish I had it now, it would be worth a bob or two.

I was posted to Germany on 1st January 1949, and started driving on the right for a change. I had no difficulty getting acclimatised and it soon became second nature. The only big problem back then was the wagons and trailers. Articulated trucks were non-existent, and all heavy goods were drawbar-trailered. Sometimes two trailers, and in exceptional circumstances three trailers. Bad enough to pass when meeting, but even on the Autobahn almost  
Advanced Motorists Newsletter - Winter 2009

impossible to overtake. The rear trailer would sway from side to side as much as three feet in both directions. All long wagons carried an illuminated yellow triangle on the cab roof which gave you fair warning. Mind you, in those days there was a lot less traffic on the roads.

At the end of 1949 I transferred to B Squadron and started driving instructing on Daimler armoured and Daimler scout cars, also AEC Armoured cars. At long last I was doing something I really enjoyed. At the end of 1950 I came back to England to Lulworth Cove and completed a gunfitters course. While there I learned the art of tank driving. Wednesday afternoon was sports afternoon, and while the rest were chasing round a football field, I was out in a Churchill or Cromwell honing my driving skills, changing targets on the ranges.

Spring 1951 I was back in Germany doing a variety of jobs, but never far away from driving. In those days most of our time was spent patrolling the East German border. The regiment returned to England in February 1952 just after the death of King George VI and I was posted up to Kirkcudbright to a T.A. camp that was pretty primitive, sleeping under canvas, but chasing cross country an awful lot. October 1952 I was posted to Mill Hill and promoted substantive corporal.

I was due for demobilisation in March 1953 so in the February I took my demob course in coaching in London. I was working with a civvy firm in Lewisham for a month to acquire my PSV Licence. I started the course on a Monday and was put in for test the following Friday. I suggested to the boss man that was a bit soon, but he said if I failed I would have to wait a fortnight before I could be retested, so it was better be safe than sorry. In those days there was no such thing as DVLA, and Hackney Carriage licences and PSV driving tests were carried out by the Metropolitan Carriage Office.

My driving examiner was a police Inspector from the Met. A nice chap but I can't remember his name after all this time. Not knowing London I went .where directed . I remember the test centre was in Victoria where I carried out the reverse manoeuvre, from there to Hyde Park Corner, down Knightsbridge onto Brompton Road and somehow on to The Embankment and back to Victoria. When we stopped in the yard he shook me by the hand and said "Congratulations corporal, you've passed. I only have two comments, One you tend to look in your mirrors too much, and Two, on The Embankment you were doing 28 to 29 mph, you could have been I doing 30." I didn't argue with him, I was too high. I was walking on air. Passing a PSV in London was all I could have hoped for. I was so proud to be wearing my badge.

For the remainder of the month I was taking coach parties out on my own.. I saw Jack and the Beanstalk on Ice five times. London Laughs with Jimmy Edwards and Tony Hancock and June Whitfield twice. The only bum note was on my last Sunday. I had a party to Earls Court. When we arrived , this old lady asked me if I'd like a ticket. I thanked her and said yes, thinking it would be ice hockey. When I got inside .I almost ran out again. It was the 23rd Anniversary of The Daily Worker and I was in uniform. I was hoping

there was no one there from MI5 or the SIB. I could just imagine my face stuck across the front pages.

On demob I came up to Hull and got a job driving for Wm Jackson's on Derringham St, going as far north as Stokesley and across to Harrogate. I couldn't get a job coaching ,so I started at Radio Luxi on Baker St, and was a private hire car driver for a while.

Doug

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## **I Want To Be Young Again**

(On second thoughts.....)

There are advantages in being young, like the ability to party two nights on the trot. However, driving tends to be one area where being older, wiser, and more experienced has benefits.

My nephew has just passed his 17th birthday, so of course, he wants to get behind the wheel. Dad drives an Audi estate, 2.5 Litre turbo diesel, Quattro, while Mum has a Mazda RX-8. It didn't take long for Mum to say that Nephew wasn't going to drive her car, after all, 'No' is one of the shortest words in the English language. Dad called his insurance company to enquire how much his £400 premium would go up. After much 'I'll just put you on hold for a moment' and 'I need to discuss this with my supervisor' they came back with a quote of just over £7 000 (additional to Dad's premium).

I was talking to a 17 year old lad from Newbald who recently passed his test, and he drives an old 1.2 litre Fiesta, which cost him less than a thousand to buy. It costs him £2 000 to insure third party, fire and theft and to get comprehensive cover is not worth asking about. I told him about my £200 premium (protected No Claims, Courtesy Car etc etc) for a 2 litre turbo diesel Mondeo and his reply is not printable.

Often, the younger generation show good car control, perhaps it is the long hours of computer games which help their hand-eye coordination. However, that is only part of the skill of a driver, not least an Advanced Driver, as we all know, and there is no substitute for several years of experience.

I mentioned Skills for Life, and he gave the answer we could all expect 'Well, I'm a better driver than most other people on the road'. I told him about Surety and the claimed discounts, and he became more interested. He is currently doing his 'Pass Plus' course, and said he might come and talk to me again about IAM when he has completed that. But the thought of more lessons and another test put him off a bit, he wanted to enjoy his driving.

We discussed at recent Group Meetings about how to encourage more members. Perhaps with the young, the words 'Insurance' and 'Discount' might just make them interested?

Keith Lownsbrough

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## Talking Is Still Probably The Best Way

I recently received this email from Keith Lownsbrough.

*Alan,*

*The Group Meetings have mentioned about encouraging others to take the test and become members, especially the longer discussion at the October meeting. I've had a couple of discussions with the younger generation which prompted me to write the following submission.*

*I think that, as has been said before, it is the members who are in the best place to sell IAM. I know quite a few of the young drivers in Newbald and I've tried to convince them it could save money. On older drivers I've tried the "prestige" card. All to no avail. I don't think anyone has signed up for Skill For Life after my encouragement. The nearest I got was my brother in law (father of the nephew mentioned above) who took a leaflet off me as he had 'always thought about doing IAM, but never quite got round to it', then decided he didn't have the time.*

*Keith Lownsbrough*

I've tried the same approach as you Keith and, like you, have had mixed results.

At my previous place of employment, about 80 strong, most knew of my involvement with the IAM and, from those with more than a passing interest in driving, I had frequently been asked about what was involved in passing the IAM Advanced Test. I duly did the 'selling' bit.

Of those who showed any interest, one took up the challenge straight away, one took absolutely ages before he eventually joined and became a full member, a third fizzled out always having other commitments and a fourth considered there was no point as he already knew it all - the most dangerous of the lot.

All I can say is that two out of 80 is a far better result than indiscriminate poster advertising is likely to achieve and, perhaps because of the protracted effort required on my part, ultimately there are two better drivers on the road.

Yes, there are always excuses people can find to avoid pursuing driver improvement but ultimately if that reluctant prospective really intends to achieve advanced standard the dripping tap method is the only way I have found that works. It does take a lot of your time and effort but don't be discouraged by a lethargic candidate. Who knows, your low key persistence may ultimately pay off and your effort may save lives or injury.

*Alan*

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## The Bridge Over the Humber

Monthly group meeting with guest speaker Mr Peter Hill the Humber Bridge Master. This was a really interesting insight (literally as there were photos of the inside of the deck sections) to our famous landmark. He outlined the geography of the ground around the towers, explaining how the kitteridge clay of the south bank meant the Barton pier had to go 40metres under before getting down to rock.



The bridge decks are made to take 4metre deflections each way under extreme load conditions so we should not see it bend like the Verrazano Bridge! The main suspension cables enter the splay chambers at each bank under ground where there are 40 anchorage points for each main cable. The bridge has 480,000 tonnes of concrete. The make up of the cable is from 6mm diameter wires, with 15000 individual wires in the main cable. 22% of the cable when taken in cross section is air, which is collected in between the round wires. This air can be the cause of corrosion such as that which has occurred in the Forth road bridge and the Clifton suspension bridge. They found that microphones would pick up small noises within the cables that corresponded with cable snaps. This has been carried out on the Humber Bridge recently with a relieving silence which means so far no corrosion of the cables but further acoustic monitoring is planned for next year. In the photo you can see the tents on the main cables where investigations

found bright steel which means no rust has been detected, and are set to continue this summer with hot air being blown up the cable voids. This will take 3 years and cost about £20million. The bridge master is managing to do proactive routine maintenance and inspection but has to juggle the available money in order to do it as there are no contingency funds, 41% of the toll collection goes on routine maintenance.

It was interesting to note that inside the hollow decks there is 40% humidity which helps keep it corrosion proof. A comment was made that it was interesting to note that on crossing the bridge you could actually be running over a group of students! (These carry out research inside the road sections). When it was being built the 18m sections were fabricated at priory sidings and barged out to the river to be installed from the middle outwards with a clearance of 38m above the sea. The road surface is dense epoxy asphalt bonded to the steel surface and is 13mm thick. It can't be any thicker as over the whole road surface area the weight increase would put the cables under a greater load. 80% of the load that the bridge bears actually comes from its own makeup with the traffic taking only the remaining 20%.

For 17 years the Humber Bridge held the title for the longest single span suspension bridge in the world and has been used as a template for those that have superseded it, however, it is still the longest one to cycle and walk over!

Lesley Cornforth

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## **Mark Jessop, at the November Meeting**

Robert was pleased to re-introduce to the group Mark Jessop as the November speaker.

Mark, a man of principles, resigned from the IAM some time ago as he felt the management no longer stood as firmly on road safety policy as he felt they should and he spoke with his feet as well as his voice.

The last time Mark spoke to the group he was employed by Hull City Council as their Road Safety Manager; a role which disappeared a few years ago, and Mark took the opportunity to pursue his passion for road safety with a private firm called Local Transport Projects. Mark was requested by Hull City Council to report to our meeting on the current state of play with regards to the statistics for Hull in particular and the country in general which he did in his usual eloquent and entertaining style. Only one thing was missing and that was an invitation to Jeremy Clarkson to attend – but we can't have it all can we.

As a road safety professional Mark has, for many years, been involved with the statistics of government and councils alike. The government has set targets and it was the duty of councils to do their best to meet the targets. For much of the time in Mark's association with the group he has been able to report on the various initiatives undertaken by Hull City Council, directed in

no small way by himself and his team, and the success or otherwise of their implementation.



Generally the picture has been quite rosy accepting the fact that zero road traffic incidents, which must be the ultimate target, is unlikely to be achieved in our lifetimes. The picture has been one of a steady improvement and, whilst any casualty is one too many, reduction in casualty figures has been so significant in the Hull City Council area targets set by the government for 2010 have already been met.

The initiatives have clearly worked and we all reap the benefits of the effort which has been put in, however do any of us feel that benefit? I would suggest not because it is hidden. It works along these lines. You are walking down the street and someone walking in the other direction smacks you in the face. You become aggravated and aggrieved at the gesture. However you don't feel any better if the same person didn't smack you in the face because you were unaware of what could have happened. The same is true of safer roads and because generally only bad news is news, this improvement is rarely if ever reported in the media.

The talk continued to investigate future targets and how these might be achieved. At the moment the targets have not been finalized but are speculatively to reduce deaths on the roads by 2020, based on the average corre-

sponding figures for 2004 to 2008, by 33% and serious injuries by the same. Child killed and seriously injured to be reduced by 50%.

By anyone's standards this is a tall order and is going to require new initiatives and approaches not tried before.

There is a need to identify local issues and to tackle them appropriately. Clearly there is also a need for enforcement and the re-introduction of covert policing may well lead the way but other methods may also need to be adopted. The speed seminars as an alternative to penalties have probably introduced one approach and additional education for offending drivers may well feature. Personally I would like to see that include all road users whether two, four or more wheeled as well as the two footed variety. After all, the roads are for all these classes of users and each must play their part for the whole to work.

Mark's main point revolved around whether society has the desire to continue to reduce the dangers of using our roads. There is some doubt as to whether or not the vast majority of road users, thankfully devoid of any family involvement with road related injuries, will actually endure more and more restrictions to what they perceive as a personal freedom. As the number of road related injuries diminishes so does the number of independent voices pushing for safer roads. There must come a point when an equilibrium is reached and further improvements which restrict individuals 'rights' will no longer be tolerated. Are we close to that time now?

The only real solution to this dilemma is to almost change the nature of society to a more caring, responsible one. It has happened to a large degree with drink driving over the past 20 years or so. We still have drink drivers but the social stigma associated with the offence is growing and will hopefully continue to do so. Perhaps the same can be done with a more responsible approach to driving although it is likely to be impossible before 2020, however a start can be made.

The IAM has existed to improve road safety through driver training and education and this is one likely way forward – enlightenment and rehabilitation rather than punishment – except we try to pre-empt the compulsion for additional driver education.

Mark's presentations are always thought provoking and this was reflected in the 'questions' he fielded at the end of his presentation. With so many things related to road safety, no one knows all the answers and there are frequently no clear solution to problems as most of the more evident ones have been tried in the past either successfully or otherwise. Mark has this talent for pointing out what, in most cases, are obvious points of view but which frequently leaves the questioner dead in the water because if you consider yourself as a family member of a road traffic incident victim you too, I'm sure, would become equally passionate about improving road safety.

Thanks to Mark for his stimulating talk.

Alan

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## Berks in Mercs and Dreamers in Beemers

It never ceases to amaze me that some drivers in so called 'prestige' marques appear to feel that the rules of the road do not apply to them. The two marques in the strap-line being cases in point.

I drive a considerable amount around the city in my day job, and unfortunately I seem to come across this type of driver with alarming alacrity.

A few days ago I had reason to drive into Sutton for a visit, and, in returning to my base, I drove down Highfield, from Church Street to Tweendykes Road. There are traffic calming humps along this road, and, at the bottom, a 20 mph zone passing Tweendykes school, leading onto Leads Road.

As I drove down Highfield, a large Mercedes CLK 200 drew up behind me, and I duly turned right onto Tweendykes Road to get to Leads Road.

Although we were directly outside the school, and still well within the 20 mph zone, the Mercedes driver obviously decided that his need to be away from the area was such that he had to pass me, and to get onto Leads Road as quickly as possible, not even bothering to give way at the junction as a single deck bus was approaching coming down the hill.

A couple of days later, driving from home in Brough on my way to work at 8:00 am with a dense fog around (we do seem to attract those in Brough!), I got to the 'new' roundabout at the end of Welton Road, and slowed for a dumper truck to circulate, followed by a BMW 5 series. The dumper truck had a revolving amber beacon on the anti-roll bar, and all the vehicles in front of him had on their lights, with all the vehicles behind me also having on their lights. So far as I am concerned, quite rightly.

Did the Beamer driver have any lights on? NO. He must have believed that either everyone would be able to see him as he was driving such a 'prestige' vehicle, or that he was invulnerable encased in the vehicle, although I can't quite fathom the thinking.

Now don't go thinking that I have a downer on Mercedes or BMW drivers, I don't. In fact I know a few people who drive such cars – some I even like! Perhaps once they get such a car they feel that they don't need to act as a responsible driver should, perhaps they feel they must be very good drivers as they drive such cars. Who knows? Any Merc or Beamer driver care to hazard a guess?

I just think that *some* drivers of these cars need to think a little more about what they are doing. And the same may be said about drivers of other so-called 'prestige' marques – Chelsea tractors being a case in point – but that's a whole new story!

Steve Mills

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## Chairman's Chatter

Recently I received a letter from the Jaguar Centre in Hull inviting me to an open day they were having. (As some of you will be aware I do drive a Jaguar, finally realising an ambition that I have had from my teenage days). They were inviting me to test drive their range of cars. Olive and I duly went along and had a very pleasant afternoon driving two of their more powerful motors. On completion I realized that my days of wanting to be 'a boy racer' had long gone. Back to the flat cap, cravat and leather gloves brigade as Olive remarked.

All very nice but where is this chatter going I can hear you say? Well, this got me to thinking about the image of advanced drivers that we portray to the average motorist. Are we seen as a caricature of the middle-aged, middle-class driver of the 70s and 80s, pottering along the roads without making too much progress? And if we are, how do we go about changing that image and convincing the average motorist, especially the younger driver, that being an advanced motorist both enhances driving skills and the pleasures of driving?

Obviously this is a problem that the IAM is addressing at national level but we, as IAM members, should help by addressing the problem at the local level. For Instance can we restructure our monthly meetings so that they appeal to the younger element? How can we make our PR stand more dynamic so that it is a 'real standout' at the events at which we attend? Your committee discuss these matters on a regular basis but would welcome your thoughts and ideas. I am sure that lots of you have got bright ideas. No matter how way out they are, they could be just the spark that we need. So go on, put your thinking caps (or should I say hoodies?) on and let the committee or me know your views; our telephone numbers are in the Newsletter.

Safe driving and have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Neil

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## October Meeting

We didn't have a speaker at the October meeting as the committee felt that the group should take the opportunity to consider our new Chairman's inaugural letter to members.

Rather than open up the meeting to a general discussion, which sometimes works but more often doesn't, Neil presented five bullet points as starting points for discussion. The topics mentioned were:

- The IAM's relationship with other groups and associations.
- New routes to membership. E.g. Friends
- The standard of the advanced test administered by the IAM.
- On-line training.
- Promoting the IAM.

After an initial introduction by Neil, a general discussion took place with questions and comments from the floor.

There is a desire to interact more effectively between IAM groups and other external organisation to the benefit of all. I really feel that, as a group, the Hull & East Riding is not only geographically isolated from other groups in our area but socially and intellectually isolated. I do feel that some cross fertilisation of ideas and approaches between groups could be beneficial and could benefit us in particular. Some mention of being linked with other external organisations, again to the benefit of both parties, could lead to improved exposure for the IAM while the other party would benefit from its association with a well known road safety group, the IAM, showing their social awareness and responsible attitude towards reducing death and injury on our roads.

In common with most (I believe) existing members, I have a concern regarding the desire by the IAM management team to increase membership to add weight to the voice of the IAM when it comes to operating in an advisory capacity. Up to now, the discussion, which has been going on for many months now, has concentrated on permitting 'membership' at some lower level; this membership not requiring the holder to have passed the advanced driving test. Or in some cases to 'bundle' membership in with some other contact an individual has had with the IAM, such as DriveCheck. All this could indeed increase membership but would essentially degrade the value and 'status' of those members who have successfully taken the advanced test. Should this go ahead without some sort of qualification of 'member', I believe some existing members may not renew their subscription to the organisation to everyone's detriment.

We were assured that the standard of the advanced test as administered by the IAM would remain unchanged. There had been some mention, albeit tentatively, of increasing membership by lowering the standard at which a test pass is achieved.

On line training is something I believe has a place in preparing for the advanced test but I do feel that the effort required to prepare the content would preclude most groups from undertaking that task. Producing on line training content is not only specialised but with it comes an element of liability in that the content must be free from misleading or incorrect advice. In our litigious society I don't believe individual groups would be prepared to take responsibility for such content whereas the IAM, as a national body, already publish, and consequently take responsibility for, 'How to be a Better Driver'.

As for promoting the IAM, I firmly believe that word of mouth is by far the best and most successful way to 'spread the word'. I understand the desire to promote our organisation nationally and I think that that must be a centralised effort or at least organised centrally with local groups supporting this national strategy but I feel efforts made by local groups in isolation produce an under-funded and diluted result with little positive coming out of it unless

that involves direct people contact and taking the opportunity to answer questions most drivers have about the IAM but 'never got round to doing anything about it'.

I've said it before but we are in a competitive market and we need to promote ourselves in a professional manner. Perhaps the team we now have in London have got the expertise and enthusiasm to guide us all to a better future with a coordinated approach. Let's hope so.

Alan

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## Christmas Bash

14<sup>th</sup> December brought the group Christmas meeting.

A rather more informal meeting than usual but Robert entertained us with a computer based presentation he had put together showing amusing photographs (I think, but it is amazing what you can do with Photoshop) of some horrendously unsafe situations. Pictures like those, although funny and often shocking – in the unbelievable sense of the word – always remind me of how resourceful people can be. A fork lift truck on a fork lift truck is not something to be recommended but ingenious all the same.

Women drivers came in for a bit of stick. It's a good job women are an understanding bunch. Hopefully they forgive as readily.

Robert's presentation gave way to a quick rearrangement of the room into one more suited to the buffet which had been lovingly prepared by commit-

tee members Dominique, Beryl and Paul who had arrived mid-morning to prepare the food. Despite being unable to get in to the building, in a further demonstration of resourcefulness, a call to Germany and further calls in the UK, entry was gained and they were all able to begin their tasks.

As usual, members left canned and dried produce for the benefit of those the Salvation Army entertain over Christmas. Alan



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## President's Chat

I am delighted to start off by congratulating Angie on taking the RoSPA Advanced Driving Test and passing at the much coveted Gold standard. As many of you know Angie is now a member of the Region 4 Observer Training Team, and one of the requirements, to be a team member, is either having taken the IAM Special Assessment and achieved a high level or holding RoSPA Gold.

David Stringer set the Region 4 Observer Training Team up earlier this year, to help Groups in the Region with observer training. At the request of a



Group they spend a day with the observers, in their own area. The morning is an informal theory session and the afternoon is spent accompanying Senior Observers/Observers while they drive their own cars. In view of the positive feedback received we have asked for the Team to visit our Group, but due to their popularity, the earliest we have been able to book is Saturday 13th March 2010. The main concentration, on the training day, is out of

town driving and for this reason we are basing the day at Market Weighton (hiring the Village Hall). It should be an interesting and enjoyable day.

I have been rummaging through some old Group minutes and find in 1978 we had 53 new associates. This compares with approximately 25/30 per year at the moment. In 1978 the IAM test cost £9.50 with the National IAM subscription being £3.00. I am not sure how much the present cost of 'Skill for Life' at £139 and National subscription of £30 compares in real terms, but it seems significantly more so I wonder how much cost has affected the lower number of associates now coming forward.

In the early 1980s the Group had a display caravan that was used around the area and seems to have produce good results in recruiting new members. Our new display tent does not seem to have produced the same results, in its first year of use, but hopefully lessons learnt this year will instigate changes and give better results in 2010. If we are to fully utilise the display tent next year a good number of volunteers will be required to man it.

I mention publicity because of my concern over the relative small number of drivers we are guiding through the IAM course each year. A recent report points out that the latest road casualty figures show the need for drivers to take refresher training and not just rely on skills they picked up when they passed their test. It also points out that even when a crash was not directly a driver's fault, better skills behind the wheel may have helped to avoid the accident. Obviously we are available to pass on our advanced knowledge but have no way of doing so if drivers do not approach to us to receive it.

With my Chief Observer's hat on can I thank all Observers for the work they have carried out in the last year, for the Group, and pass on my best wishes to them and all members for Christmas and the New Year.

Ivor Nicholson President

