

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern

NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2019

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From the Editor

This year's (first, and almost certainly last) fall of snow is almost forgotten. Living in this part of the world has many advantages, one of which is that - south of the Downs, anyway - snow rarely lasts. How lovely to think that this is the Spring edition, meaning that over the next few months the days will get longer (well they don't actually get longer, but you know what I mean!). The North American poet [Anne Bradstreet](#) (1612-72) wrote, "*If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant*"; still, I'm glad it's over for this year.



As I drive - particularly in urban traffic - I wonder more and more whether these days driving schools teach positioning and signalling. So often I am behind something approaching, say, a T-junction, and find it quite impossible to judge either by where the vehicle stops on the road, or by the non-existent signal, whether he or she is intending to turn left or right. Efficient use of the width of the road (bearing in mind the cyclist who might well gatecrash on the nearside) can potentially shorten the queue. Would anyone care to write something for us on this subject?

I'm very grateful to the Officers for their reports, to Oliver Farley for his unfailingly readable and thoughtful 'reflections' and to Malk for making sure there is always a 'lighter' side to our Newsletters. Also in this issue are interesting articles from Sharon Andrews and Chris Skerry, and for the benefit of Members thinking of driving on the Indian continent Jan Riddle has sent a copy of the Indian Highway Code which has come to her attention. Don't say you weren't warned!

Best wishes;

Tina



IN THIS ISSUE

CSAM Committee and other contacts	2
From the Editor and Contents	3
CSAM Events Diary	4
From the Chairman	6
Chief Observer's Corner	8
Membership Mumbblings	10
Associates' News and two recent presentations to new Full Members	11
From Reflector: <i>Beyond the Highway Code - The Long and the Short of Accidental Confusion</i>	12
<i>New Beginnings</i> , an article by Sharon Andrews	17
<i>Nearly two years with an Electric Car</i> , by Chris Skerry	18
The Indian Highway Code, from Jan Riddle	20
Useful resources and links	22
CSAM events during the Winter	23

Forthcoming CSAM Events

Members are advised to check the [Events](#) page of the CSAM website before setting out in case of last-minute changes. Please click on the links to find maps showing approximate location of venues.

Unless otherwise indicated, events and activities are open to all Members; everyone is encouraged to come along and, if they wish, to bring a guest or family member(s).

CSAM Diary

Sunday 10 March

9.30 am - noon

[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs with one of our highly qualified Observers for Associates and members of the public. Full Members are also encouraged to book a refresher drive. Contact [Glenda Biggs](#) or [Phil Coleman](#).

Tuesday 12 March

7.45 for 8.00 pm

[PCC](#), Pagham

Talk by Sally Botwright, Blue Badge Guide for London, on the **Old London Docks and New Docklands**.

Thursday 14 March

7.30 pm

[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all Members are welcome. NB: Please note that all Committee meetings in future will start at 7.30 pm.

Saturday 13 April

9.00 am - 4.30 pm

[BC](#), Billingshurst

Observer Training Day.

Sunday 14 April

9.30 am - noon

[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 10 March or [website](#) for details.

Sunday 12 May

9.30 am - noon

[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 10 March or [website](#) for details.

Thursday 16 May

7.30 pm

[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all Members are welcome. NB: Please note that all Committee meetings in future will start at 7.30 pm.

Saturday 18 May

7.00 pm

[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Film Night - [The Italian Job](#), starring Michael Caine. A very enjoyable Group evening - put it in your diary now! It will be a ticketed event (limited to four per Member/Associate): please reserve your place(s) by emailing our Treasurer, Duncan Ford, at df021150@gmail.com.

Sunday 9 June

9.30 am - noon

[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 10 March or [website](#) for details.

For further details of venues please see page 5

Tuesday 11 June

To be confirmed
Car park next to Crawley
Town Hall, [RH10 1UZ](#)

Manoeuvring Challenge, Crawley. Time is to be confirmed:
please check the [website](#).

Sunday 14 July

9.30 am - noon
[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 10 March or [website](#) for details.

Thursday 18 July

7.30 pm
[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all Members are welcome.

Sunday 11 August

9.30 am - noon
[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 10 March or [website](#) for details.

Thursday 19 September

7.30 pm
[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all Members are welcome.

CP: Car Park

BC: [Billingshurst Centre](#), Roman Way, Billingshurst, RH14 9EW

BH: [HAMSVA Committee Room](#), 2nd floor, Delmon House, 38 Church Road,
Burgess Hill, RH15 9AE - above Lloyds Bank, entrance at rear of building.

Free car parking available in Church Road car park, behind offices.

NCP: [Northgate Car Park](#), Chichester (exit from eastern side of large roundabout)

PCC: [Pagham Church Centre](#), Nyetimber Lane, Pagham, PO21 3JT



*Highway in Japan with snow
more than 10 meters high*

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*And for the soft-hearted among us,
a baby snowy owl*

From the Chairman



Nature has this wonderful way of renewing itself in the Spring. Coming back from a walk by the sea the other day there were snowdrops flowering beside the foot path through a wood. They cheered my spirit and got me thinking about the new year ahead. CSAM is doing well in its main activity, the training of Associates, as you will note from Phil's article. We are not doing so well in maintaining what we have had, an events programme. I have said several times that 2019 will be an experimental year, with fewer events, but what will 2020 hold? We are still looking for people to fill three key roles: East and West team leaders and, perhaps most importantly, a Publicity Officer. If you would like to help with any of these jobs, or if you would like to know more about what is involved, do give me a call.

For the first time in a while the flow of Associates has slowed. We are taking steps to bolster our promotion but if you know someone who has always wanted to become an Advanced Driver do encourage them to sign up or at least have a taster drive on a Sunday morning.

Phil and I have asked the Observers to help us identify publications in which we can let the public know about Sunday Taster Drives, and shows that we might attend. Clearly, we cannot do everything, but by being aware of what is available the Committee can decide how we should spread our efforts. If you have any ideas do let us know. The Committee has made it possible for us to sign up new Associates at our Sunday morning sessions. This makes us more efficient and allows people to be signed up while they are still keen.

Two things about our Sunday morning sessions. First, I would still like to find a location further to the east so that the sessions could be alternated. If you have any thoughts on a suitable eastern location, do let me know. Secondly, Sunday drives are not just for potential Associates - they are there for CSAM members to check whether they are still driving to Advanced standards. If you were thinking of becoming a Fellow it is a good way to start the process. This is also true if you would like to try for a F1RST. Or you might be thinking of enrolling for the Masters course. Again, it is a good starting point to have a check drive. If you are thinking about any of these options, do mention it when you sign up for the Check Drive.

Any new Members - those who have taken their test in the last twelve months - can transfer to the Fellowship with out taking a test by speaking to head office. The cost of membership will go up slightly, to cover the cost of your first three-yearly Fellow's test, but by becoming a Fellow you have more of a challenge to maintain your standard by taking a test every three years.

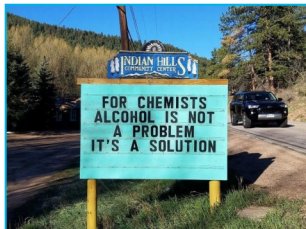
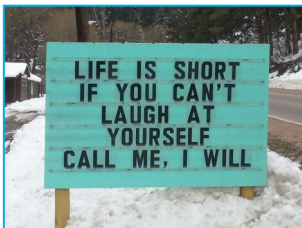
I mentioned events above. Please do keep an eye on our website, as any new events and details are posted there. You may have already noticed that the Manoeuvring Event on 11 June will be held at a new venue - on the top floor of the car park next to Crawley Town Hall. I hope you will put it in your diaries, as it is a fun evening that really makes you think about your slow manoeuvres - and you could win a trophy. The other event I would like to mention is the Film Evening. This will take place on Saturday 18 May. Maurice Upton and his son Andy, who



Without ammunition, the Air Force is just an expensive flying club.

supplies and shows films for a living, are presenting this for us. I hope you will come and have a social spring evening at Billingshurst. The cost of the evening will be £8 per head. Please use the following email address to apply for tickets from our Treasurer, Duncan Ford: df021150@gmail.com. There is a limited number of tickets, so they will be restricted to a maximum of four per Member or Associate. Wherever, possible Duncan would like payment by Bank Transfer, details of which will be supplied once an application via email has been made. The cost includes some light refreshments during an interval, and tea and coffee will be available. I look forward to greeting you and your guests at this event. Please put the date and time in your diary: **Saturday 18 May, 7.00 pm.**

Tony Higgs
Chairman



Some signs from the Indian Hills Community Centre, Colorado

Warmest congratulations to Sally Franks, Maurice Upton and Dennis Clement on passing their three-yearly Local Observer Assessor (LOA) re-tests with "flying colours"; Stuart Haythorn was delighted with their standard.

It is very important that the Group's standards are maintained, and LOAs use their skills and knowledge to guide and support us all in achieving this.

Chief Observer's Corner

Since the start of the current reporting period in September 2018, we have had 20 Associates pass their test, of whom 8 were awarded F1RSTs. The numbers of passes and F1RSTs are fantastic figures, and a reflection of the quality of our Observing team. Thanks to all our Observers for the great work they do, and welcome to the 20 new Members who passed their tests.



We have a total of 39 active Observers, including 8 Trainee Observers.

Our next Observer Training Day is Saturday 13 April. Mark Andrew, Chief Observer at the Southampton Group, has already booked his place.

We have 45 active Associates assigned to Observers; several of them are coming up to being test-ready.

We restart our Northgate Sunday sessions on the 10th of March. If you would like a run out to check your standards are still up to scratch, or know anyone who might like a free assessment, please let me know and I will book them a place; our Observer team is always keen to see old and new faces.

If you know anyone who might like to take the Advanced Driver Course, now would be a good time as we are reasonably quiet, particularly in the west of our area.

Finally, I'd like to let you know that I've been in contact with Neil Watson from the Aberdeen Advanced Motorist group: Tony Webb, a former CSAM Local Observer who moved to Aberdeen, made the initial introductions. We have been sharing some of our Observer Training processes with AAM and hope to receive details of some of their Lesson Plans in return. It's always good to talk to other Groups, but this normally happens with groups in our area; making contact with AAM, for me, is a bit of a bonus.

Phil Coleman
Chief Observer



PLEASE NOTE

The deadline for contributions to the next Newsletter is **Tuesday 30 April 2019**



I read that, by law, you have to turn on your headlights when it's raining in Sweden.

How the hell am I supposed to know if it's raining in Sweden?

Let's all take a moment to appreciate the time and effort this guy spent putting a strap on his sand so it wouldn't fall off



How do Court Reporters keep a straight face?

These are from a book called *Disorder in the Courts* and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and published by American court reporters that had the torment of staying calm while the exchanges were taking place.

Attorney: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

Witness: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

Attorney: What was the first thing your husband said to you that morning?

Witness: He said, "Where am I, Cathy?"

Attorney: And why did that upset you?

Witness: My name is Susan.

Attorney: Are you sexually active?

Witness: No, I usually just lie there.

MORE ELSEWHERE IN THE NEWSLETTER!

Membership Mumbblings!

It has been hard to notice Spring being less than six weeks away with some of the journeys we have all no doubt experienced in the early days of February. With all the skills we learn about planning for all possibilities, being overtaken in a long line of cars by a lorry at the Winchester end of A272 (which had to apply an emergency stop when faced by oncoming traffic) was quite unnerving. This was a lesson in how, while we endeavour to better ourselves, our skills can be tested at a moment's notice by the sheer risks other people take to progress in times of difficulty. However, our collective efforts do make the roads safer and together at Central Southern Advanced Motorists we have 313 Full Members, 63 Associate Members and 1 'Friends' Member, giving a total membership of 377 driving that vision for safer roads.



Since the last Newsletter we have continued to welcome new Members to the Group and I would like to send a huge warm welcome to them all as Associate Members: Edward Stevens, Kate Carter, Sophie Orlans, Peter Serna, Thomas Black, David Pang, Richard Bantin, Ian MacAllister, Tony Lewin, David Prince and Stephanus Fouche. The fifteen new Full Members were all Associates who have passed their advanced test since publication of the Winter Newsletter. I look forward to meeting you all in person at various events the Group will be holding.

Make a note of the date of the Film Night on 18 May: this ticket-only event is really taking shape and will be an enjoyable evening for all.

Still fairly new to the role, there are still Members I may not have reached out to and I would like this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support to the Group. I hope you all benefit from the membership and am always happy to receive any ideas and suggestions to allow the Group to continue to meet the needs of its Members. It is worth remembering that becoming an advanced driver does not have to be the end for gaining new skills. Have you thought about becoming a Fellow, a Master, one of our Observers? All three have been such rewarding experiences to me, especially sitting in the passenger seat of an Associate's car as they peak in their performance and you can sit back and enjoy their accomplishment.

Finally, Members, or drivers wishing to become Members, or anyone requiring more information, can reach me by email at membership.csam@gmail.com or by 'phone on 02392 595817. If you are transferred to voicemail, please leave a message and I will pick it up out of my working hours.

Safe driving;

Matthew Pitt

Membership Secretary and Observer



**DECADE OF ACTION FOR
ROAD SAFETY 2011-2020**

WHY?

Why do we leave cars worth thousands of pounds in our driveways and put our useless junk in the garage?

Associates' News

Advanced Driving Test results since the last Newsletter are as follows.
Those marked * passed with a F1RST.



Associate	From	Observer	Examiner
Elizabeth Douglas	Chichester	Phil Coleman	Colin Thaxter
William Robin	Hassocks	Vince Clarkson	Richard Mansfield
Anthony Field	Crawley	John Chisholm	Peter Burgess
Oliver Benson	Brighton	Mike Duffin	Adrian Short
Chris Filkins	Burgess Hill	David Stevens	Richard Mansfield
* Alice DuPort	Chichester	Gordon Egerton	Colin Thaxter
Maurice Woolgar	Pulborough	John France	Adrian Short
* James Renwick	Selsey	Kevin Crowley	Colin Thaxter
Andrew Coop	Hassocks	Maurice Upton	Richard Mansfield
Colin Young	Horsham	Peter Buckley & Kevin Hopkins	Richard Mansfield
Mike Rusby	Middleton-on-Sea	Bernard Timbers	Adrian Short
* Ray Knight	Ovingdean	Derek Williams	Adrian Short
* Wendy McFadyen	Havant	Duncan Ford	Derek Williams
Rita Hendy	Horley	David Stevens	Peter Burgess
Antony Dale	Burgess Hill	John France	Richard Mansfield
* Aaron Smith	Chichester	Gary Smith	Adrian Short

* Simon Wingett, already a Full Member of CSAM, decided to re-take his test in November to ascertain whether his driving was still up to IAM standard. He achieved a F1RST! Many congratulations, Simon

Many congratulations to our hard-working Observers and Associates, and to all the Observers for keeping me updated, which enables my job to flow more easily.

Best wishes;

Glenda Biggs

Associate Liaison

Two recent Presentations



Colin Young receiving his certificate at the event on 8 January. Colin's Observers were Peter Buckley (pictured) and Kevin Hopkins



Andrew Coop receiving his F1RST pass certificate, also on 8 January. Andrew's Observer was Maurice Upton (right)

FROM REFLECTOR ~

BEYOND THE HIGHWAY CODE

The Long and the Short of Accidental Confusion



The old year has slid irretrievably into the past and 2018, which still appears so strange to write, is now itself history. The new year brings more of the same, or perhaps the same only more. Let's leave aside the contentious public debates of our time and think upon the smaller events which affect us personally, or events which have affected our acquaintances and from which we should draw lessons for ourselves.

Perhaps you too have had the sort of experience I had one Monday evening. A colleague failed to turn up at the regular meeting of the Natural History Society and his presence was both missed and a source of puzzlement. Roger is 100% reliable and never misses a lecture. Filled with foreboding I rang him afterwards and yes indeed, he had been involved in a traffic accident. This is a good approximation of what he said:

"About half a mile from Bucks Green at Rudgwick on the A281 coming towards Horsham we passed a parked vehicle on the other side of the road and a Porsche coming the other way going towards Guildford crashed into us on our side of the road. No, our air-bags did not go off in front, but the right wheel was crushed back into the bodywork and the car is a write off. Neither of us was injured."

I didn't ask what had happened to the Porsche driver, though later I learnt that its front wheels were on one side of the road, completely detached from the car, and the rest of it was a tangled mess on the opposite side.

Always learn from others' disasters. It's the painless way of avoiding one ourselves. I didn't dare ask any more pressing questions of Roger, and was really thankful that he was alright. Thankful too to Toyota's engineers whose safety planning sacrificed the car rather than the occupants. Presumably, their German equivalents have done a similar service to their driver.

Lose the metal not the mortals.

One would love to know more. Where exactly was it? Why didn't they see each other? Was the parked vehicle lit? But to avoid the risk of ghoulish over interest in others' misfortunes, we must refrain.

What we do know about that road is that it is singularly dangerous. For some odd topographical reason there is a series of gentle slopes leading down to the road and they form a row of parallel humps along that length of the A281 for quite a few miles. The road is straight enough, national speed limited for much of this stretch - and with clear, obvious signs of miss-driving etched onto the road. In the bottom of each hollow are patches of oil and scratch marks where oil sump guards have impacted the surface. Driving too fast, the front suspension has flexed as the vehicles hit the rise after speeding down the slope, and the evidence is plain. The solution is to use accelerator sense and give very slight extra power on the way up to compensate for lifting off power on the way down. This mild acceleration lifts the front over the dip, eases your passengers' sensation of dipping and rising, and keeps the vehicle under much firmer control.

Dangerous as it is, this portion of the road is safer at night. In daytime, an approaching vehicle can easily be hidden in the dell: at night the forward pool of light betrays their presence. So why didn't Roger see the Porsche? Or maybe he did and just assumed that as he had right of way he'd carry on and let the on-comer sort himself out around the parked vehicle. Had the Porsche driver seen the parked offender? Did it all come as a sudden surprise because he was going so fast that he crested the rise only to spot too late that his way



I can't say, and I'm reluctant to quiz Roger any further on the issue. But I have drawn a simple lesson.

Don't assume that your right of way always means your safe-of-way. Spot the obstruction for the on-comers and tactfully adopt a prudent path for yourself just in case they loop into your lane. It was true of one car here and it's usually more true of a string of traffic who follow each other like a line of sheep over a hurdle.

It's also pretty difficult to judge approaching speedsters when the darkness blanks out the lateral contrasts we rely upon to assess their speed, and we can't always be sure that a solitary obstacle won't be carelessly swerved around. But knowledge of this road should have acted as a warning. Most accidents happen within five miles of home, as this one did, and perhaps it shouldn't have happened at all.

Guess the other's mistake

Don't hog your right of way

Don't rely on others seeing what we can; there's death in the dark



There's death or near death on the high street as well. Yet another phone call about a disaster in the family, and more concern for the unfortunate victim of carelessness.

Let's go back a little. Ask any of your associates or driving acquaintances to describe a dangerous road and they'll come up with something like this, after a pause for reflection:

"Oh! The M1, late at night ... raining ... a Sunday with holiday traffic ... and lots of fast driving..."

Probably wrong on almost all counts.

A dangerous road is defined as:

... a mix of users

... a mix of directions

... a mix of speeds

... a mix of weather

A road confined to motor vehicles only is inherently less dangerous than one with cars, trucks, pedestrians and dogs. Think of Billingshurst High Street on a Saturday morning, and despite a 20mph limit it's far more dangerous than twenty miles on any motorway. Erratic, contrary movements typify the ebb and flow on the street, along with the obscuring presence of delivery vans and SUVs picking up kids and shopping. The scene is full of interest, but much less attention for the roadway. The M1, by contrast, is way less interesting but each driver is going in the same direction and there's just drivers plus vehicles. Nothing else.

A change of direction or a crossing of movement are greater hazards than most people credit. Most collisions happen at junctions or on corners. Navigating a junction demands both observation and judgement.

What have you seen and how can your driving intentions blend in with the likely path and speed of what you've seen?

In the daytime there's more traffic, more to see and usually less time to take a chance when it arises. All too often impatience or just nervy-ness upsets judgement and a risky dash from a side road into the mainstream ends in predictable disaster. At night the lights



show moving traffic but reduce the ability to measure its speed, and of course the unlit is the unnoticed and thus the root of the next collision.

We should deal with these situations with extra caution ourselves and extra courtesy. Deliberately slowing a little, or even stopping to allow a wearied emerger to get out safely, is generously rewarded and eases travelling for all.

But safely. That's key.

Speed differential is a vital factor in the assessment of space and danger, though it's not always obvious, nor is its direction.

I learnt this the hard way many years ago while holidaying in the more easterly regions of what was then West Germany. The Autobahn was only two lanes wide in each direction, more an up-graded dual carriageway than a full motorway, and the slow lane was dominated by trucks. At first I took the trucks as just a flow of heavy vehicles but soon realised that they were in fact a series of multiple convoys, all Russian registered and carrying endless goods between the BRD and the USSR. They were strung out in groups of twenty or so at a time and all travelling at about 40mph.

The outside lane was a different matter. In effect, this was the true Autobahn so far as high speed travel was concerned, and multiple cars zoomed along at 70 to 90mph. My Chrysler couldn't compete with those persistent high speeds - some were a lot faster and flashed savagely to get past - and the speed differential was at least 30mph from one lane out to the next. A long clear section behind was essential for pulling out and daring to whisk past as many trucks as the Flying Followers in lane two would permit. Then back into a squash between trucks, hoping to be visible to the high-perched Soviet driver, before the next venture into the dicey lane.

Long after those days the experience has come back to me again and again. Once, for instance, in a miles-long queue for the Dartford Tunnel. An SUV stayed in lane two with the trucks and was slowly crawling forward in stop/start, as indeed we all patiently were, only the SUV was between two foreign registered commercials. Eventually one of the drivers momentarily lost concentration and glanced up to see the truck in front move so he did likewise, completely forgetting the Discovery in-between. That bump cost the rear end of the SUV and cost the rest of us extra hours for the debris to clear. Yes, the SUV had every right to be in the lane he occupied, but the truck driver is no different to ourselves; he concentrated by habit on what was most visible, the large rear of truck two, and the consequences you now know.

Or more recently on a return journey from the West Country along an unavoidable stretch of the M4 the memory of Soviet trucks and bunched up vehicles played a role in keeping distances and waiting for gaps to develop. IPSGA was upper most in mind, particularly the P for position; this time not position as in lateral placing across the road but longitudinal positioning to avoid being scooped up into the clusters passing the triplet of trucks in number one lane. Ease back, wait for the group to flow past, speed up and safely overtake the commercials, then ease back again to travel in the near-empty gap.



This is the official Newsletter of the Central Southern Group of Advanced Motorists

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You also know this one too: on motorways, travel in the hole.

A mix of weather is rarely as simple as it boringly sounds. We easily note the heavy rain on the way out to start the car in the morning, the slippery driveway in frosty February or the pooled tarmac in hot August. Obviously we reckon on these hazards before we start and usually keep them in mind as we sail along.

Now think of those irritating changes, when weather alters suddenly or subtly and hardly noticed. So often we accept the conditions as we reach the car, yet frequently remain much less sharply conscious of alteration as we progress. I clearly remember a drive in Wales on a bright sunny day when a mist fell like a stage curtain all over the vale we were in and in less than thirty seconds visibility was reduced to yards. A similar reduction can happen on motorways and oh! so rarely do our fellow travellers cut their unwise speed which seemed so safe a mere moment ago.

Modern cars and modern equipment insulate us from the outside world and you have to be aged well over fifty to remember when cars were supplied without a heater or radio.

Most of today's vehicles have a warning light when the temperature outside drops below 4 or 2 degrees so frost is possible. The opposite problem happens in summer, when air conditioning cocoons us from the external heat and nothing warns us of temperature changes before thunderstorms.

Even light rain can have a disproportionate effect on road surfaces. The first mild shower after weeks of dry summer can turn cornering on dusty and oil-besplattered tarmac into a treacherous slide, easily done and easily unnoticed if the shower preceded our arrival by twenty minutes or so. A weather eye open pays off, looking out for that innocent single cloud in a clear sky, and perhaps the oddity of approaching traffic with wet windscreens.

There are clues out there - by no means all obvious or apparently driving related, but no information is redundant. Keep watching, keep waiting and all should be fine.

And the family disaster in the phone call?

That too was something very simple. My cousin's widow was crossing Whitechapel High Street when a hit-and-run driver bowled her over, breaking both hips, a leg and an arm. Given these injuries, it seems she was flung into the air by the impact and landed lower body first. If she'd landed on her head there might well be a worse story to tell. She was just posting a letter, rather like one of the Godman sisters did from South Lodge years ago on the A281.

She was less lucky; she died instantly.

So what do we learn?

That IPSGA is central to all we do and information may well be something which looks remote from the task in hand but just could have an influence.

The parked vehicle which isn't in our way but in others' path

The pedestrian hurrying with letter in hand to the letter box we've yet to spot

The vagaries of town, road, country and weather

The flowing traffic behind and the lumbering commercials in front

Keep your mind on the job in hand and let alertness be your guide.

Oliver Farley

Reflector

Sometimes you get the bear ...



... and sometimes the bear gets you

Malk Monro assures me that once the cyclist gets past the photographer he should be fine ...

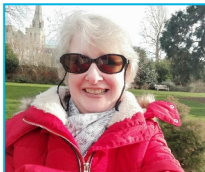


A houseboat in Iceland

NEW BEGINNINGS

Just over a year ago I was telling some friends about the negative relationship I had built up around driving.

It started by being married to a chronic "back seat" driver who did everything he could to undermine any confidence I had in driving. The result was that I drove less and less and started to feel anxious about the whole experience.



After we divorced I couldn't afford to own a car and so my driving took a back seat (excuse the pun!).

Many years later, and remarried, I decided to get back behind the wheel, but found myself making excuses to not drive. If I did agree to drive anywhere I built it up in my mind for ages before a journey, to the extent where I catastrophized everything and stressed myself out.

When I was on the point of giving it up for good, a friend told me about Advanced Driving courses through IAM. I found myself turning up for a Sunday drive and enrolling on the course. Technically, my driving was adequate, but anxiety was the issue.

I was delighted to be paired up as an Associate with Gordon as my Observer. Our first run took me onto the A27 travelling towards Arundel. Gordon quickly realised that I had built up quite a severe phobia of dual carriageway driving. Gradually, with Gordon's guidance and patient teaching style, I started to build my confidence. I had also struggled with roundabouts, and using IPSGA I now find that I am actually pretty confident and adept during roundabout manoeuvres.

I have been practicing with Gordon for a year now, and my driving has improved beyond recognition. This made me decide to try for the advanced test - not something I had at all considered at the beginning of the course.

I have completed two pre-test drives but found that the nerves got the better of me both times. I have decided to take a break, knowing that I have achieved my ambition of improvement. I view this as a positive, as I am going to go forward with increased confidence and skills.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to Gordon for being a complete legend. I would also like to thank everyone else that I went out for runs with, especially Maurice, who was very kind and understanding during the latest pre-test run.

I would advise anyone doing the course who may be struggling to carry on: you will know when you reach the point where you have achieved your aim. Happy driving.

Sharon Andrews

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Members are reminded that Group records are held on computer. Anyone who objects to their details being held in this way may request that they be held instead on a manual system by writing to the [Group Secretary](#).



NEARLY TWO YEARS WITH AN ELECTRIC CAR

In March 2017 I got a brand new Tesla Model S. It was hugely expensive, but I got permission to spend the kids' inheritance. What follows is just my own, perhaps incorrect, views of the experience.

Tesla is unlike any other car company. Elon Musk, who joined after others founded it, became the driving force. He put speed of development and production before quality and practicality. The benefit of this is that Tesla is the only car designed from the ground up as an electric vehicle (EV). Its design is brilliantly appropriate - all aluminum, big battery under the floor, a wheel at each corner, over the air software updates and luxury features like permanently on internet connection, Spotify, and Tunes (a music streaming service).

An EV is much easier and safer to drive than an ICE (internal combustion engine) car. You press the right foot on the accelerator, gently or hard, and either inch forward precisely, or set off like a rocket and do 0 to 60 mph in 5 seconds. Easing your foot off the accelerator starts regeneration - the wheels turn the motor, which has switched to a generator, and it re-charges the battery and the car slows down. If you live at the top of a hill, your battery will have a greater charge at the bottom of the hill than when you started. Using your right foot alone is adequate for almost all situations of accelerating and braking; only occasionally will you need to use the brakes.



Today the car has level 2 autonomy: it will follow lane markings on the road and cruise intelligently behind the car in front, slowing, stopping and re-starting to maintain a pre-set gap. It is possible to pay for full self-driving (FSD) which will be available at some future date.



Tesla rarely meets any of their stated dates. FSD was supposed to be available at the end of 2017. No new date has been published. Software updates can be defective: for example about a year ago when using intelligent cruise the car would almost stop as it reached the brow of a hill, presumably because the TV cameras could not see anything. Later updates have fixed this. In the early days, Tesla was working with MobileEye, an Israeli company specialising in software for autonomous vehicles. Elon and MobileEye had a disagreement and MobileEye left, taking their software with them. Because of this, Tesla tried unsuccessfully to develop their own software. New cars were significantly worse than those existing cars that had working MobileEye software. Now the experts say that Tesla has finally caught up.

One nice feature of Tesla that I have not seen on other cars is the concept of everything being set for the driver's convenience. For example, your bum on the driver's seat tells the car that you might want to drive it. No need to turn it on, just select forwards or reverse and press the accelerator. When you come to a full stop at the lights, press a little on the brake pedal and auto hold is set. When you leave the car, put it in park, get out and walk away. It will lock itself.



Range anxiety is a common problem for EV drivers, especially new ones. If you run the battery flat, you will almost certainly need a flat bed truck to take you to a charging station. I am still anxious, but I just plan my trips more carefully than in an ICE car. I charge at home to 70% every day, so in the morning I can do local trips without worry. If I am planning a longer trip, I might charge to 95%. There are more and more recharging stations available, but you will be involved in setting up the right app on your smartphone, or having the right membership card. It would be simple for the Government to legislate for a debit or credit card payment, but they have not done so.

Sooner or later you will have to buy an EV to replace your ICE car. It will not be economic for petrol companies to keep garages open for a dwindling number of customers. Look forward to it. The cost of fuel will be about a tenth of what you pay now. You can be proud that you are polluting the planet much less, and when full autonomy comes you won't even have to own a car, just command one to come to your front door for your trip.

Chris Skerry

Following her recent visit to India and some 'interesting' experiences on the roads there, CSAM Member Jan Riddle would like to share with other members the 'Indian Highway Code' which has come into her possession. Ed.



Travelling in India is an almost hallucinatory potion of sound, spectacle and experience. It is frequently heart-rending, sometimes hilarious, mostly exhilarating, always unforgettable - and, when you are on the roads, extremely dangerous. Most Indian road users observe a version of the Highway Code based on a Sanskrit text. These 12 rules of the Indian road are here shown in English.

Article I: The assumption of immortality is required of all road users.

Article II: Indian traffic, like Indian society, is structured on a strict caste system. The following precedence must be accorded at all times. In descending order, give way to: cows, elephants, heavy trucks, buses, official cars, camels, light trucks, buffalo, Jeeps, ox-carts, private cars, motorcycles, scooters, auto-rickshaws, pigs, pedal rickshaws, goats, bicycles (goods carrying), handcarts, bicycles (passenger carrying), dogs, pedestrians.

Article III: All wheeled vehicles shall be driven in accordance with the maxim to slow is to falter, to brake is to fail, to stop is defeat. This is the Indian drivers' mantra.

Article IV - Use of horn (also known as the sonic fender or aural amulet):

Cars (IV, 1, a-c): Short blasts (urgent) indicate supremacy, ie in clearing dogs, rickshaws and pedestrians from path. Long blasts (desperate) denote supplication, ie to oncoming truck, 'I am going too fast to stop, so unless you slow down we shall both die.' In extreme cases this may be accompanied by flashing of headlights (frantic). Single blast (casual) means 'I have seen someone out of India's population of 870 million whom I recognise'; 'There is a bird in the road (which at this speed could go through my windscreen)', or 'I have not blown my horn for several minutes.' Trucks and buses (IV, 2, a): All horn signals have the same meaning, viz, 'I have an all-up weight of approximately 12½ tons and have no intention of stopping, even if I could.' This signal may be emphasised by the use of headlamps (insouciant). Article IV remains subject to the provisions of Order of Precedence in Article II above.

Article V - All manoeuvres: Use of horn and evasive action shall be left until the last possible moment.

Article VI: In the absence of seat belts (which there is), car occupants shall wear garlands of marigolds. These should be kept fastened at all times.

Article VII - Rights of way: Traffic entering a road from the left has priority. So does traffic from the right, and also traffic in the middle. Lane discipline (VII, 1): All Indian traffic at all times and irrespective of direction of travel shall occupy the centre of the road.

Article VIII - Roundabouts: India has no roundabouts. Apparent traffic islands in the middle of crossroads have no traffic management function. Any other impression should be ignored.



An Indian traffic policeman - clearly a very dangerous job!



Article IX: Overtaking is mandatory. Every moving vehicle is required to overtake every other moving vehicle, irrespective of whether it has just overtaken you. Overtaking should only be undertaken in suitable locations, such as in the face of oncoming traffic, on blind bends, at junctions and in the middle of villages/city centres. No more than two inches should be allowed between your vehicle and the one you are passing - one inch in the case of bicycles or pedestrians.

Article X: Nirvana may be obtained through the head-on crash.

Article XI - Reversing: no longer applicable since no vehicle in India has reverse gear.

Article XII: The 10th incarnation of God was as an articulated tanker.

How do Court Reporters keep a straight face?

Attorney: What is your date of birth?

Witness: July 18th.

Attorney: What year?

Witness: Every year.

Attorney: How old is your son, the one living with you?

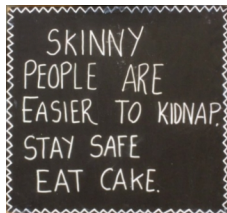
Witness: Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.

Attorney: How long has he lived with you?

Witness: Forty-five years.

MORE IN THE SUMMER ISSUE!

Snapped outside a café on the Isle of Wight



How true!

The Treasurer asks Members and Friends of CSAM who are able to Gift Aid their subscriptions or donations kindly to return the relevant form, if they have not already done so, in order to enable the Group to claim back from HMRC 25p on every £1 paid.

If you are unsure whether you are eligible to help in this way, or would like a copy of the form, please get in touch with Duncan on 07920 534475 or email

treasurer.csam@gmail.com

USEFUL RESOURCES AND LINKS

CSAM website Homepage:

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern>

CSAM Newsletter page:

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern/about-us/our-community/newsletters>

IAM website homepage:

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/>

IAM RoadSmart's "[Advice and insights](#)" pages

Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency: sign up for
[Highway Code email alerts](#)

[Operation Crackdown](#), operated by **Sussex Police**, where drivers can report illegal/unsafe driving. Some pdf readers will try to block access to this site, but if you type 'www.operationcrackdown.org' into your search engine this should bring up the website

Online Highway Code:

<http://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk/>

(There are some other interesting links here, too)

Online pdf of Highway Code to download:

<http://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk/download-pdf.html>

Searching depends on the device and the pdf reader in use

Hard copies of the **Highway Code** may be purchased here:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/DVSA-Official-2015-Highway-Code/dp/0115533427/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1513299425&sr=8-1&keywords=highway+code

but this is printed on dead trees and has no search facility

For anyone who may be interested in becoming an Observer:

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/campaign-pages/end-customer-campaigns/becomeanobserver>

CSAM Events during the Winter

To read about the [events](#) which we've enjoyed since publication of the Winter Newsletter, click on a link below. The 'thumbnails' give only the smallest flavour of what you missed if you weren't able to join us.

There is all the information you need to know about what's on, news about Advanced Test passes, future events, road tips from the IAM, etc.



A talk by Jim Stobart about the [Sussex Safer Roads Partnership](#) - 8 January
Click [here](#) to read the report.



Thought for the day

Blessed are those that can give without remembering, and take without forgetting

One day a florist went to a barber for a haircut. After the cut, he asked about his bill, and the barber replied, "I cannot accept money from you: I'm doing community service this week". The florist was pleased and left the shop. When the barber went to open his shop the next morning, there was a 'thank you' card and a dozen roses waiting for him at the door.

Later, a cop comes in for a haircut, and when he tries to pay his bill, the barber again replies, "I cannot accept money from you: I'm doing community service this week". The cop left the shop happy. The next morning when the barber went to open up, there was a 'thank you' card and a dozen doughnuts waiting for him at his door.

Then a MP came in for a haircut, and when he went to pay his bill, the barber again replied, "I cannot accept money from you: I'm doing community service this week". The MP was very happy, and left the shop. The next morning, when the barber went to open up, there were a dozen MP's lined up waiting for a free haircut.

And that, my friends, illustrates the fundamental difference between the citizens of our country and the politicians who run it. As Margaret Thatcher said: "Both politicians and nappies need to be changed often, and for the same reason!"



I know that, as a matter of policy, we don't advertise, but for any Members who haven't already seen it [this](#) Toyota Lexus ad on YouTube is well worth watching!