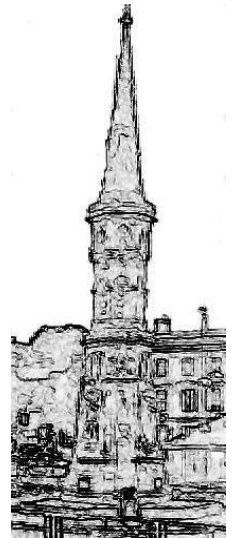




Byway



The not so major communication from

Banbury Advanced Motorists

Registered Charity Number 1088338

September 2019

Dear All,

This is the last Byway I shall write for you. I may contribute to the new OAD newsletter in time, but, for now it's time to take a break. Actually, I am getting off lightly this time as I have a contribution from Michael and using a document I've had for several years, together with input from John Thomas and Chris Milner, I can put together a sort of history of BAM. In addition, Andrew from Oxford is arranging the distribution of the document as he now has the definitive mail list.

Here then to start with is Michael's bit.

It's difficult to tell how many people read Byway, in much the same way that a radio presenter does not know how many people are listening to them. Peta has done an excellent job in communicating information to the group using Byway. Before this, Highway was a multi-page magazine with jokes, articles from various members of the group and of course the Editors opening gambit. You will of course have all received our new Oxfordshire Advanced Drivers magazine which I have found to be very informative. Not only that but there is a great introduction to some of the new faces you will be seeing at meetings / drive outs etc.

I have served on the committee for a number of years now in various different posts. We have had a number of faces on the committee and they have all been brilliant in keeping the group going. Perhaps you would like to put yourself forward to serve on the new committee? If this is not for you we would like to make sure you get the most out of your membership. If you are receiving this you are an Advanced Motorist (or training to be one), how up-to-date are your skills? Would you like to further your driving ambitions? Perhaps you would like to train to be a local Observer - this is incredibly rewarding witnessing your associates' progress through to the Advanced Test. Not only that but you may learn something along the way too!! Existing Observers may wish to qualify for National or even a Local Observer Assessor Role. If coaching others isn't for you then maybe you would like to put your car through its' paces on a racing circuit - I went down to Thruxton on 28th August and can thoroughly recommend it - a lot of fun in a not so powerful car!!

IAM Roadsmart is a completely different organisation to what it used to be. It's not just a brand change. Yes, the skills we teach are broadly what we have always taught and there is good reason for this - the driver behind the wheel will remain the main cause of collisions until we are legally forced to succumb to Artificial Intelligence. Road collisions will continue to be the main cause of death but this is something that we can help to mitigate. Remember that you are all in possession of a Skill for Life. Please spread the word. Inspire other drivers through your actions.

Michael



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Now then, what about the history of BAM. Well some of it seems to have been lost in the mists of time, but I did find, amongst the documents on the computer, a piece called 'A Potted History of BAM'. I am not sure who wrote it, but I suspect John Riches. The document is dated 2000.

A POTTED HISTORY of the BANBURY GROUP

Some time ago I asked Pat Horn, the mother of Mike (our President) and a long time secretary of the group, if she would search her memory for information on our history. At the time I was in the chair and we were going through a rough patch; it struck me that if Pat and Mike were to lose touch then we could lose the knowledge of our origins which would be a pity after all the hard work they had put in over many years.

“Banbury group was started in early 1970’s by Reg. Curling of a driving school in Tysoe; Mike Horn was involved from the beginning (Mike as a class 1 police driver would have been very welcome). Mike and Brenda Fletcher then became involved as chairman and secretary respectively and John Fisher as an Observer

During various periods we met at the Post Office building in Beaumont Rd., Banbury Secondary School and the North Newington Sports club

We started the yearly Safer Driving Events in 1975 – the first one being in conjunction with Ewing Garage at the Banbury Cross and Vauxhall cars (the garage is now a chemist). After this and up until about 1992 all the garages were involved in supplying us with cars for check drives and police driver demonstrations that ran together with the driving competitions. At first these were held at the Castle Garden car park then later at Demag in Beaumont road. Cups were given to the winners of each event to be held for one year together with a certificate to keep.

We also participated in the Banbury carnival with floats, the Steam Rally and the Hook Norton fair with stands”

Chairman	Vice Chair	Secretary	Treasurer	Chief Observer	Events Co-ordinator	Newsletter Editor
Reg. Curling						
Mike Fletcher		Brenda Fletcher				
Mike Horn		Pat Horn	Norman Whateley	Clive Jennings	John Riches	Jem Hayward
	John Riches			Jem Hayward	John Riches John Thomas	John Riches
John Riches		Val Wood	John Thomas	Trevor Beaumont		
				Dan Jones		



Chairman	Vice Chair	Secretary	Treasurer	Chief Observer	Events Co-ordinator	Newsletter Editor
				Len Wood	J. R/John Thomas.	
Bernard Moore		J. Riches/Sara Southwell	Kromer Rogers	Chris Milner	J. R. /Rob Hodgkiss	Bill Lambert

The backbone of any group is the observers and committee members

Jane Holmes has been a hard working committee member and observer for as long as I can remember
Mike Clifton was an old hand when I arrived in 1986 and can always be relied on to turn out in all weather

John Thomas started the same Sunday as me and we probably joined the committee at the same time

Here's what Chris has to say:

John Riches, as Chairman of Banbury Advanced Motorists in the 1990's, was struggling very hard to keep BAM afloat in those days; it was down to only a **very few** members. The IAM were then looking to close the group. Around that time, at the request of the IAM to "local members", a meeting was held by the IAM here in Daventry to form a new IAM group and I offered to be the Chief Observer. In the mean time John Riches remained BAM Chairman. Unfortunately, the IAM had not asked Northampton Group, NAM, if they objected to having another group so close to them, as NAM should have been controlling the Daventry area as well. DAM rapidly became VERY successful and ended up with over 40 members. In the process, I became the Chairman, Chief Observer, Editor of the newsletter and much much more.

Northampton became so upset that DAM was so successful "in their area" that they told the IAM that DAM should never have been set up and they wanted it closed. John Thomas, Phil Robinson and I placed a great deal of hard work and enthusiasm into DAM, only to find that the IAM had got it very wrong and that they should never have formed DAM in the first place. At that time, with over 40 members, we were financially very well off. Northampton group tried to force DAM to close and wanted all our members and funds brought to them. I refused and closed DAM, taking the members and finances to Banbury where I became the Chief Observer for over 14 years. Kromer Rogers and I have held the position of Joint Chief Observers at BAM for some time. BAM became secure with at least 50 members and funds to suit and it went from strength to strength, until the relatively recent downturn in demand for advanced driving. You all know of my serious concern over so called vehicle safety systems etc with the dramatic downturn in today's driving standards and driver attitude. About four years ago "a senior member" of the IAM suggested to me that advanced driving would not be necessary "in 10 years time" due to the advances in so called "self drive vehicles etc"; I totally agreed with him. It now looks as if this prediction is coming true. However still I believe that Advanced Motoring Organisations are vital for the safety of the public.

I spoke to John Thomas and he more or less confirmed the above officer list and added Nathan Askew – one time treasurer.

Richard and I joined in 1983 and, trained by John Fisher, passed our tests in about a year – more relaxed then – with Mike Clifton doing our final check drive. After that, due to changes in work practice etc, we drifted away, though retained our membership. It must have been in about the mid 90's when we were



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contacted by Sarah Southwell and persuaded to become more active again. I can't actually remember when I joined the committee as secretary but I do remember the very long committee meetings presided over by Bernard Moore. Bernard always said he was an officer not an observer because he suffered from travel sickness and could never manage to observe. He always had to drive.

When Bernard sadly died, John Riches stepped in again as Chair with me as Vice Chair. Since then I've been Chairman and now again Vice Chairman.

We have been lucky to have several very enthusiastic members over the years and these include the present committee, all of whom have worked very hard towards the coming merger. These include, not only the original stalwarts of John Riches, John Thomas and Chris Milner, but of course Kromer Rogers and George Findlay who have been committee members and officers for many years, and more recently the younger and more active members, Michael Bishop, Karen Liddle, Peter Willcocks, Tony Carney and Ken Merry. All of these have contributed immeasurably to the past success of BAM.

Unfortunately, as you are all aware, lifestyles have changed and we are having problems recruiting new committee members when the older ones wish to take a break. It seems that our colleagues at Oxford have found the same problem, at least in their car operations. The coming merge will, I am sure, inject new enthusiasm and there will be a wider catchment of potential associates and management. Please give the new OAD your full support.

Speaking of supporting the new group, you will have received the notification of the inaugural AGM on 2 October. Please make an effort to come. It will be a good opportunity to meet some of our new colleagues. If you need to share transport, ask a nearby colleague, I am sure that can be sorted.

Then, let's make a good start on the new Social Calendar. We start off with one of my special Signpost Scatters on Sunday 13th October. Start at 09:30 at The Old Shed off the B4022 near Charlbury. I know Andrew will be sending out a reminder, but the important thing is you must let me know by 7th October if you are coming, so that I can produce sufficient number of sets of photographs. My number if you don't know it is 01608 643377. If you're at the AGM I can take details then.

Of course, before all of these things, we have our 'Driving Skills Day' in Banbury Town Centre on 22 September. This is, as you will have seen above, a return to what we hope will be a wider engagement with the general public. Tony Carney and the Rotary Club of Banbury Cherwell have worked very hard to help set the whole thing up, and we are very grateful. We also look forward to welcoming some of our Oxford colleagues who will join us on that day. Why not come along and support us and have a go at testing your skills.

That's it then. Sorry, not pic's or cartoons this time, there isn't room unless Andrew adds some things on a separate page when he sends this out.

Please continue to drive carefully and I look forward to seeing you sometime in the near future.
Regards

Peta Simmons
BAM Vice Chairman and editor of Byway.



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