

IAM
DRIVING ROAD SAFETY



**TAUNTON GROUP OF
ADVANCED MOTORISTS
NEWSLETTER**

Number 115

June, 2010

CLUB PEUGEOT UK PHOTO GALLERY



Peugeot 205GTI, 406 Coupe, 604 and 405 at Barrington Court



304 Coupe, 306 Cabriolet, 202 Pick-up and 406 saloon (see Page 24)

TAUNTON GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

NEWSLETTER

Published Quarterly

Editor: John Gilbert Printing: Heathfield Community
School

Circulation: 200

IAM Group No. 1005
Registered Charity No. 1062207
www.tgam.org.uk



Any comments or opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily of the Institute of Advanced Motorists Ltd., Editor or Committee. They are published in the belief that free expression may stimulate and breed ideas. No legal responsibility can be accepted for any article or advert published. Please send any items for consideration to be included, provided suitable space is available in the next Newsletter, to John Gilbert, our Newsletter Editor (details on Page 2). Items will be published ASAP.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Members' details, i.e. names, addresses and telephone numbers, are kept on computer for convenience. This information will only be used to further the aims and objectives of the IAM and is only available to Committee Members BUT can be inspected at any suitable time provided just cause can be proven.

THE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT	John Pentney 18 Tristram Drive, Creech St. Michael, Taunton TA3 5QU 01823 443344 president@tgam.org.uk
CHAIRMAN	Kevin Grose c/o Chateau Griffin, Hatch Beauchamp, Taunton TA3 6SJ 07788 863981 chair@tgam.org.uk
TREASURER	Frank Richards 33 Farriers Green, Monkton Heathfield, Taunton TA2 8PP 01823 412916 treasurer@tgam.org.uk
SECRETARY (ACTING)	Kevin Grose c/o Chateau Griffin, Hatch Beauchamp, Taunton TA3 6SJ 07788 863981 sec@tgam.org.uk
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Serena Lonton Mashala, Ilton, Ilminster TA19 9HL 01460 52519 memsec@tgam.org.uk
CHIEF SENIOR OBSERVER	Bill Coltham Field Cottage, Smallridge, Axminster EX13 7LY 01297 631818 cso@tgam.org.uk
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	John Gilbert The Coach House, Stockland Bristol, Bridgwater TA5 2QA 01278 651222 ed@tgam.org.uk
TRAINING OFFICER	Alan Thomson The Nook, Kingstone, Ilminster TA19 0NS 01460 55919 cmat@tgam.org.uk
COMMITTEE MEMBER	Faye Markham 41 Calvados Road, Taunton TA1 2LA 01823 338171 cmfm@tgam.org.uk

Committee meetings (for Committee Members ONLY) are held at 7:30pm on the second Thursday of the month at Heathfield Community School. If, as a Group Member, you need to raise any issue at Committee level, then please feel free to contact any Committee Member to put your views to the next Committee Meeting.

CONTENTS

Cover	Photo: 1947 Peugeot 202 Pick-up at Barrington Court, see Page 23 (Photo by Frank Richards)
2	PEUGEOT GB PHOTO GALLERY
3	Photo: Driver's view of Nostalgia Cars Jaguar C-Type
4	THE COMMITTEE
6	FROM THE PRESIDENT
9	FROM THE CHAIRMAN
11	'STRAIGHT ON'
14	GROUP OBSERVERS
15	MEMBERS' PAGE
16	CALENDAR
17	Members' Meeting, 17 th February
19	Long Sutton W.I., 18 th February
20	Driving at Night, 24 th February
21	Weston & Mendip AGM, 16 th March
22	Members' Meeting, 17 th March
24	Club Peugeot UK, 18 th April
25	Members' Meeting, 21 st April
27	Nostalgia Cars, 15 th May
28	Members' Meeting, 19 th May
29	LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
30	MEMBERS' CARS
34	Ladies...How was it for you?
35	FACTS
36	Motoring Miscellany – Finale
38	MEET YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS
39	NOSTALGIA CARS PHOTO GALLERY

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE
SEPTEMBER 2010 ISSUE IS WEDNESDAY,
AUGUST 4TH. ITEMS SHOULD BE SENT TO
"THE EDITOR" ed@tgam.org.uk
OR, IF YOU DO NOT HAVE E-MAIL, BY MAIL TO
JOHN GILBERT, THE COACH HOUSE,
STOCKLAND BRISTOL, BRIDGWATER, TA5 2QA.**

FROM THE PRESIDENT

'I GOT PLENTY OF NOTHING'– Gershwin, *Porgy and Bess*

By John Pentney, M.A.

THIS quarter, I shall write about nothing – nothing where there should be something, emptiness where there should be substance, voids where there should be solid filling. In short, my theme will be potholes where there should be tarmac.

None of us can have failed to notice the serious deterioration in Britain's road surfaces with numerous potholes in all types of road from minor lanes, suburban residential streets, secondary routes, main A-roads and even motorways. The immediate cause is the harsher than average winter that we have recently experienced, with water repeatedly penetrating crevices in the top surfacing, freezing and then thawing, resulting in most stretches of highway presenting pothole hazards to road users. However, the longer term cause is serious under-investment in road maintenance for many years past. This last winter has simply highlighted the penny-wise-pound-foolish and short-sighted policy of neglecting essential maintenance. This scandalous gamble with road safety has been exposed to public view for the false economy it is. In England, the Highways Agency, a central government quango, is responsible for motorways and trunk roads like the A303; whilst other roads are the responsibility of county councils or unitary authorities where there is single-tier local government. Similar arrangements apply in the other countries of the UK.

Since the winter, I have driven in many highway authority areas and Somerset's roads are amongst the worst. In its recent free newspaper, Somerset County Council proudly boasts of how it is increasing expenditure to address the problem of potholes, but this is spin. What the Council does not point out is that in many previous financial years it has raided the road maintenance budget to fund other services. Throughout Britain, a high proportion of the maintenance budgets is paid out in compensation to motorists whose vehicles have been damaged as a result of poorly maintained roads, thereby leaving even less money to spend on its intended purpose.



Potholes in Hyde Lane, Creech St. Michael, on the approach to a narrow blind corner, where you need to keep well over to the nearside, but risk damaging your car if you do

However, a claim against Somerset County Council would probably be met with legalistic stalling. This happened to me some years ago when my bicycle was damaged and I was slightly injured as a result of dangerous roadworks, leaving a 'step' in the road surface. As I was then employed by the county council, I did not dare pursue my claim in the county court for fear of reprisals. Another stalling tactic is to try and shift the blame to the complainant by saying that he/she should have reported the pothole. The onus should be on the highway authority to regularly inspect its roads and act quickly to repair potholes before they grow larger. Anyway, at present, there are simply far too many potholes to report them all. In a drive of a few miles, you will probably encounter so many that you won't be able to remember where they all are.

Any private company that took so much money as is paid in general, council and motoring taxes and failed to deliver the service would rightly be judged guilty of fraud, but unfortunately there is no such clear contractual obligation on the part of statutory public bodies *vis-à-vis* taxpayers. You would soon end up in court if you failed to pay your council tax, but if your car is damaged because of the highway authority's neglect you will struggle to get swift compensation if any. This situation will continue unless the law is changed to allow council tax payers to withhold equivalent payment where the local authority has defaulted in the provision of statutory services resulting in one being out of pocket. Such a radical reform would focus the minds of our elected representatives, but is unlikely. However, it would redress the balance of power between the taxpayer and those who purport to govern us at our expense. This is why it will probably never happen.

A few months ago, I attempted to report some particularly bad local potholes, but found Somerset County Council's internet reporting system was non-functional, and when I left an answerphone message after being on hold for many tedious minutes, I received no response. I have since given up.

The structure of a road has to fulfil a number of functions: it needs to have good drainage (neglect of drains alongside a road can lead to potholes), good skid resistance, have adequate foundations to bear the weight of the traffic and finally the top surface needs to be adequately sealed to prevent water penetration which causes so much damage. Therefore regular inspection and maintenance is essential, but for many years this has been totally inadequate, resulting in the present situation.

For road users on two wheels, potholes have the potential to cause fatalities. A few weeks ago, the press reported that an army officer who had survived Afghanistan, was killed whilst cycling in Wiltshire by a lorry as he moved out to avoid a large pothole at the edge of the road.

Although an inquest verdict is awaited, there can be little doubt that poor road maintenance was a contributory factor to this man's death. A similar fatality could easily occur in Somerset. The County Council is strangely schizophrenic in its attitude to road safety: on the one hand it is obsessive about imposing speed limits resulting in many ridiculous ones that cannot be justified in terms of either safety or amenity, while on the other hand it is all too complacent about dangerous road surfaces.

Much of the patching of potholes that has been carried out in Somerset has been of such crude quality that the surface breaks up again within days. Quite a few Somerset potholes have been officially marked with spray paint indicating the all too obvious need for repair, but many weeks later, the paint is wearing away and the repairs are still awaited as the potholes enlarge. As we advanced drivers know, Roadcraft gives good advice on the best positioning for driving, especially on the approach to bends. But at present one's positioning on the road is partly dictated by the need to avoid so many potholes. This is not easy after dark and when the holes are partly concealed by water and/or fallen leaves. Also, many of the potholes are virtually unavoidable because they



Potholes in Linden Grove, Taunton – impossible to avoid with a car, and one is very deep.

often lie in the natural path of one's nearside or offside wheels where there's insufficient space to take evasive action. These have to be negotiated very slowly to avoid damage to tyres, suspension, steering tracking and even wheel rims.

As Gershwin didn't quite say 'Nothing's *not* plenty for me', at least where holes in the road are concerned.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

DIRECT FROM THE DRIVING SEAT...OR CHAIR, MAN!

By Kevin G. Grose

WELL, where do we start this time? Firstly, "due to technical problems" the last two paragraphs were left off my last edition's report so it may have appeared that I had finally lost the plot in my usual scribblings (see ERRATUM on Page 10 – Ed.). To conclude my ramblings on that account, I was just comparing two different sets of items – watches and cars and the bottom line being – no matter how many features said items had, a watch only needs to tell you the time and a car only needs to get you from A to B – however, the most important feature we all have is our BRAIN. It is better than all the other features put together.

The trouble is, we forget to use it most of the time and especially when driving. So forget all those extra features, gizmos, gimmicks, etc., and use your BRAIN when driving – THINK! Secondly, "due to technical problems" I have very recently suffered a complete computer failure thereby losing all recorded data – everything gone. All your e-mail addresses, letters, reports, Committee Minutes & Agendas – all completely gone. So even I have demonstrated the need to use your BRAIN because clearly I didn't and have now endured many weeks extra hard work to try and sort out all the encountered problems. "It will never happen to me", I hear you say, but it does happen to you and it will happen to you sometime in the future. So, use your BRAIN now and back up all that data on your computer. Listen to someone who knows from experience – DO IT NOW!

Thirdly, "due to technical problems" I nearly didn't have anything for the April Members' Evening. My original prepared presentation was gone – lots of naughty words expressed – so with many late nights and also trying to master my new Windows 7 along with its new associated (annoying) programs, on a new laptop, I did finally have something to present on the evening. I also, "due to technical problems", encountered a few more snags on setting up but I didn't let on – why is it, it all works 100% when trying these things at home but as soon as you get to a venue, it all falls apart? No matter, it did finally all fall together and I believe everybody who attended may have enjoyed the evening. We even ended up running a slide show of some of the TGAM recent events; 25th Dinner, Christmas 2008/9, etc.

Fourthly, "due to technical problems", I think my BRAIN has failed me several times over the last few months. My BRAIN decided to shut down to all new technology. My Daughter gave me an "all singing and all

dancing" new "iphone" for Christmas. Blimey, it's complicated even to make a simple phone call. My old phone worked fine and did all I wanted it to do but obviously, I was a major embarrassment to my daughter every time I used my ancient piece of communication technology. So I now have a mobile phone virtually capable of launching a space rocket! Amongst some of it's capabilities, it has Games, TrackID, Mobile TV, Video Player, Radio, MusicDJ, PhotoDJ, VideoDJ, Vodafone Live, Music Player, Cybershot camera, Messaging, e-mail, Video Call, Calendar, Synchronisation, Stopwatch, Record Sounds, Timer, Light, Remote Control, 5 Alarms, eBay, Facewarp, Googlemaps, Photomate, etc., etc., I can even take 317 photos presently and can increase this to 2,500 photos quite easily, but most of all, I can even make a phone call on it! Brilliant, but it would take a week to read the enclosed instruction manual and I really only want to make a quick phone call. So, I have had to master a new fangled, multi gadget whatsit thingy along with also mastering a second new fangled, multi gadget whatsit thingy all in a very short time. "Due to technical problems", my BRAIN has been severely overloaded almost causing a complete shut down. As technology marches forward we must therefore embrace it. However, we must also use our BRAIN to master this new technology otherwise it's all a useless piece of very expensive rubbish. None of it works unless we use our BRAIN. Your extremely expensive new fangled, multi gadget whatsit thingy car with all it's new technology is completely useless...unless you use your BRAIN.

Anyway, just a thought, my Mother gave my Daughter a little novelty wooden plaque many years ago. It read, "Engage Brain before Mouth" – maybe we should all have a little plaque on our dashboards, "Engage BRAIN before driving"! Please think about that before your next journey.

ERRATUM

AS Kevin mentioned above, the last two paragraphs of his Chairman's Report were omitted from the Spring edition. This was not due to a technical problem, as Kevin diplomatically said, but simply due to carelessness on my part. My apologies to Kevin and all our readers – Ed.

Closing Date for the September, 2010 issue of the Newsletter is Wednesday, 4th August.

All items, whether they are general motoring articles, news of Members, Letters to the Editor, Members Cars, etc., would be very welcome

'STRAIGHT ON'

LOOKING BACK TO THE WONDERFUL SUMMER OF 2010!

By Bill Coltham

WELL I can dream, can't I? Who knows, it might really be that wonderful, BBQ summer we were promised last year. Mind you the Met Office is not going to publish advance forecasts this year, so who knows?

But, seriously, how does our driving change when the weather is warm and sunny, the clocks are back, and the evening extends into early night. Are we better drivers then, or worse? Or doesn't it make the blind bit of difference.

Let's look at it.

Hot, sunny days, busier roads? More traffic, all heading in a carefree way, to the coast, to the adventure parks and to the countryside. Packed with children, uncles and aunts, grandma and granddad, over seated and squashed all together, it's not the best recipe for stress free motoring. The dog is in the back and the picnic is piled high with the electronic gadgets whirring and flickering in the sticky hands of the kids in the back seat. Noise chatter, laughter and tears - all mixed up and aimed at the driver.

And who is the driver? - not the regular commuter with the best knowledge of the workings of the car, but perhaps the second car driver (no sex discrimination here, please), not always used to travelling a couple of hundred miles, more to the shops, to the school and to the gym. Or perhaps to work too, but slower and always in a jam or rush. And the car itself may be the oldest, least maintained and not used to long journeys.

So what happens when you meet the above disaster area on four wheels, sitting in the queue on the A30 at Honiton waiting to blast on to the dual carriageway for Exeter and the House of Marbles? Road Rage, impatience, exasperation, dodgy overtaking and speed all comes to mind here. Lack of attention and poor attention to detail reveals faults in the car, sticky brakes and non adjusted mirrors.

So did we react when we came across this wonderful scenario as we were also driving to the House of Marbles? Or did we give extra distance behind, more space to overtake, and more tolerance to the poor driving of the occupants? Did we live up to the ideals of the IAM red badge?

I really hope we did, and we do!! You have been warned.

Observer Notes

Some excellent passes of the Advanced Driving Test recently, Observers having helped our members to appreciate the finer and safer points of advanced driving. Every month another member takes the test and proves their skills to the examiners. Every month another person is shown to be a safer driver on the roads.

Over the year about 350 hours of Observing with Associates takes place in the area of the Taunton Group. Probably about 30 or so hours to each Observer, although individuals all have differing lives to lead and some can do more than others.

Not only are driving hours given to the group by Observers, they give talks; they attend Regional meetings and national gatherings.

Members attend at 'ad hoc' activities such as shows, and exhibitions. It would be difficult to add up all the 'Safe Driving' messages that have been given out in each year, but it adds up.

Committee members meet monthly for about an hour and a half, planning and sorting out the arrangements for the Group. Add up all those hours for a year, and it comes to a substantial amount!

Training evenings during the winter for Observers and for Associates, some 20 to 25 for each time, and the hours start to really mount up.

So - give yourselves a clap here - our Group is committed and substantial.

Driving for the pure fun of it!

Thinking about the enjoyment of driving, it is usually a motor-cycle thing that we do - out and about for a few hours, just breathing in the West Country clean air, bending the bike through the wiggly bits and honing our skills in the bends.

Do any car drivers do that? I did, but only when I had an MR2, open topped and revvy! It held the bends, no, not as well as my bike, but not bad, and I enjoyed just putting my skills into practice a bit. It really was the nearest thing to a bike, and I was sorry to see it go. I still dream of it!! Here it is.



So you are now an Advanced Driver!!

You've got the certificate, the badge is up on the windscreen, and your family, wife, husband or mum is duly impressed that you are a 'super hero'! You have joined the ranks of the IAM Advanced Drivers, which you have been trying to get for weeks, months, years, or decades. You are one of them or us!! You have arrived and your friends are really, really, impressed- or so they say to your face.

So what do you do now? Off in the car, finger pointing in a relaxed way at the roundel in the front windscreen as you stop at the lights. You mouth 'Advanced Driver' to the person sitting in the driving seat of the next car- a white van driver- who shoots off at the lights and leaves you stationary. He's not impressed at all.



Suddenly it all goes wrong! You miss the gear change as you try to catch the van; you forget the ten to two steering wheel position and swear under your breath! Your speed shoots up to 33 mph, and the speed camera flashes - bother, will I get a ticket?!! It's all gone horribly wrong, hasn't it?

Pulling over for reflection, you look at the IAM badge, still proudly displayed, but your feelings are now a bit mixed. What did I do wrong here?

Well, you reacted! The red mist surged as the white van man failed to respect your new found super hero status, and you completely lost it after that. It happens to all of us - even those who have the coveted Observer tag to their IAM handle. But the badge does remind you that you have a responsibility to the motoring public that you have shown yourself to be just a little bit more restrained than others, and a more selfless, considerate driver too.

But, and a big But, no Advanced Driver is perfect (except me of course!).

Happy Driving.

GROUP OBSERVERS

CHIEF SENIOR OBSERVER

Bill Coltham 01297 631818

TEAM WEST **SENIOR OBSERVER** **& TEAM LEADER**

Colin White 01823 257196

OBSERVERS

Guy Denton
Kevin Grose
Tudor Humphreys **(PAUSED)**
Faye Markham
Alan Thomson
Russ Williams

TEAM EAST **TRAINEE SENIOR OBSERVER** **& TEAM LEADER**

Frank Richards 01823 412916

TRAINEE SENIOR OBSERVER

John Gilbert

OBSERVERS

Ron Holdom
George Parker **(PAUSED)**
John Pentney
Steve Selby
Allan Wellwood **(TRAINEE)**

Group Observers must be fully paid up Taunton Group Members AND fully paid up National IAM members at ALL times to carry out your vital Observer roles. There are NO exceptions. You must always check that your Associate has an up to date membership card before departing on any observed drives. Please try to make and maintain contact with your new Associates, and listen to any concerns or fears they may have. When Associates pass their Advanced Driving Test, PLEASE inform your Team Leader as soon as possible as we have a duty to keep accurate and up to date records. All new Associate Members are normally teamed up with a conveniently placed Observer. If you have or encounter any problems please contact our Chief Senior Observer, Bill Coltham, or the Group Chairman.

TGAM & LOCAL DRIVING INSTRUCTORS

The following IAM & TGAM members are Driving Standards Agency/ Approved Driving Instructors:

Guy Denton 01984 633467 also a TGAM Qualified Observer
Tudor Humphreys 01823 277353 also a TGAM Qualified Observer
Nigel Steady 01278 722944

Members and/or enquirers must establish their own facts and details when contacting a Driving Instructor. If any other IAM & TGAM Full Member Driving Instructors wish to be on the above list, then please contact the Group Secretary or the Newsletter Editor. (Note: You MUST remain FULL IAM & TGAM members at all times.)

MEMBERS PAGE

ADVANCED DRIVING TEST PASSES

CONGRATULATIONS to the following who have recently passed their Advanced Driving Tests.

	<u>OBSERVED BY</u>
Danielle Heaver	John Gilbert
Nigel Steady	Frank Richards
Justin Pepper	John Pentney
Janet Loader	Faye Markham & Colin White
Jos Bennett	Ron Holdom
Caroline Facey	John Gilbert
Janet Franklin	Frank Richards

NOTE: If you have passed the test recently but your name is not on the above list please make sure that you inform Serena Lonton, the Membership Secretary. Also, in a change from our previous procedure, we would, in future, like to present successful candidates with their pass certificates at one of our Members' Evenings.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Many thanks to all those who have renewed their membership so far. TGAM now has 155 fully paid up members, including 16 new members who have joined us since 1st October 2009.

There are still 22 of you out there who have yet to renew your membership from last year, so please don't delay! We need your renewal by 30th June 2010, or sadly you will drop off our membership list. If, however, you have decided not to rejoin the Group, would you please let me know in order to avoid the expense and inconvenience of reminders. Many thanks.

THE MEMBERSHIP REGISTER

THE following have recently joined the group. We hope you enjoy your association with the Taunton Group and we look forward to welcoming you to our meetings, events and activities.

	<u>TOWN</u>	<u>LEVEL</u>
Lynne Strange	Langport	Associate
Arthur Peters	Cotford St. Luke	Associate
Spencer Modica	Taunton	Associate
Nicola Johns	Taunton	Associate
Janet Franklin	Tiverton	Associate
Sam Westmacott	Watchet	Associate
Neil Sutton	Bridgwater	Associate
Meg Winfield	Spaxton	Associate
Bernard Stacey	Taunton	Associate

CALENDAR

All displays, events and talks, etc., are always open to you as Members, your family and friends. We welcome as many new faces as possible to come and join us. We endeavour to make sure that full details are made available in each Newsletter. The latest news on events can be found on the up to date Events page of the Group Website at www.tgam.org.uk or by contacting any of the Committee Members (please see Page 2).

MEMBERS' EVENINGS ARE HELD EVERY THIRD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT HATCH BEAUCHAMP VILLAGE HALL, TA3 6SG, AND ARE OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS, FROM 7:30 PM TO 9:30 PM.
POP ALONG AND SEE WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT OR HAVE A LOOK ON: www.tgam.org.uk

JUNE

10	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members Only)
16	W	7:30 pm	Members' Classic Car Evening

JULY

8	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members Only)
17	Sa		IAM National Motorcycle Conference
21	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening

AUGUST

12	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members Only)
18	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening

SEPTEMBER

9	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members Only)
15	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening

OCTOBER

9	Th	7:30 pm	IAM National Car Conference
14	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members Only)
20	W	7:30 pm	TGAM Annual General Meeting

NOVEMBER

11	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members Only)
17	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening

DECEMBER

4	Th	7:30 pm	TGAM Christmas Luncheon at Oake Manor Golf Club
9	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members Only)
15	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening

TGAM MEMBERS EVENING, 17th FEBRUARY

By Kevin G. Grose

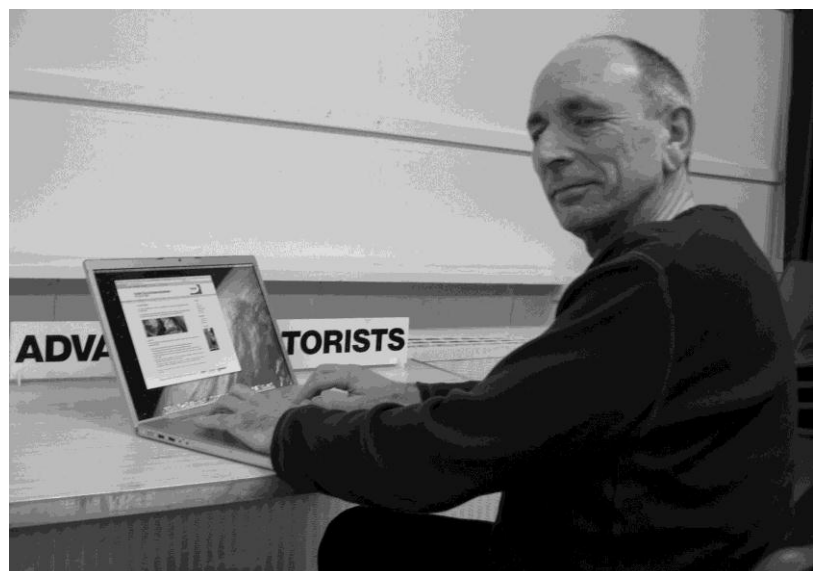
Two for the Price of One

WELL, what a surprise...that was the idea anyway, but it didn't work did it! As it usually all lands on virtually one person to arrange all these evenings, this person, this time, decided to not do anything – or, to many of our Members, that may have been how it appeared apart from those that did turn up anyway and then found they were entertained by not just one presentation, but two enjoyable presentations on the evening.

Two for the price of one – bargain – there, you don't know what you have missed! Only about a dozen Members turned up – this is about half or even a third of the normal attendees on one of our usual Members' Evenings and I want to sincerely thank all those who did make the effort and ventured to the meeting regardless of what was planned.

So, who let who down? Right, I'll own up and say that maybe I let the Members down because I didn't email the majority to let them know what was going on this time around. I couldn't email them because I didn't know what was going on. I didn't know because, once again, it was left ALL to one person to arrange it all again – ME! On the other hand, the Taunton Group Members let us down because they didn't bother to turn up anyway. Remember, these evenings are for your benefit – YOU asked for these evenings – somewhere to meet on a regular basis – somewhere to come along to and ask questions – somewhere to get the answers, meet new Associates and driving/motoring like minded people – they are YOUR evenings...put on for YOU. Right, enough "moaning" for now.

However, those that did attend on the night were firstly enlightened by a presentation by Paul Willits in respect of the new 21st Century www.tgam.org.uk website which I had already arranged on the quiet – the first surprise! By the time you read this, the new site will already have been fully live and up and running for a while – go to: www.tgam.org.uk now and have a look. Tell me what you



Paul Willits

think – all comments valid and welcome. The Taunton Group owes Paul a massive big thank you for all his effort and hard work in putting it all together. We can develop and improve this site and keep it on top form for the future. This is something the Taunton Group Committee have been striving to sort out for ages and now, we have done it – THANKS to Paul.

That was the first surprise of the evening – new website. After the interval for tea, coffee and biscuits then came the second surprise – yours truly gave a PowerPoint presentation on “Counting Traffic – well, someone has to do it!” This appeared to go down well and many questions were asked and debated. This finished the evening in good time and all went home happy. There, another missed opportunity to ask all those questions you needed to ask about the behaviour of the traffic on our extremely busy roads and motorways today.

A big thank you to Tracey, Darren, Patrick and Mary for all your help with the refreshments, etc., and also a big thank you to those who helped set things up and tidied up afterwards. Please remember, that even if details are not on the website or e-mailed to you, the Taunton Group will ALWAYS endeavour to put on something worthwhile to entertain you on the Members’ Evenings – every third Wednesday of the month.

As they say, be there or be square no matter what, otherwise you might just miss something very worthwhile...including FREE tea, coffee and biscuits.

MEMBERS’ EVENINGS

Wednesday, 21st July

Wednesday, 18th August

Wednesday, 15th September

**Fun, entertainment and fascinating
programs, and free tea, coffee biscuits,
parking, your family and friends welcome**

**Further details to be announced
Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall at 7:30 p.m.**

LONG SUTTON W.I., 18th FEBRUARY

By John Gilbert

AS part of our programme of publicising our activities Observer George Parker had arranged to give a presentation of the activities of the IAM and TGAM to the Womens' Institute of Long Sutton. Most unfortunately, due to illness, George was unable to carry out this activity so I stepped in to the breach, and took the opportunity to substantially rewrite my presentation for the occasion.

Much to my embarrassment I experienced difficulties in getting my PowerPoint presentation to open so the ladies gallantly entertained themselves while I tried to sort out my problems. Luckily for me Kevin Grose had also come along so we decided that he should give his presentation instead. Even that didn't go smoothly and Kevin was unable to get his presentation to display on the big screen so he had to deliver it by reading out his slides from his PC screen. The rest of the evening went smoothly, Kevin's presentation being very well received and followed by a number of questions from the floor.

While Kevin answered questions from the ladies I was invited to judge their competition for that month for, appropriately, the best model car. The W.I. subsequently provided a description of the evening to us which had been published in the local newspaper, and which is reproduced below.

"... President, Jenny Trood, welcomed our speaker Mr Kevin Grose, Group Chairman of the Taunton Institute of Advanced Motorists and his colleague Mr John Gilbert.

Unfortunately a technical glitch prevented the power point presentation from working.

While the problem was being rectified Jackie Sherlock regaled us with a tale of her first car.

This encouraged other members to tell amusing anecdotes connected with vehicles they had owned, including an exciting incident on a roundabout in Singapore and a honeymoon spent in a Mini Clubman.

Eventually, Mr Grose gave his excellent and informative talk without the aid of the power point.

He encouraged us to take an assessment session with the Institute after which a "Skill for Life" course could be taken.

The aim is to teach greater road awareness, observation and safety. He was warmly thanked by Jackie Sherlock.

The competition of a toy vehicle was won by Ilona Streeting, second place being taken by Jenny Trood..." – By Correspondent Brenda Meaden

DRIVING AT NIGHT - PART TWO, 24th FEBRUARY

By Bill Coltham, CSO

WEDNESDAY evening, 24th February 2010, and 25 intrepid 'night drivers' turned up for the second part of their Night Driving Training at the Village Hall in Hatch Beauchamp.

'Death by PowerPoint' was the order of the evening again, and a quick run through of the main points that were made on the previous evening, on the 27th January, were highlighted again, mainly for the first time attendees.

Fortunately it was dark, being a triumph of planning by Bill and Alan over the dates! So sorting out the drivers, who goes with who was the first priority, as they made plans for a run through the countryside to Ilminster.

But a catch lay ahead. Go out into the car park and check your lights was the first instruction! Who was going to go out illegal? Only one person as it happened, well done troops, or have you cottoned on to the Bill/Alan sneaky ways of doing things?

But there was more to come - then sit in the car, and the passenger ask the driver (who owned the car and should know all about it) to point out a number of dash buttons - in the darkness. No comment on how it went - but you *were* warned last time!!

Out they went, into the darkness, perhaps never to be seen again. But back too and seemingly still in one piece, no dents and no one admitting to any real mishaps on route. Tea and biccies, courtesy of the domestic staff on duty, Ron Blake and myself, recovering their poise and increasing their blood sugar levels before the turn around and the second run.

Back and chat about the experience - questions and comments. A good exercise, lessons learned (where have we heard that so many times before? Oh, yes, government!) then off home back into the fray on the main roads, and dodging the headlamps on full beam (easy now), the cars on the white line (that's sorted too), and knowing where all the switches are on the dash board and the inside of the car. Easy isn't it?

Thanks for attending, it wouldn't have worked without you, thanks to Alan for his contribution, and to Ron, the domestic goddess who can handle a drying up cloth like a veteran (guess who did the wet bit in the sink?).

Remember to ensure that all sidelights and rear registration plate lights are lit between sunset and sunrise.

Use headlights where required during the hours of darkness, i.e. from half an hour after sunset to half an hour before sunrise.

TGAM & WESTON & MENDIP AGM – 16th MARCH

By Kevin G. Grose

IT was AGM time again, but not ours – it was the Weston and Mendip Group this time. Once again, I was chauffeured by our Group Chief Senior Observer, Bill Coltham and once again, I had to argue with Katy or Suzie on the Satnav over which route was the best one to take! Not really a great problem because I did win in the end. Bill and I decided it must be the web provided downloaded postcode that is recorded as it may be for the old village hall which obviously may have been in a different location to the new hall at our now indicated venue.

As we walked into the smart new hall, Andy Poulton, our local IAM Examiner started rummaging about in his pockets and then commented, “he was looking for a pound to buy me a razor”... “I know times are hard” he said, “but forgetting to shave this morning...!” “Yeh, yeh... budgets are very tight at the moment”. Anyway, after we had established that Bill was actually Bill and not to be confused with someone else who had rung earlier (ask Andy or Bill...), Bill and I made our way into the meeting room, duly signed in and grabbed a couple of seats.

All the usual AGM stuff was completed with new appointments resulting and awards being given. The President, Vernon Mortimer, had obviously been given less time than usual and couldn’t thank everybody individually but made a fine job in the end – even though he was not “officially” allowed to!

A quick break for a cuppa and then down to the Guest Speaker who just happened to be none other than Peter Rodger – “the” Chief Examiner of the IAM. Peter indicated that he didn’t have anything specific to present but he could talk until the next day if needed. Luckily he didn’t. But he did cram a lot in and it was definitely way past 10.00 o’clock before we left. I know we could have left earlier but we had to wait right until the end because we both forgot to buy any raffle tickets – OOOOPS!

We didn’t win anything...no surprise there then, but at least I think we got away with it and no one noticed. Peter indicated that there are many more things on the way; imminent changes, new ideas, plans for Group consultation, items to instigate, lots happening for the better – hopefully.

The journey home was very quiet. I noticed the overall traffic volume seems much less recently – is it really the underhand and sneaky gradual increase on fuel prices causing this or something else? I don’t know but I do know that the motorist is, once again, on the losing end

and paying much more than necessary through the nose and getting nothing extra in return. Anyway, thanks to Bill – my chauffeur, thanks to Weston and Mendip Group along with Peter Rodger for an informative evening, and thanks to Andy Poulton for offering to buy me a razor!

TGAM MEMBERS EVENING, 17th MARCH

By John Gilbert

IN the Taunton Group of Advanced Motorists we have a diverse group of people, many of whom have an interesting story to tell. And so it was at our March Members' Meeting when our Chief Senior Observer, Bill Coltham, regaled us with his experiences in the Kent Police Force during the sixties and early seventies and interspersed his story with a description of some of the vehicles used by that force at that time.

Bill joined the Kent police at Whitstable in 1963. Two years later he moved to Canterbury and became a local police motorcyclist riding an Ariel Leader and, the following year, moved to the HQ Operations Room.

In 1967 he was married to Susan and posted to the Isle of Sheppey where he served as a rural police constable on Ariel and Velocette motorbikes. Following his promotion to Sergeant in 1970 Bill moved back to HQ.



↑ Bill's "woman-pulling" Ford Consul and with his lovely bride, Susan →

Shown below are just a few of the many vehicles described by Bill. Photos are reproduced by kind permission of the Kent Police Museum. For more fascinating photo archives visit the Kent Police Museum's website at www.kent-police-museum.co.uk or, if in Kent, visit them in person at Boiler House No.3, Chatham Dockyard (admission free, subject to volunteer availability).



The Austin A99. Note, there are no bells or two-tone horns fitted.



Hillman Imp on patrol in Maidstone High Street.



Jaguar 3.4 litre patrol car alongside the M20 motorway



Vauxhall Ventora 3 litre Traffic Patrol car



Rover P1 at the Farthing Corner Service Area on the M2 motorway at Gillingham

CLUB PEUGEOT UK, 18th APRIL

By John Gilbert

CHIEF Senior Observer Bill Coltham, Trainee Senior Observer Frank Richards and Observers Kevin Grose, Faye Markham and John Pentney recently spent a Sunday morning observing members of Club Peugeot UK. All of our Observers enjoyed the experience, particularly Bill who had a run in a 1990 Peugeot 205 GTI, a reminder of when GTI were GTIs! (More photos on inside cover.)



Bill Coltham leads the briefing

COURTING THE SUNSHINE

By Alison Budd

BARRINGTON Court, one of the National Trust's hidden gems showcasing Gothic and Tudor architecture side by side, acted as host to a tied event between Club Peugeot UK and the Taunton Group of Advanced Motorists on Sunday, 18th April.

After a briefing led by Bill Coltham, which outlined the work of IAMs and the plan for the day, CPUK members were invited to take a TGAM observer out for a drive in order to benefit from their experience of advanced driving skills. Some Peugeot members are also long-standing members of IAMs but were still of the opinion that the refresher session was very informative. Others were new to the IAM's school of thought but came back having earned both themselves and their cars positive comments.

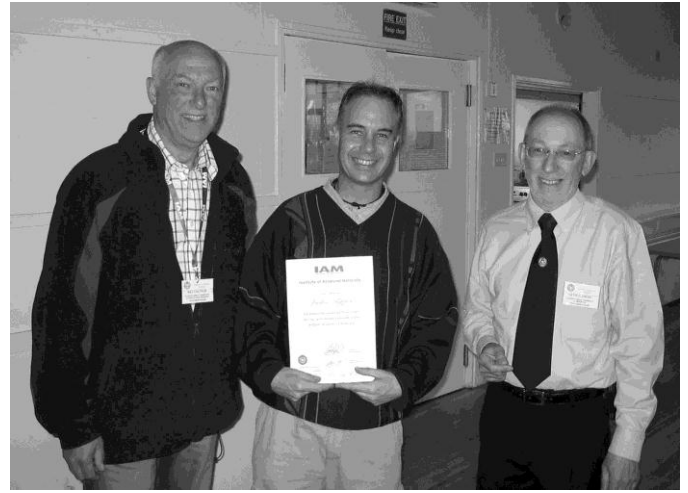
On one of the best days of spring, with the sun shining constantly despite the Icelandic plume of volcanic ash grounding planes across Europe, we showed the strength of the Peugeot lion with vehicles ranging in age from a delightful 1947 202 camionette to the much more recent 406 models in both coupe and saloon variants. Other cars, in age order, were a 1975 304 coupe, 1978 604 saloon, 1990 205GTI, 1995 405 saloon and 2000 306 cabriolet.

I'd like to thank everyone from TGAM who gave up their Sunday morning and know that the Peugeot drivers all enjoyed the day.

TGAM MEMBERS' EVENING, 21st APRIL

By John Gilbert

CONTINUING on with our theme of in house presentations by members of our diverse group it was the turn of our Chairman, Kevin Grose, to take the floor with a fascinating talk on his very varied career, much of which revolved around cars and driving. But first it was time to award two more Advanced Driving Test Certificates to Justin Pepper, observed by John Pentney, and to Nigel Steady, observed by Frank Richards.



Chief Senior Observer Bill Coltham awards Advanced Driving Test Certificates to Justin Pepper (on the left) and Nigel Steady while Chairman, Kevin Grose, looks on

As a youngster Kevin helped his father, an RAF technician, with his cars and at the age of four, he drank a jar of very dirty paraffin while helping on an Austin Ruby – not clever! He also played in his grandfather's scrap yard where he would drive anything with fuel in it and learnt clutch and car control at a very early age.

Kevin acquired his provisional Driving licence at the age of 16 and rode a Honda SS50 motorcycle. He became a Trainee Surveyor with the Somerset County Council and purchased his first car, a 1959 Morris 1000.

After leaving the SCC Kevin worked in the Scrap and Motor Trades as a car salesman, in car auctions, as an MoT tester, a mechanic, sprayer, in body shop repair and as a recovery driver. In fact in 1979 Kevin became the youngest DfT registered MoT tester in the country even though he was, strictly speaking, five months too young to qualify for such a position.

At the same time he helped his father with his removal van and wedding car businesses. The wedding car fleet included such cars as a Cadillac Fleetwood Brougham, an Austin Princess, a Chevrolet Malibu

and a Ford Fairmont. And, as if all of that driving activity wasn't enough, Kevin was also involved in rallying with Escorts and Cortinas.

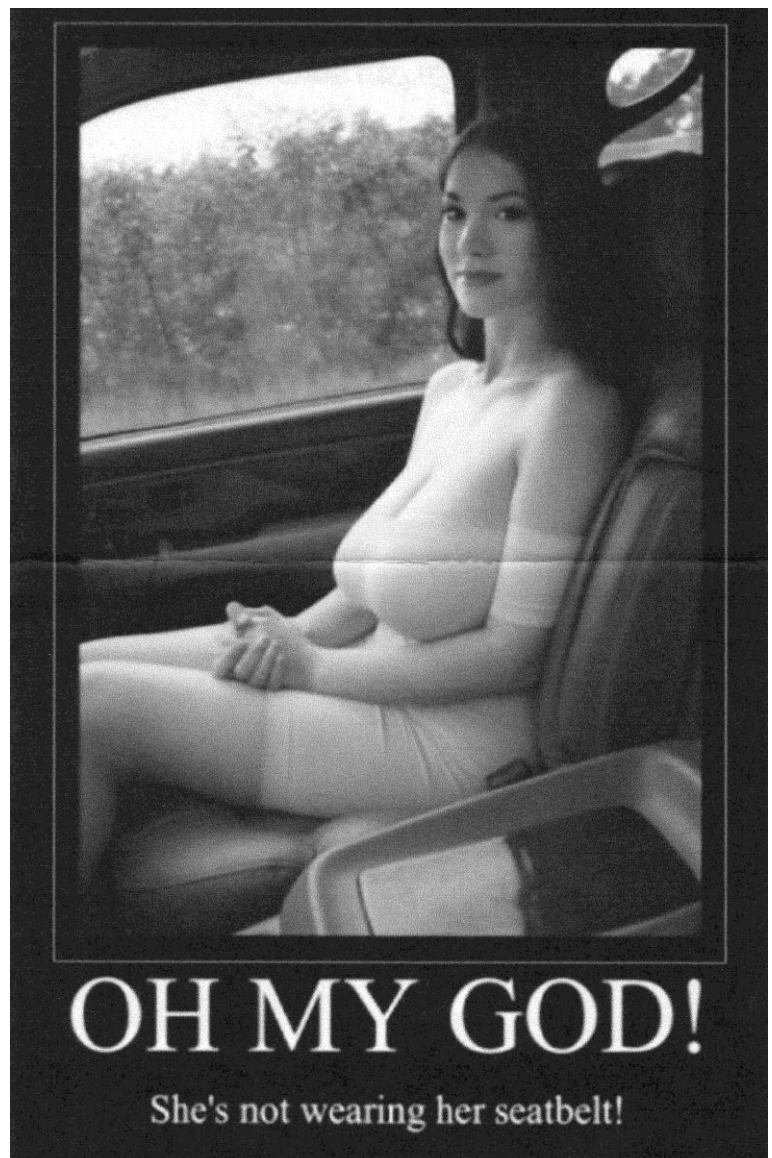
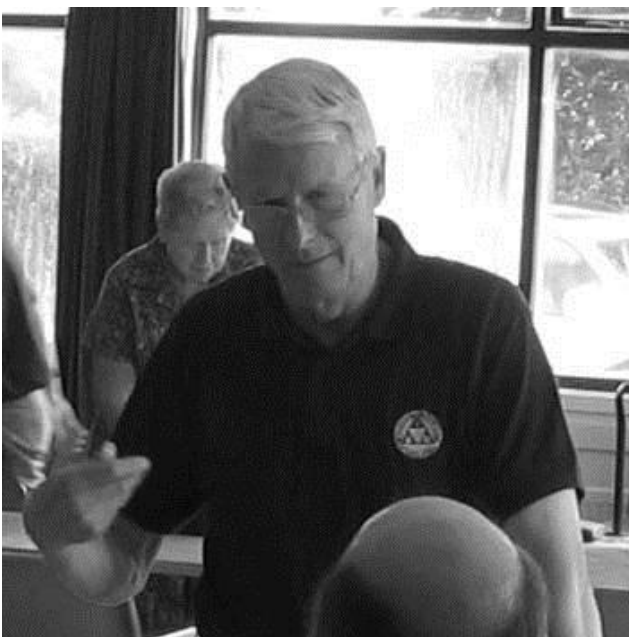
In 1986 Kevin went through another career change to start work in the insurance business with Liverpool Victoria as their south west district Auditor, followed by a short stint with United Friendly. But in 1989 it was back to Surveying.

Yet another career change came later when Kevin started working for the Childcare and Education Section for Legal Services in County Hall. And then, in 2002, he took a job with Leica Geosystems but was, unfortunately, made redundant two years later so it was back to his old survey company, Weatherhills. He is currently involved with part time traffic surveys for a main contractor to the Deptment of Transport.

As for his involvement with the IAM, he joined the Taunton Group in October, 2001 and successfully took his ADT in December of that year. He was also a qualified driving instructor. He became a qualified Observer for the IAM in March of 2004. Before his current position of Chairman he was the Group's Secretary.

DOWN...BUT NOT OUT!

SUBMITTED by our valued Observer, George Parker, with his comment *"Things you notice when you're over sixty"*. I am sure we all wish George a speedy recovery and hope to see him fully involved with the group again in the very near future.



NOSTALGIA CARS OPEN HOUSE, 15th MAY

By John Gilbert

OUR Group is always looking for ways to get our message out to the car driving public so when my Associate, Caroline Facey, provided us with the opportunity to put in an appearance at Nostalgia Cars Open Day we jumped at the opportunity. Although it was a rather rushed, last minute affair four of the Committee, namely Serena Lonton, Frank Richards, Bill Coltham and myself, took turns to man our stand.



XK120 replica (Photo by Bill Coltham)
More photos inside the rear cover

Nostalgia Cars is a company based in Creech St. Michael, founded in 1998, which produces replicas of three Jaguar classics, the C-Type, the XK120 and the XK140 in component form for both factory and home assembly. The replicas use major Jaguar components which are sourced from XJ6 or AJ6 engined donor cars. It has also recently started producing the Ogle SX 1275, a replica of the Mini based Ogle SX 1000.

Our group handed out our publicity leaflets and offered an abbreviated DriveCheck free of charge. Unfortunately nobody took us up on our offer of a free DriveCheck to the dismay of our Observers as we were all looking forward to the prospect of a ride in one of those beautiful classics, but we did manage to hand out a number of leaflets. The nearest we got to actually doing a DriveCheck was when one of the XK120 owners said that he would like to do it but he did not have time as he had a five hour journey back to Wales ahead of him.

Anyway it was a very pleasant day under sunny skies. Our group thoroughly enjoyed watching the activity of classic cars coming and going and demonstration drives being given to prospective customers. At the end of the day the raffle draw was made. There were a large number of very acceptable prizes, all proceeds going to St. Margaret's Somerset Hospice. Although he had already left, Bill won a prize, a Victoria Sponge Cake. The cake was duly presented to him at our May 19th Members' Meeting where the attendees were only too happy to eat it for him. TGAM is indebted to Nostalgia's owners, Chris Boyer and Simon Davis, for allowing us to attend their event.

MEMBERS' MEETING, 19th MAY

By John Gilbert

AS can be seen on Page 15 our Observer team continues to process a continuous stream of Associates and successfully get them through their ADT. At this meeting we had the pleasure of presenting his certificate to Andy Wherrett who passed with flying colours last year. In the absence of our President, Chairman and his Observer, Andy was presented with his certificate by Serena Lonton, our Membership Secretary.

Although the Committee does do its best to provide an interesting speaker at each of our meetings this was, unfortunately, not possible at our April meeting. We were therefore forced to amuse ourselves.

A number of issues were discussed during the evening but the main item was a debate on that eternally controversial and emotional subject of speed. The audience was divided into two groups, those who thought speed limits were, in general, sensible and properly policed, and those



Andrew Wherrett being presented with his Advanced Driving Test Certificate by Membership Secretary Serena Lonton



Group discussion on Speed Limits and their Enforcement, dissenters in the foreground

(the minority) who believed that many currently posted speed limits were inappropriate and current policing methods were not successful.

Each group spent some time building their case and then presented it, via an elected spokesman, to the other group. And who won the debate? I dare not venture an opinion, this debate will go on forever.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FOR my 68th birthday, October 09, my husband presented me with the IAM package. This gift was a great surprise, I had often said in the past that I would like to do the course and as time went on I thought I was too old.

I approached my first drive with fear and trepidation and arranged to meet Faye at Sainsburys car park in Taunton. I had been driving for 47 years so felt I may have many bad habits. Faye immediately put me at ease and off we went. I really enjoyed my drives as around Taunton was new country to me.

Faye went on holiday at the end of January and Colin became my observer. I think he despaired with me at times because I couldn't reverse around corners. His patience was very much appreciated.

Faye returned and my last observation drive was with her and both she and Colin kept saying I would be fine BUT corners were my nightmare. The week before the test I was out every day just reversing around corners.

The test day arrived 19.04.10 and I met Roger Ware at Tiverton hospital (I was so nervous and Colin had suggested I have a glass of wine before, only literally of course and this was before the test but some observation drives).

Well after all that I am pleased to say I passed, of course this was due to the wonderful tuition and support from Faye and Colin. Thank you. One last thought 'you are never too old to learn'.

From a newly qualified advanced driver, Janet Loader.



Latest News

Unfortunately, the Max Control Contest is now closed

The final takes place on Sunday 1st August 2010

Hopefully, one young person under 25 is going to win a NEW car !

Your Taunton Group has been involved since the start of this scheme

Many youngsters have gained experience from TGAM

Full report in our next edition

MEMBERS' CARS

By Frank Richards

I bought my first car in 1964 and since then I calculate that I have driven about 400,000 miles in a variety of cars. Most people in this time will have owned dozens of vehicles. Not me – I calculate my tally is 15, two of which I own at the moment. Neither have I shown much loyalty to one manufacturer. They were mostly 'middle of the road cars' which were bought and sold privately and generally maintained by myself. However as I have got older I have been less inclined to crawl under cars and do my own maintenance. Only one car (which was my first) was bought from a garage and all of them were sold privately through the local paper. After keeping cars for about four years they tend to be about 10 years old when I am ready to move on, which means they are not worth a great deal!

Sunbeam 250 Scooter

Like many people I started on two wheels. My only points on my licence involved this scooter when I was 16 or 17. I was required to stop by a policeman because I went over a solid white line. It didn't help that I could not stop properly and went under his arm!! I still have my motor-cycle licence and in theory I could go and buy a 1,000 cc motor-cycle tomorrow. I am not planning on doing this but I have ridden pillion a few times and quite enjoyed the experience.



A Sunbeam Scooter

Morris 1000

When I was 17 I learned to drive in a Morris 1000 (948cc). I remember having 10 lessons before taking the driving test. I also had the opportunity to gain experience by driving my father's Morris 1000 (properly accompanied). Sadly I never owned one of these cars but there are still quite a few surviving.

VW Beetle 1200

My first car – for some reason I can still remember the registration number (KC 4880). Colour – Red. I cannot remember much more about it except that it was the only rear-engine car I have had. There was not much room for luggage in the front where the spare wheel was.



A VW Beetle

Hillman Minx (Rootes Group)

I bought this car from a work colleague. I remember this car being very reliable and that I did a lot of miles in it. It had a bench front seat with the handbrake on the right by the driver's door. (Rootes Group cars had a good reputation - Chrysler took them over in 1967)

Triumph Vitesse

Vitesse means speed and I suppose it was quite fast bearing in mind it only had a 6 cylinder 1600 cc engine and was capable of 100 mph (allegedly). Later cars had a 2 litre engine. It was based on the Triumph Herald and had a forward opening bonnet. Mine was blue with a white flash along the sides. They were famous for having an amazing turning circle of 25 feet- no three point turns as you just turned around in one. I remember mine had some fairly serious rust – perhaps that's why there are not many around today.



A Triumph Vitesse



A Mk 2 Cortina

Cortina Mk 2

I think this car was the newest car I have ever owned – less than three years old. It was a reps car with lots of miles on the clock. We drove it to Spain on two occasions. A friend of mine had a 1600E at the time which was a lot more desirable.

Riley Elf

I worked in Bridgwater at the time and we needed a second car. The car was really a Mini with a few more 'knobs and whistles' than the basic Mini. A Wolseley Hornet was also produced with a similar specification. I wish I still had this car.



A Riley Elf

If you would like to feature your cars in a future issue please let the Editor know – Thank you



A Triumph Dolomite

Triumph Dolomite 1850

I bought two of these, not at the same time. They were known to blow cylinder head gaskets, I can personally vouch for this. I recently saw a picture of me driving one of these cars in an IAM manoeuvring competition at Exeter.

BMW 520

I am not sure why I bought this car except that with two small children I needed something bigger than normal. It was a very basic car with few extras. I remember filling it up with unleaded petrol in France instead of leaded which it didn't like. The person who bought it from me managed to write it off.

Rover 216

My first Rover car is not particularly memorable - bland but reliable. I do remember having to put chains on it once when we were driving in the Alps.

Vauxhall Carlton

This car had a good load carrying capacity. However it did let me down in Dover when we were driving to the Alps on a ski holiday. Under the AA 5 star scheme we were given a Mercedes to take abroad and my car was relayed back to Taunton. They never did find out what the intermittent problem was. I sold it after 3 or 4 years for not much less than I paid for it.

Rover 800

This car was even larger than the Carlton and was used by me to carry items such as fridges and a four drawer filing cabinet across the back seat. It was appropriately decorated with ribbon and used as a wedding car when we were married.



A Rover 800



Frank's 2.5L Vauxhall Omega

VX Omega 2.5

I think I must have developed a liking for large cars. This had a six cylinder engine and was very smooth. It was the only car with automatic transmission that I have had. I remember the 'Sport' mode being very useful to overtake. It was also used on more than one occasion to transport an excessive amount of wine back from Calais. The Police had a number of these in their fleet for use on the motorway.

BMW 525 Tourer

This is one of my current cars and has the largest load carrying capacity of all my vehicles. It has proved to be very versatile for carrying large awkward loads including a chest freezer to Dover a few weeks ago. The milometer now reads 173,000 which is nearly in the 'inter-galactic' category. However it is not necessary to top up the oil between services and so hopefully will keep going for a while yet. I have a detachable tow hitch which I use for a bicycle rack on occasions.

MGB GT

(Most people know that MG is short for Morris Garages). This is my other current car and is now 30 years old and can be seen at the group's classic car show on Wednesday, 16th June at Hatch Beauchamp. With only 58,000 miles on the clock it is in good condition and is kept in the garage and only brought out on dry days. I have the full service history together with receipts for every nut and bolt purchased. I understand that most parts are available on a next day delivery basis. Unfortunately it does not qualify for free road fund tax.



Frank's MGBGT



Frank's wife's Audi TT

Audi TT Quattro 225

This does not really qualify as one my cars as it is my wife's car. I do however get to drive it sometimes. It was featured on the cover of the newsletter last year in the snow. Four-wheel drive is very useful sometimes and the performance is good for overtaking but you cannot carry a chest freezer in it! (225 refers to the bhp - not the top speed.)

My next car

I have not decided yet but as I have had my BMW for more than four years I think I will be making up my mind soon. It is likely to be a touring or estate model and German. It could also be my first diesel. I plan on keeping the MG though.

LADIES...HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

By Faye Markham

DO you fancy a bit of excitement in your life? Something new and satisfying?

Now that I've got your attention, may I suggest that you consider being an observer for the IAM? STOP! Don't turn the page or start reading another article. Hear me out, please!

When it was suggested a few years ago that I should become an observer I freaked out at the idea. I enjoyed being a member of the IAM, loved the talks and the meetings and made new friends with whom I shared a love of driving. But, of course, had it not been for the dedicated efforts of the observer who helped me pass the ADT, these happy experiences would not have been possible. It was suggested to me that by becoming an observer myself I could at least pay back the hours of time and effort that had been spent on ME, even if I only took the trouble to help one person pass. This attack on my conscience proved successful and I completed the next available course. It was fascinating and informative and not at all intimidating.

When my first associate passed the ADT the satisfaction I felt was so intoxicating that I decided there and then to do 'just one more'. And so it has gone on ever since. My associates become real friends. Our observers' courses are interesting, and we are regularly updated by police examiner colleagues who give us the benefit of their advice in a relaxed and good humoured manner.

At present we have eleven observers, and I am the only female. We really need to redress this imbalance. In my opinion we ladies have qualities and skills – and sometimes a different approach – which may be of great benefit to the more nervous driver, especially those who are lacking in confidence. So, can I persuade you to at least come along to the next observers' course? And at the end of it no-one is going to force you to become an observer if it isn't for you. But I bet you will enjoy it and find it a most interesting and informative experience.

If you don't, I'll eat my copy of this newsletter.

Please submit all contributions for the September 2010 issue of the Newsletter to The Editor (see Page 2 for contact details) by Wednesday, 4th August. Thank you. All contributions, whether they are articles or Letters to the Editor, will be most gratefully received.

A FEW **FACTS** TO THINK ABOUT

By Kevin G. Grose

- FACT: The IAM is the largest independent road safety charity
- FACT: 73% of people would report on elderly friends or relatives if they had concerns about their driving standards (IAM online poll)
- FACT: 68% believed mandatory re-testing of drivers over the age of 70 would benefit road safety (IAM poll 1,628 IAM Members)
- FACT: 77% thought young drivers presented a greater risk to road safety than older drivers
- FACT: 8% of drivers are over 70 and are involved in 4% of injury crashes, but 15% are in their teens and 20s, and are involved in 34% of injury crashes
- FACT: Although under 25s make up only 9% of the driving population, they are involved in almost 25% of all crashes that cause death or injury
- FACT: During 2008/9, the Highways Agency attended 42,895 incidents, 24,000 were routine, 7,500 needed immediate response with 33 fatalities and 180 serious injuries
- FACT: IAM Fleet and Drive & Survive are now one single company
- FACT: Cycle training more important than helmets – IAM poll (6,000 members)
- FACT: 95.58% (IAM poll) would approve of additional public money to be made available to make cycling safer in the UK
- FACT: Coventry City Council is spending £250,000,000...yes, 250 million pounds on fitting dimmer switches to all of its 28,000 street lamps over the next 25 years
- FACT: £2,500 – maximum fine for an illegal tyre (per tyre) AND 3 points on your licence (per tyre) – better check yours NOW
- FACT: Some Fire Engines cost £500,000 each, that's half a million pounds
- FACT: The DfT are looking to reduce speed limits for vehicle under 7.5 tons (70 to 60 mph) and minibuses and small coaches (70 to 65 mph)
- FACT: Cardiff City Council spent £2,000 on an 8ft long cycle lane
- FACT: A driver in Ayr, Scotland was fined £60.00 for blowing his nose
- FACT: A roof box can cost you 20% more in fuel consumption
- FACT: Smooth driving can save 15% in fuel consumption, against an aggressive driver
- FACT: Correct tyre pressures can reduce fuel consumption by 5%
- FACT: Reduce fuel consumption by 15% - switch off your air conditioning and heated windows

MOTORING MISCELLANY – FINALE

By Don Hendy

IT is now 1978 and I am 48 years of age. And I have been offered a job as Assistant Manager working in an office of around 50 people. So it is with some trepidation that I board a flight from Heathrow to Miami, where I change planes and land in Grand Cayman with my wife and youngest son Stephen.

Everything goes according to plan and upon landing I am met and escorted to a hotel. After a brief stay there I locate a 3 bedroom bungalow on Walkers Road, which is just a short distance from the High School which comes complete with a gardener. He is very efficient and every December he comes along and cuts down a hibiscus hedge which is in full bloom. Despite protestations from my wife he insists on this decapitation annually.

My son settles down in his new school and Sheila joins the Pink Ladies, which is an American version of the Women's Institute. Our chosen church is Elmslie which is on the waterfront and it is United Reform. They are anxious to form a youth group and a Scottish Minister asks me if I will act as captain of the troop. Luckily he has a wealth of experience so the First Cayman Boys Brigade is formed. Luckily I am assisted by two families who enrol their sons. After a few years we learn that BB is to celebrate its centenary in Scotland and we start fund raising. Around 15 boys and 8 adults go on the trip and after a brief stay in the home counties we board a train and head north.

In the early hours of the morning we are taken to the BB camp in a field near Scone Palace. As some of the coloured lads have never been outside the West Indies it is a shock to be sleeping in a cold tent and I go along to the HQ to plead for more blankets.

On our return to Grand Cayman we learn that the Queen is due to visit Georgetown and our troop is invited to march in the parade and one boy has the honour of opening the door of the limousine for the Queen to alight.

I meet up with Olive Miller who is secretary of the Council for Social Services. She hands me details of a classical musician who is offering to visit the island and give a concert so with another couple I book a hall and get tickets printed to raise funds for charity. This proves a great success and I contact Young Musicians of the Year and send out invites for them to come and perform in the West Indies. Over the next few years we held regular concerts and formed a Music Club with a choir of around 24.

One of the groups who came was the Endillion String Quartet who are now world famous and still performing in the UK.

Does this guy ever do any work I hear you ask? Well yes the office was booming with plenty of new clients walking in, many were carrying large sums of banknotes which they wanted to deposit in order to "launder" their ill gotten gains and they were politely shown the exit. Even some of the respectable clients were in the habit of carrying bank notes and I would send them down to the bank who charged a 1% handling fee as plenty of forged banknotes were in circulation, so every one had to be carefully scrutinised.

My wife acquired a sunfish boat which I could carry on top of a Ford Fairlane automatic car and I purchased a 17 foot cabin cruiser which I kept on a trailer outside our apartment at Northwest Point. Every weekend I went scuba diving or took my family water skiing.

After ten years of this idyllic lifestyle my wife said she wished to return home to the UK to see more of our children and grandchildren. I gave my boss one year's notice and we took a vacation of three and a half months visiting Fiji, New Zealand, Australia. Hongkong and Red China, Japan and India.

Our health was in jeopardy in India and we picked up Delhi Belly. On one of our flights we met up with a pharmacist who gave us a small supply of Immodium tablets which eased our problems and we were able to buy more in Kashmir, where we were staying on a houseboat. Upon reaching our home in Guildford I was hospitalised and had major surgery to remove gall stones and Sheila took months to overcome her intestinal parasites. SO I RETIRED AT 58 YEARS OF AGE.

JUNE MEMBERS' EVENING MEMBERS' CLASSIC CAR EVENING



**Wednesday, 16th June at 7:30 pm
at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall**

MEET YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBER



Name:	John Pentney
Group Position:	President & Observer
Drives:	Skoda Octavia TDI, Skoda Fabia saloon; also son's Ford Granada Mk2 2.8 and Ford Mondeo Mk3; railway pump trolley
Current Job:	Retired museum officer (Archaeology and Documentation)
Hobbies:	Travel in UK and Europe, historic buildings especially medieval castles, medieval history, museums, railway history and travel, industrial archaeology
Pet Likes:	Driving mountain roads in Wales, the Welsh Marches, the NHS, cats, rabbits
Pet Dislikes:	Austin Allegros, hot-air hand-dryers, Marmite, porridge, Wagner, impenetrable jargon, misuse of apostrophes, stupid bureaucracy, cramped modern railway carriages, calling railway stations train stations, speed humps, car parking charges, absurd speed limits, religious fundamentalism ... cont'd p96
Retail Therapy:	New and secondhand bookshops
Favourite Food:	Turkey roast, curry, risotto, fish and chips
Favourite Drink:	Whisky, gin and tonic, most liqueurs, bitter shandy, fruit juices, bitter lemon
Favourite Writers:	Thomas Hardy, John Buchan, Malcolm Saville (children's author)
Favourite Actors:	Alan Bates, Edward Fox, Robert Hardy, Michael Kitchen, John Nettles
Favourite Actresses:	Sinead Cusack, Amanda Root, Greta Scacchi, Imogen Stubbs
Dream Date:	Has to be my wife Josephine
Best TV Programmes:	<i>Dad's Army, Last of the Summer Wine, Morse, Midsomer Murders, Lewis, Foyle's War, Frost, Waking the Dead, Silent Witness</i> , classic costume dramas
Best Films:	<i>Far from the Madding Crowd; Tess; Dr Strangelove; It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World</i>
Best Group/Singer:	Janet Baker, Maria Callas, Renée Fleming
In car radio/CD:	Classic FM, orchestral and operatic CDs

NOSTALGIA CARS PHOTO GALLERY



An XK120 awaits delivery and three XK140s for sale at Nostalgia Cars



Nostalgia's Jaguar C-Type replica

WOULD YOU LIKE TO:

Improve your driving skills

Pass the Advanced Driving Test

Help lower your car insurance premiums

Make driving an enjoyable experience once more

Safeguard your life and the lives of loved ones you transport from place to place

Meet new friends

YOU CAN DO ALL THE ABOVE, AND MORE, FOR ONLY £139

For more details contact the IAM at 020 8996 9600 or enquiries@iam.org.uk

or talk to the Chairman of your local Taunton Group, Kevin Grose, at 07788 863981 or chair@tgam.org.uk



www.roadsafety Somerset.org.uk