

**IAM**  
DRIVING ROAD SAFETY



# TAUNTON GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS NEWSLETTER

Number 119

Summer, 2011

[www.tgam.org.uk](http://www.tgam.org.uk)

# PHOTO GALLERY - CARS OF 1981



Ferrari 512BB



Ford Escort RS (Photo by Przemyslaw Jahr)

# TAUNTON GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS NEWSLETTER

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#### **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.

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Committee meetings (for Committee Members ONLY) are held at 7:30pm on the second Thursday of the month at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall. 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.

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## ADVERTISING RATES:

Commercial Ads:		Personal Ads:	
Full page	£10.00	Full page	£3.00
Hall page	£7.50	Hall page	£1.50
Quarter Page	£5.00	Quarter Page	£0.75
Small ads:	£1.00 per line	Small ads:	Free

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

## CAUSE AND EFFECT

**By John Pentney, M.A.  
President**



"...Gary Hart is probably driving motor vehicles on the public highway again while his victims and their families have had their lives blighted..."

IF I were a terrorist, of the non-suicidal variety, and planted a bomb timed to detonate so that I was several miles away at the time of the explosion, I would be just as guilty of the resultant death, injury and destruction as if I had remained at the scene. However, the simple and obvious logic of such a statement seems to have escaped Gary Hart.

Just over ten years ago early in the morning of 28 February 2001 on the M62 at Great Heck near Selby in Yorkshire, Hart fell asleep (despite his denial) at the wheel of his Land Rover which was towing a trailer loaded with another car, and crashed down a bridge ramp onto the East Coast Main Line. Shortly afterwards a passenger train struck the wreckage and was partially derailed, but with the enormous amount of energy in a 500-ton train travelling at 125mph, carried on for about half a mile, still basically upright, until it struck a set of points and was deflected into the path of a 1700-ton freight train travelling in the opposite direction on the other track at close to 60mph. This secondary collision, with the highest closing speed of any British rail crash estimated at 142mph, resulted in the deaths of six passengers and four train crew plus injuries to a further 76. That there weren't more fatalities is a tribute to the strength of modern railway carriages of monocoque-construction (ie without a separate underframe).

Not surprisingly, Hart was convicted on ten counts of causing death by dangerous driving and served half of a five-year prison sentence. It emerged that he had been up most of the night before the crash talking on the phone to a woman whom he had just met over the internet, and was therefore sleep-deprived. He had also been speeding on the same journey. He even tried to blame a vehicle defect for causing him to swerve off the motorway, but forensic examination ruled this out. All this did not stop him suing, unsuccessfully, the Department for Transport alleging that the Highways Agency had not extended the nearside crash barrier far enough down the bridge ramp. His insurance company had to meet claims in excess of £22 million from the train companies and the former Railtrack for the damage caused to their

property and for personal death and injury.

Nonetheless, Hart seems to be largely in denial and unrepentant about the lethal consequences of his irresponsible and dangerous driving. Earlier this year, the press reported him as claiming that the secondary collision between the passenger and freight trains was nothing to do with him because it occurred several hundred yards away from the site where he crashed onto the railway line! This despite the obvious fact that the two trains would have passed each other on the up and down lines in total safety, but for his actions causing the first train to derail. It was simple cause and effect: his dangerous driving was the cause and the effect was death, injury and severe damage to railway infrastructure and rolling stock. That most of this occurred at a little distance from the initial impact of the train with his car and trailer is utterly immaterial in deciding the ultimate responsibility and blame. If he really refuses to accept his liability, Hart is an illogical, insensitive and arrogant idiot as well as a dangerous driver. His prison term has evidently not succeeded in making him face up to the consequences of his actions.

Gary Hart is probably driving motor vehicles on the public highway again while his victims and their families have had their lives blighted. He clearly lacked the responsible approach of those who have made the effort to undertake advanced driver training which is as much about adopting the right attitude as driving techniques.

## **JUNE MEMBERS' EVENING**

**Presents**

# **A CLASSIC CAR EVENING**



**Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> June at 7:30 pm**  
**at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall**

# FROM THE CHAIRMAN

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

**By Kevin G. Grose**  
**Chairman**



"...The IAM suggest 'Get them [your offspring] the best car you can' – I suggest, 'It may save their life'!..."

Short, sharp and to the point...well, that's enough about me! I am trying to keep things to a smaller scale, so here goes; I've been unwell recently – read all about it elsewhere; it's summertime and that brings many distractions – read all about it elsewhere; we have had quite a few excellent Members' Evenings recently – read all about it elsewhere; SL & KG have attended the RLF AGM @ BAWA...no idea what I am talking about – read all about it elsewhere; new IAM leaflets available – read all about it elsewhere.

Is your headrest/restraint adjusted correctly? If not, read all about it elsewhere; are you a Pratnav?...ok, I'll keep this short – do you wear flip flops? Have you heard of Dave Shenton? Did you buy your offspring an old car or a newer car? Do you know you can get a Porsche for £199? Well, you can read all about it elsewhere!

There – short, sharp and to the point – eleven interesting titles to the fuller stories, done in two paragraphs – all you have to do now is find them all throughout our excellent award winning Newsletter.

As I'm a nice guy, I'll help you with a few to get going – the IAM have arranged for some lucky youngsters to have a Porsche for £199! Yes, £199 – no Dad/Mum – you can't have one for £199 as you have to be between 18 and 25 years old; it's only for ONE day I'm afraid and you have to hand it back at the end of the day – interested? Go to [www.iam.org.uk](http://www.iam.org.uk) and look at IAM Young Driver Skills Day – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2011 – Porsche Silverstone – you may have missed this one but get ready for the next one!

Now be perfectly honest, how old is your offspring's car? According to a very recent survey nearly 50% of men under 20 years old who were involved in a KSI (killed or seriously injured) incident were driving a car over 10 years old! Blimey – I drive a 27 year old car and a 15 year old car but it's perfectly ok as I am just over 20 years old...anyway, my parents wouldn't buy me a car – you want a car, buy it yourself, so I did – you can see I didn't have much to spend!



Anyway, the serious side is learners learn to drive on NEW or almost NEW cars; pass their DSA driving test in a NEW car and then drive a 10, 15, more, year old car and usually crash it – we have gone straight from a NEW car with all the latest gizmos, gadgets and safety features to something that might not even be really roadworthy...and then wonder why they crash it? Why not try and help them buy a newer car – a safer car, less likely to break down or fall apart – they may even be a bit proud and look after it better and not treat it like a shed – no comments about my Astra Estate please – it's a very shiny, useful shed! The IAM suggest "Get them the best car you can" – I suggest, "It may save their life"!

Dave Shenton is now Head of Field Operations. Dave now has "responsibility for managing the delivery of the IAM's Advanced Test, by leading the Group Support team of Regional Group Coordinators and the Staff Examiners team" – there, you now know who Dave Shenton is – the Taunton Group wish Dave all the best in his new important IAM role – I know he's a bit of a biker but we do like bikers as well and we all like Dave because he drives a car also!

Headrest/Pratnav/Flip flops...these are all very recent News Releases from IAM HQ – go to the website: [www.iam.org.uk](http://www.iam.org.uk) and have a look – you can sign up to receive new releases at any time.

Briefly – is your headrest/restraint correctly adjusted? Not sure, seek help – ASK! Do you rely utterly on and obey your SatNav? Even when it tells you to turn right travelling over a bridge – don't be a Pratnav – use your common sense BEFORE you have an incident – a 2 metre wide car will NOT fit down a 1.5 metre lane, no matter what your Satnav tells you! Do you drive in flip flops? Do you drive in wellingtons? Do you drive in very high heels (ladies of course)? Well, this time of year, flip flops are worn by the cool people whilst driving their cool cars – hey man, I look cool. You will not be quite so cool when your flip flop slips off the brake pedal and you ram into the back of farmer boy's Land Rover especially when all you have done is knock all the dust off his bumper but also proceeded to demolish the whole front of the 15 year old car your parents got you after passing your DSA test, whilst looking at your Pratnav and your neck now hurts because you threw the head rest in the boot because it didn't look cool...and you get fined for wearing INAPPROPRIATE footwear and the insurance company then decide not to pay out because of this! OH DEAR...! Flip flops cost £1.99 to £5.99 – car costs £1,000 to £5,000; insurance costs £1,500 to £2,500; penalty points costs ?; fines cost ? Flip flops are NOT cool to drive in – they are only cool by the pool, so please wear proper footwear at all times whilst driving no matter how uncool they look!

# 'STRAIGHT ON'

## By Bill Coltham Chief Senior Observer

Come on...You didn't actually think that picture of the Vietnamese Pot Bellied Pig was me did you?



DON'T be silly, it's only a representation of what I am going to witter on next.

Do you live in the country? Yes, most of us do, with some living in the real countryside- the rest in the villages and towns in Somerset and Devon that pass for the nearest thing you can get to real country.

And what is prevalent in the countryside? Animals of course.

Wild and domesticated, farm and useful transport animals like cows, sheep and horses. Birds, farm bred fowl, ducks geese, kestrels, and other delightful flying beasts.

What do you do when you have blasted your way around our country roads- have had the thump on the bonnet or windscreen and see the poor lifeless blackbird motionless at your feet.

That's easy, you chuck it into the hedge with a regretful sigh and drive on.

But it's not quite the same when you hit a cow, is it? The car is now a mangled wreck and the cow is rubbing her head saying "what was that then?" ...I and you are wondering what to say to the farmer who is standing over you with a shotgun.

Well you do have some protection- of sorts. If an animal is an animal as defined by the Road Traffic Acts, Section 170, then you are required to act under the law and report, exchange names and addresses, in many ways the same as for any injury accident involving a person.

So what are these animals? A horse, cattle, ass, mule, sheep, pig, goat, or dog. Any other animal and you don't have to. It's tough being a squirrel.

**And the Pot Bellied?  
Needs to be reported if you  
hit one, of course- it's a pig!  
And it might be a first!**

**1981-2011 30 YEARS OF  
ROAD SAFETY TRAINING BY TGAM**

## ***Modern technology***

***YES, I think we have got there at last. The Land cruiser has gone, five years old and depreciation of only 45% in that time from new, it was a wrench to see it go. But 30mpg was not a wrench to give up - particularly when I now get 50 mpg on regular occasions.***



***So what did we get? VW's fairly new Tiguan-140bhp diesel with DSG gearbox. A 'what' I hear some say?***

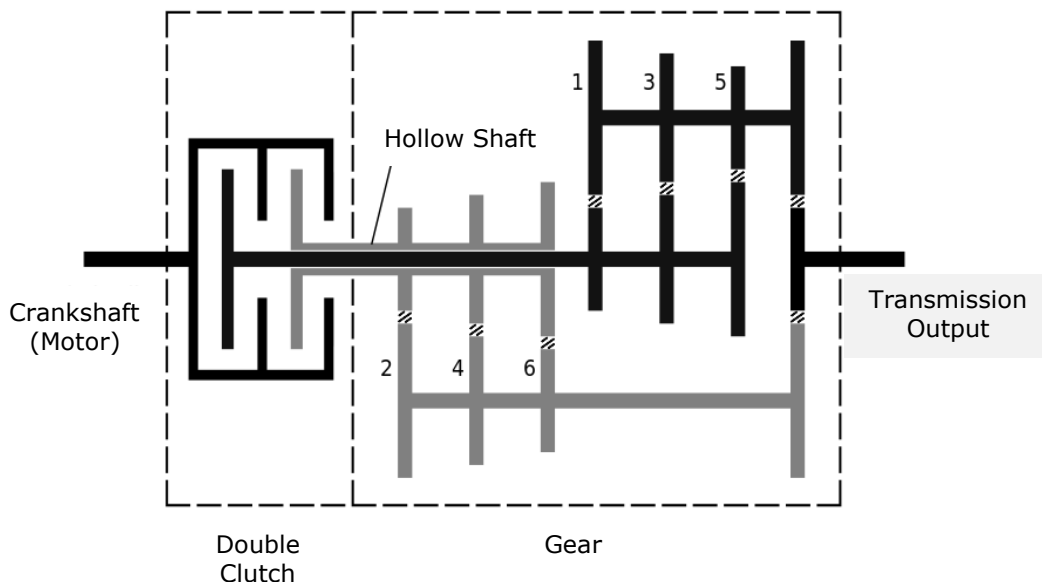
***A Direct Shift Gearbox. You must know what that is and does. No, nor did I! Below is the official version as per VW.***

### ***Direct Shift Gearbox***

TWO independent gearbox units make up the DSG. With dual-clutch technology - two clutches in a common housing - both gearboxes are connected under load to the engine in turn, depending on the current gear, via two drive shafts. Clutch 1 serves the first gearbox unit with 1st, 3rd, 5th 7th and reverse gear and clutch 2 the second gearbox unit with 2nd, 4th and 6th gear. An output shaft that applies the torque to the driven wheels via the differential gear is assigned to each gearbox unit.

Thanks to the dual-clutch design the DSG is more efficient than conventional automatic transmission. This efficiency, together with its low weight and intelligent control, means that DSG can achieve the same, and in some instances better, fuel consumption, than a manual gearbox or even lower, depending on the style of driving.

The control unit does the thinking for you, using information such as engine speed, road speed, accelerator position and driving mode to select the optimum gear and to determine the ideal shift point. The hydraulic control unit then implements the shift commands in a sequence of precisely co-ordinated actions.



### Split-second gear changes

When one gear is engaged, another gear is always preselected. Within four hundredths of a second after the system detects a gear change it opens one clutch and closes the other. The mechatronics unit ensures that this takes place fast and to a level of accuracy that would not be possible in a manual transmission. The change of gear is imperceptible to the driver who is merely conscious of the uninterrupted power.

***So you have it from the horse's mouth here. All I can tell you is that it is a marvel, seamless power and barely perceptible automatic gear changes. What happened to the torque converter? Out of date I hope.***

***Next time, 'How I worked out how to use the Park Assist! ' Happy summer motoring, in whatever mode of transport you choose.***

**MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARY!  
30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY LUNCH  
SATURDAY, 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER  
OAKE MANOR GOLF CLUB**

# GROUP OBSERVERS

## CHIEF SENIOR OBSERVER

Bill Coltham 01297 631818

### TEAM WEST

#### EAST

#### SENIOR OBSERVER & TEAM LEADER

#### LEADER

Colin White 01823 257196  
55919

#### OBSERVERS

Guy Denton  
Kevin Grose

### TEAM

#### TRAINEE SENIOR OBSERVER & TEAM

Alan Thomson 01460

#### TRAINEE SENIOR OBSERVER

John Gilbert

#### OBSERVERS

Ron Holdom  
John Pentney

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

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

# MEMBERS' PAGES

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

**By Serena Lonton**  
**Membership Secretary**



"...Many thanks for your continued support..."

MANY thanks to you all for renewing your membership with TGAM this year. As at 08<sup>th</sup> May 2011, we have 140 fully paid up TGAM members, including 10 new members who have joined us since 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010.

The numbers are a little down on last year, probably mostly due to the economic climate we find ourselves in, but it is still a healthy position and we fully appreciate and value your support.

However, we are now fast approaching a new membership year. October 1<sup>st</sup> seems a long way off, but it is surprising how quickly it arrives, so please make a note to renew with us. For a very modest subscription you not only get the chance to enjoy our monthly Members' Evenings, but our absolutely brilliant award-winning newsletter! Our Editor, John Gilbert, greatly appreciates input from YOU – the members, so your contributions will be warmly welcomed.

If however you decide not to rejoin TGAM, would you please let me know in order to avoid the expense and inconvenience of reminders. Many thanks.

Please tell your friends and family about us – give them our newsletter, and bring them along to our Members' Evenings where they will enjoy an informative and entertaining evening, along with FREE tea, coffee and biscuits – spread the word! Many thanks for your continued support – and most of all, safe and happy motoring.

## 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>
Daniel Harding	Cannington	Associate
Louise Watson	Wellington	Associate
Philip Brimson	Holford	Associate
David Horne	Ashill	Associate
Peter Hammett	Taunton	Associate
Christopher Dann	West Buckland	Associate

## ADVANCED DRIVING TEST PASSES

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

Tony Brown  
Daniel Harding

### OBSERVED BY

Colin White  
Ron Holdom

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.

## EDITORIAL

### 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY, ADVERTISING, ETC.

**By John Gilbert**  
**Newsletter Editor**



"...the TGAM Newsletter will now accept advertising..."

AS you are probably aware by now, this is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year for the Taunton Group of Advanced Motorists. The main event will take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> October when there will be a celebratory lunch at the Oake Manor Golf Club. We do hope that as many of you as possible will come along to this event. To recognize this landmark the Photo Gallery in this issue is dedicated to cars of 1981 vintage, perhaps you were driving one of these cars at that time.

After having received some enquiries the committee have decided that the TGAM Newsletter will now accept advertising. If you, or anyone you know, would like to advertise in the newsletter please see Page 5 for the scale of charges.

You will see from this issue that we have recently had a number of very interesting presentations at our Members' Evenings, and there are more in store in the coming months. If you have not been attending our meetings do consider doing so, they are all free, including the refreshments.

As ever I would like to appeal for more articles from the general membership. Most of the material is still being produced by a very small number of contributors. I would particularly like to see interesting and original colour photos for our colour Photo Gallery. Thank you.

# 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](http://www.tgam.org.uk) or by contacting any of the Committee Members (please see Page 4).

**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.**

## JUNE

9	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members only)
15	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening – Classic Car Evening
29	W		IAM Track based Skills Day at Knockhill

## JULY

14	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members only)
20	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening – Bread Making

## AUGUST

11	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members only)
17	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening – IAM/HQ Issues
18	Th		IAM Track based Skills Day at Mallory Park

## SEPTEMBER

2	F		IAM Track based Skills Day at Croft (N. Yorks)
8	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members only)
21	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening

## OCTOBER

1	Sa		30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon at Oake Manor
13	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members only)
18	Tu		IAM Track based Skills Day at Silverstone
19	W	7:30 pm	TGAM Annual General Meeting

## NOVEMBER

10	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members only)
16	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening

## DECEMBER

8	Th	7:30 pm	Committee Meeting (Committee Members only)
21	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening





**NOW...**

**...COME TO THE THIRTIETH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
TAUNTON GROUP OF  
ADVANCED MOTORISTS**

**1981 - - - 2011**



**Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> October  
at Oake Manor Golf Club**

# **REGIONAL LIASION FORUM – JANUARY 2011**

**By Kevin G. Grose**  
**Chairman**

ONCE again, the Regional Liaison Forum (RLF) was held reasonably close to the Taunton Group, so yours truly and your Group Secretary, Serena Lonton, made our way to the venue known to some as Clay Pigeon between Yeovil and Dorchester. Its proper address is Southern Counties Shooting Lodge, Wardon Hill, Evershot, Dorchester, Dorset and what a splendid venue it is. It is also the spot where Jensen Button started out go kart racing many years ago on the accompanying go kart track beside the shooting range – I hope the two never cross!

However, this time we were instructed at late notice to attend at the brand new George Albert Hotel complex recently built right next to the Shooting Lodge. Well, what can I say – a truly wonderful venue, maybe as far as faultless – everything was just right, especially on such a very cold day – my Astra “shed” continued to indicate a constant temperature of between 0.5 and 3 degrees all day – I think that is cold enough for all of one day.

Down to business – sign in, pay up, grab tea or coffee, find seat, sit down and listen. So far, so good. Usual stuff – various reports, etc., then straight on with the main presenter – Patrick Doughty.

Who you may ask? Yes, Patrick Doughty, the new Operations Director from IAM HQ. This man appears to be a “car” man having spent 30 years working with General Motors amongst other things. He gave a concise and fairly honest account of what is needed to be done. He listened to our views on what is needed to be done. He promised to consider and deliver if possible, those needs and gave a fairly honest probable time scale. Mr. Doughty appears to know what is needed and time will tell if he delivers – but remember, it is not only him who needs to deliver – we need to deliver also; IAM HQ needs to deliver; our Observers need to continue to deliver; our IAM Examiners need to continue to deliver; IAM products need to deliver; all the IAM Groups need to deliver; the Group Committees need to deliver and finally, all the IAM Members need to deliver.

Deliver what? By deliver – I mean unstinting full support from all and every quarter to move the IAM forward. If everybody makes a full commitment to their Group and to IAM HQ, then the IAM as a whole will move forward. No more them and us – where have we heard this before? But it appears that IAM HQ have merged many different “avenues” of their past and current business. This makes for better efficiency – better efficiency means more proactive – more proactive

means more productive, things can only get better – no please don't start to sing Tony Blair's Labour campaign song of old! We can all makes things better by all pulling together.

Right, break for an excellent carvery lunch – first class service and meal and then all back to the main function room. At this point, all the bikers split from us car lot and we go our separate ways. Roger Jewell, RLF Chairman, finally got his laptop going...and we enjoyed a long running, fully filmed, commentary drive given by a leading Devon Road Traffic Police Officer. Various questions and answers were dealt with and then the bikers rejoined us for the final "wash-up" as they call it. The official day's events over, Serena and I grab another cup of tea whilst chatting to many other various members from the other Groups present. We finally left – "shed" temperature reading 0.5 degrees and made a safe journey home.

A very enjoyable day – valid, proactive and informative. Excellent venue, hospitality, food, service and surroundings. Could have done with some of the famous glorious Dorset sunshine but then, nine out of ten can't be too bad. Let's hope year 2011 is the year that the IAM really strive to move forward – we can all help and do it.

### **Clay Pigeon Shooting**

'Southern Counties Shooting' is now the largest shooting ground in the country with over 450 fully automatic traps offering all the major disciplines. As well as catering for the serious competitor, our qualified instructors are close at hand for novices to make sure everyone has an exciting, safe day out, or provide businesses with a great experience in 'team bonding' or corporate event.



### **Go Karting**

'The Clay Pigeon Raceway' is a professional kart racing centre with a 815 metre circuit hosting regular British and National Championships. We also offer the opportunity for the novice to experience the speed, excitement and drama of kart racing. Corporate karting is available too, with any numbers of drivers between 10 and 60 racing for trophies.

# MEMBERS' MEETING, 16<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY

## By John Gilbert Newsletter Editor

AFTER some preliminary notices our Chairman, Kevin Grose, introduced our speaker for the evening, Jim Newman, the Road Safety Coordinator (Motorcycling) of the Somerset Road Safety Partnership (SRSP). Joining Jim from the SRSP were his colleague, Colin Webster, and Rina Cameron. Jim started off by stating SRSP's main aims which are to reduce casualties and to provide safer roads. He then detailed some upcoming changes to the Partnership.



Jim Newman (right) and Colin Webster

Jim then provided some statistics of Road injuries (both slight and serious) and fatalities for Somerset over the four year period up to 2009. This showed a fairly constant number of fatalities over the period but a reduction in the number of total casualties. It was noticeable that powered two wheelers (PTW) made up about 30% of fatalities even though they only made up about 1% of total miles travelled. The trend for PTWs was similarly to that for all vehicles, steady fatalities but a reduction in the total number of casualties. An interesting statistic was that one Bridgwater Motorcycle dealer had suffered a 42% reduction in new motorcycle sales compared to last year and a 20% reduction in used bike sales due to the current economic conditions.

The group's tasks include investigating collisions and finding patterns, and then devising solutions. The solutions include education and engagement with riders (i.e. Jim, Colin and Rina going out to talk to motorcyclists), engineering, and enforcement.

Next Jim mentioned some of the problems facing motorcyclists. It was mentioned that 60% of car/bike collisions are the fault of the car driver. Potholes were cited as a major concern but, due to the present state of the economy, this situation was unlikely to improve in the near future. Bends are considered to be a major problem; if a motorcyclist

gets into trouble then there is a need to speed up or lean more but this is counter intuitive. Left hand bends are particularly dangerous, any misjudgement tending to throw the motorcyclist into the path of oncoming traffic.

Considering all of these problems then why do bikers ride? Jim explained that it was for the thrill, exhilaration, and camaraderie (they are a sociable bunch), they consider that it takes skill, and for hero worship. He then classified riders into the seven groups below:

**Car Rejectors:** This is a group of 10% of motorcyclists do not want a car, actually they don't want a bike either, they ride with a high state of anxiety but choose to do so because of commuting costs. They have an accident rate of once in every 34,000 miles.

**Car Aspirants:** This is another group of 11% of motorcyclists who really don't want a bike, they would really rather have a car but cannot afford one. They do not have a good sense of risk and have an accident rate of once in every 25,000 miles.

**Riding Hobbyists:** This 14% of the riding population tend to be older and married and ride in summer only. They trend to avoid risky situations and have a much lower accident rate of once in every 56,000 miles.

**Riding Disciples:** They are 16% of riders who, again, tend to be older and have partners. They are likely to join IAM or RoSPA, ride big bikes, wear high visibility jackets, and are keen on safety. They have the best safety record of one accident in every 58,000 miles.

**Performance Hobbyists:** This 15% of the riding population tend to be younger males who are solitary commuters and pleasure riders who tend not to bond with other bikers. They have an accident rate of once in every 40,000 miles.

**Performance Disciples:** They consist of 8% of the biking population. who ride all the year round, are interested in performance, attend track days and wear leathers. Their accident rate is once in every 50,000 miles.

**Look at Me Enthusiasts:** The largest group at 25%, they ride colourful bikes, wear tinted visors, and need to look good, image is important. They have a high accident rate of once every 29,000 miles.

Rounding up the presentation mention was made of other things that Jim and Colin get involved in. They go out to local bike groups and put them through various exercises. You can't stop a bike as quickly as a car so one exercise is to lock both wheels to halve stopping distances. This exercise is done in a controlled environment and is for people who don't want to do IAM or RoSPA, but just want to survive. They also go out to colleges to check mopeds and do bike safe courses; roadcraft in the morning, out on the road in the afternoon. Colin is also the Chairman of a local RoSPA group.

# YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW

**By Kevin G. Grose**  
**Chairman**

DID you know that your Taunton Group President and Chairman were invited to join the Army recently? No, don't believe it - but it's the truth. Apparently, the invites inferred we were both "influential figures within the community"...yes, John and I have cracked it – maybe fame and fortune bestowed upon us at last!

But hang on a minute – you might think there may be a catch to either get us both to join up or cough up some money for a good cause...well, one of those thoughts did happen and as John and I are still here, you can guess which one! Anyway, what could the Army want us for? What could we really offer? How could we help?

After being cleared by security...several times, we were corralled into a reception area and duly offered free drinks along with casual talk with a diverse section of the Army ranks which I believe we both found enlightening and interesting. Once all the invited guests had finally arrived, we were lead into an adjoining conference centre for the main event and a jolly good, finely engineered event it was.

The Army presented themselves with a fairly honest, informative and slick programme and I mean that in the best possible taste as I firmly believe this was not a specifically prepared "public" version of events that may hide some true facts of war and other encounters.



The presentation was well managed with changing informers with spot on information being displayed on three large projectors screens. The seats were very comfortable and the room was ideal for this type of scenario. There were approx 150–200 people there but it did not feel overcrowded. The Army personnel conducted themselves politely and impeccably at all times no matter what occurred – prompt effective efficiency displayed at its best.

It appeared the “influential figures” were chosen from a very diverse section of the community with certain trades and professions where the Army may be more involved – i.e. ex-servicemen, locally connected employers, the Territorial Army, volunteer groups and many more. We were being “sold” today’s Army and they “sold” it well. We only see what we see in the papers and hear what we hear on TV but do you believe all that hype – do you really believe it?

It appears that Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and our adjoining counties supply a major amount of today’s Army – OUR local lads and lassies are out there defending our freedom where ever that is needed in the world and a truly fantastic job they all do. They constantly put their lives on the line so we can live our lives safely, day in, day out and I think we should all sit back and think for a minute what that really means in the real world we now live in.

Without their continued input and support everyday, where would we be? Their commitment to defend and defeat the enemy and then engage, encourage and rebuild war torn countries is something that can be beyond normal comprehension, but they do it and they do it well and therefore, they need all the support from the general public they can get and maybe that’s where John and I come in.

Maybe that’s why we were invited – we were both very pleased that the modern Army even thought we could help in any way – it’s a privilege to share some time with “our” Army and they certainly have my full support in whatever they are instructed to do, where ever that may be in the world because without them, the Air Force, the Navy and all our other related services, where would we really be? Would we enjoy our freedom as it is now? Would we be living as we do now? Would we really be free to do as we generally please? I don’t think so and we therefore owe a great debt to all those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for us all, by giving their lives for us so that we can continue to live our lives in relative peace. Thank you, all you lads and lasses of the British Army.

Don’t worry, John and I didn’t join up so we are still here to help all those ex service drivers and other drivers who need our guidance and help to improve their driving standards – RIGHT, by the right foot, quick march, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, pay attention, LOOK AHEAD, observation, observation, observation, LISTEN, LOOK, OBSERVE and DRIVE - RIGHT, forward counter attack on the left, charge down the middle and around the right flank – put your foot down and let’s get home for tea!

By the way, “In the Army Now” by Status Quo is one of my favourite record tracks – watch the video – it’s very informative and realistic.

## **MEMBERS' MEETING, 16<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

**By Kevin G. Grose  
Chairman**

OUR presentation on the March Members' Evening was all about Shelter Box. David Guy, a member of the Axminster Rotary Club, kindly agreed to enlighten us for the evening on the subject of Shelter Box. You may have heard about them before, but do you really know what it is all about? I didn't for sure, but I knew they are usually mentioned when there is an international disaster around the world. Earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, where ever there is complete devastation, Shelter Box will be there.

We were informed that Shelter Box was started in Helston, Cornwall by Tom Henderson from the local Rotary Club. It came about when the need for food, water and shelter for displaced families were urgently required – a make shift temporary home for a family maybe up to 6 months to enable them to support themselves.

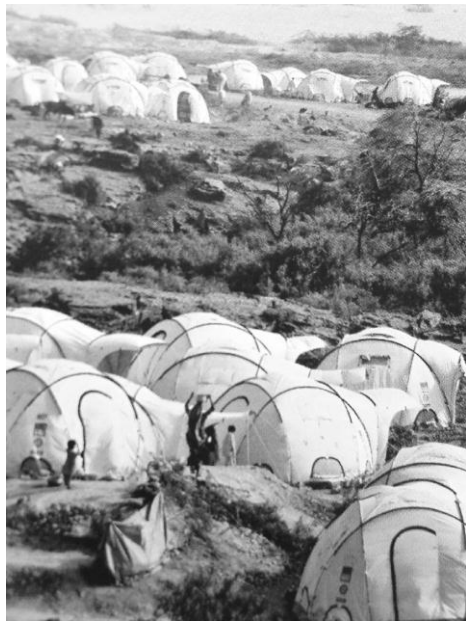
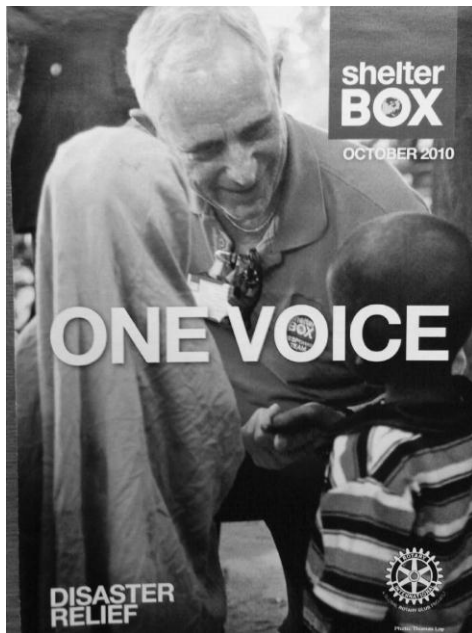
The initial set up was such a success, it then began to be rolled out throughout the 33,000 Rotary Clubs around the world. As the local Rotary Clubs were already in place, many were the first point of contact when a disaster occurred. Most Rotary Clubs have influential members who really know their locality and key contacts.

They can get things moving very quickly as the need for a Shelter Box is obviously a life saving experience. Within 48 hours of a disaster occurring, a consignment of Shelter Boxes could be in place, on the ground exactly where they are needed to help.

They cost about £590 each – that appears a lot but it does contain a full size easy to put up tent – I know because I helped assemble one in the hall along with David and our "helpers" – it also contains a multi fuel stove, water filtration kit, axe, saw, hammer, tools, wind up radio, cooking utensils, and many more very basic items to ensure you can get fuel for the stove, you can cook something, you can drink safe water, you can shelter yourself, you can listen to radio broadcasts and information, etc. The boxes are adjusted to accommodate different countries and different disasters – brilliant!

All this happens with volunteers and donations from the public and there are now 18 branches around the world all coordinated by the head office in Helston, Cornwall. Some more figures – 143 Shelter Boxes to first disaster, 28,000 Shelter Boxes to Haiti, 1000 to Pakistan North and 1000 to Pakistan South during recent floods, in 2010, 45,000 Shelter Boxes to 17 countries, Madagascar, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, South America, Panama, Bolivia, Brazil, etc., and now Japan – 5,000 are ready to go now (Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011) and all this





takes place with only 8 employees at Helston HQ and the whole army of volunteers through the world who help out. There are many more figures and facts but the main issue is the quick response and life saving equipment that gets to those who really need it – they may have nothing else and I mean nothing else – everything is gone, they only have what they are wearing – that’s it, nothing else...think about that for a moment and then you may realise what a Shelter Box really means – “it does exactly what it says on the can” – it’s a box containing a shelter!

As repayment for David’s effort and time, a collection bucket was made available and at the end of the night a grand total of about £107 had been raised, so a very BIG thank you to you all who contributed on the night. I think we all learnt a lot in a short time.

Thank you David, Bill Coltham for arranging the evening, Axminster Rotary Club and all the Rotary Clubs throughout the world for their consistent effort and time given to supplying such a worthwhile item. If you need any further information, please go to the Shelter Box website: [www.shelterbox.org](http://www.shelterbox.org) or contact their donation hotline on: 0300 0300 500 – you can also volunteer to help pack boxes, etc., just go to their website or ring their number – you will be very welcome to go and help out and see what it is all about. Thank you.

## MEMBERS' MEETING, 16<sup>th</sup> MARCH



BEFORE the start of David Guy's presentation on Shelter Box Rina Cameron, Coordinator for the Somerset Road Safety Partnership (SRSP) was presented with her Advanced Driving Test Pass Certificate. Rina had passed with flying colours scoring 25 "ones" and just 2 "twos". Very well done indeed, Rina

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## REGION 1 OBSERVER TRAINING DAY, 2<sup>nd</sup> APRIL

**By Allan Wellwood  
Observer**

AN early morning start to attend the IAM Bristol group training on 2<sup>nd</sup> April saw me key into TomTom the postcode for BAWA (Bristol Aerospace Welfare Association) in Filton. While happy with my map reading abilities, I do find TomTom useful when driving alone to unfamiliar places especially in towns and cities and a lot safer than trying to map read and constantly looking out for road signs.

After passing factories bearing the great names in the aircraft industry, Rolls-Royce and British Aerospace, I arrived at the BAWA club house where the training was to be held. Upstairs, I met up with Observer John Gilbert and Trainee Observer Geoff Worby, who had arrived earlier, and joined them in a welcome cup of coffee. Andy Poulton commenced the proceedings by asking all attendees to give a brief introduction about themselves, demonstrating again what a diverse organization the IAM is. Andy's presentation did not disappoint and entertained, in his individual style, the assembled predominantly male audience with driving anecdotes. He then showed the IAM film on 'How not to be an Observer', stopping and starting it to allow for audience participation and to make his points. Following on from this we split up into groups of three, one Bristol IAM trainer with local knowledge to stop us getting hopelessly lost and messing up the tight schedule, and two others. I was paired up with two senior observers, each having about 17 years experience of observing, which was a bit daunting for a 'rookie' like me on my first associate. They were however very welcoming and encouraging.

The driving part of the day was broken up into four sessions; two in the morning and two in the afternoon, where you acted first as Trainee Associate and then as Observer, returning to base in between to partake of a quickly eaten excellent buffet lunch.

We'd opted for country drives rather than town work and set off through very pleasant



Delegates awaiting the start of the programme, Allan and Geoff sitting four rows back

unfamiliar countryside. I have to say my first drive was not one of my best (nerves?) but my experienced co-drivers gave constructive comment and advice throughout. What it did show me was the differing styles of training and driving that other groups appear to have, with a definite emphasis on bringing fun and enjoyment into your driving.

When the roles were reversed, it was difficult to find anything of real significance to pull 'my associate' up on, as he delivered an almost faultless commentary and drive. It was somewhat reassuring however, that even he crept over the speed limit during the drive until he felt the combined eyes of his co-drivers focus on the speedo and then on him whereupon he gently braked to return to legality!

The exercise was repeated in the afternoon over different drives where I felt much more relaxed and delivered a much better performance. With the benefit of our Bristol group trainer's local knowledge we finished the two afternoon session bang on time at 4pm. A quick debrief and swapping of notes was followed by Andy closing the day and giving thanks to all those involved in the organisation of the event.

I would thoroughly recommend that observers and trainees participate if they get the chance – travel does indeed broaden the mind. I picked up a lot of tips and advice that will hopefully improve my observing. It was a long and intense day but I left feeling that I had learned a lot but that there was still 'work in progress' to achieve the driving levels of my senior observers that day. My thanks to them.

## **REGIONAL LIASION FORUM – 16<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

**By Kevin G. Grose  
Chairman**

EVERY year there are a few meetings of the RLF and we also have an RLF AGM. This year, the RLF AGM was held at the BAWA. SL & KG attended the RLF AGM at BAWA. I know you are now thinking, what on earth is this idiot talking about? Some might think that all the time, but here goes – I'll try and explain all those capital letters!

RLF equals Regional Liaison Forum. This is a meeting of some group representatives from all the IAM Groups – Car and Motorcycle Groups throughout a nationally declared regional area. We, the Taunton Group, are in Region 1 which covers an area from Cornwall to Dorset, Wiltshire, Gloucester and South Wales – it's a big area.

These representatives from all the IAM Groups in this area, meet to argue, fight and generally disagree with everything that goes on...!

So, there we have the RLF explained and of course, every year there is a major meeting called the AGM – annual general meeting and that makes the RLF AGM! We are getting there. Next BAWA- this is the venue: British Aerospace Welfare Association – BAWA, this is an excellent venue situated at Filton, Bristol just down the road from the home of Concorde, Filton Airport, Filton College, BAE Systems, Rolls Royce, Bristol Sorting Office, etc.

We are now left with SL & KG – easy, Serena Lonton and Kevin Grose – there, all done and I now hope the title has been fully explained. The meeting took place on Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> April from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm and Serena and I represented the Taunton Group to listen, discuss and convey the thoughts and maybe decisions made at this meeting. We then roll out any relevant information to the Taunton Group Committee, Group Observers and to our Group Members. We can also take information to the forum so it works both ways. It appears the Region 1 RLF is well supported and active in its role – this is just not another level of bureaucracy where nothing actually happens.

There are many changes ahead for the IAM and for local Groups – who really knows what the future may hold but we have to move with the times. So there we go, all explained – not bad, I suppose five paragraphs to explain five small abbreviations. Thanks, BFN!

**1981-2011 30 YEARS OF  
ROAD SAFETY TRAINING BY TGAM**

# MEMBERS' MEETING, 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL

**By John Gilbert**  
**Newsletter Editor**

THE presentation at our April meeting was given by Member Andy Mayes. He started off by explaining why it was inevitable that he would become a lorry driver. He was born in a fire station, fire engines becoming his toys. He went to school opposite a United Dairies depot and became mesmerized by artics. Although he lived in London he spent long holidays on a Somerset farm where they had Fordson Major tractors, and he learnt to drive there. He drove cars from the age of 12.

After leaving school he started an apprenticeship in Bristol and attended Filton Technical College gaining a City & Guilds qualification followed by a Technicians Certificate at the age of 19 at Bristol University. He gained an Institute of Motor Industry qualification at the age of 21.

His work experience started at Steels Garages, continuing at ShellMex/BP at Avonmouth, where he learnt to reverse tankers. He started Somerset County Commercials with four others as Service Manager, opening up the workshop from scratch, and stayed about 10 years. He then went to Derby as a service manager on Toyotas. He then started teaching at Taunton Technical College, not just on motors but also football. Next to Toyota Somerset but eventually came redundancy. Having a mortgage to pay but also having a Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) licence he signed on with an agency. This led to a position as a driver assessor and becoming involved in accident examination. He ended with his latest job driving artics for Wincanton who have a contract, amongst many others, to haul Argos trailers.

Andy then went on to talk a little about the safe and fuel efficient operation of trucks, why they are limited to 56 mph (fuel), and some aspects of driving HGVs on motorways and around roundabouts in particular. Finally he set us a little competition, Brian Howe and Patrick Lang winning model trucks kindly supplied by Andy.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WHEN John asked me to apply for my test, I quietly hoped that my application form would get lost in the post for a while. No such luck, a letter arrived in the post all too soon advising me that an examiner would be allocated to me within three weeks of receipt of the letter.

Just imagine my surprise when an examiner phoned me only one week later to say that he could do the test that week! After I had composed myself and realised I couldn't buy any more time, we agreed a date. I hoped for lovely weather, familiar territory and easy to read roads with hardly any traffic.

It wasn't a good start when I couldn't find the McDonald's car park we had agreed to meet in. I had never come off the M5 at that particular junction in Devon. It was pouring with rain so I was pleased that my examiner had observed me coming into the car park and once I had parked, jumped into the car.

I was very nervous and kept wondering why I had put myself in this voluntary stress situation. The reason is because of my job, I have been driving and have been a passenger with police drivers and driving instructors and I always ask them to comment on my driving as I want to improve. After years of observing and getting tips about my own driving, I finally wanted to find out how polite they had been about my driving and get an objective view!

The test drive took me through totally unfamiliar territory and for most part in the rain. The drive seemed to last forever and I have never been so pleased to see the McDonald sign again. The post-test debrief of the points the examiner wrote down during the drive were all discussed in detail and various pointers given on how to improve and as well as perfect driving systems and certain situations, which was really helpful. It is great to get the benefit of a professional's experience and advice on how to improve one's driving. As a driver you have to be able to deal with so many different instances and sudden changes safely, swiftly and efficiently.

There are a multitude of factors which influence the way we drive and react to hazards. Anticipating these and learning to read the road as well as anticipate what other drivers might do within the IAM driving system is an excellent way to improve one's driving standards.

I'm very grateful to the IAM and especially to John Gilbert who with gentle insistence and guidance has shown me a way which has made my driving safer and more enjoyable. Making progress has a completely different ring to it now. The only problem is that I have to find a way of introducing the IAM to some of my friends who could do with some 'friendly' IAM advice without losing them as a friend!

**Rina Cameron**



**By Rina Cameron**  
**Somerset Road Safety Partnership**

RECENTLY the Somerset Road Safety Partnership has launched the Route Sixty+ package, which is aimed at giving advice to the more mature driver when needed on a variety of different subjects in order to keep them driving safer for longer.

It will cover items such as driving licences, Highway Code, medication, night driving, vehicle improvements and eyesight tests.

It will be presented in the form of a road show at various locations throughout Somerset by staff from the Road Safety Partnership, the Fire and Rescue Service and the Police.

People attending will also be able to find out information about home fire safety visits, mobility driving aids, Heartstart a basic first aid course and crime prevention advice.

In addition to this they will be invited to have a free one-hour driving refresher with an approved driving instructor at a time and location which suits them.

All drivers who attend a workshop will be given a free information pack including a hi-vis jacket for use if they should be unfortunate enough to brake down.

For any further information please contact the Somerset Road Safety Partnership office on tel. No. 0844 98 000 28 or e-mail [roadsafety@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafety@somerset.gov.uk)

## **JULY MEMBERS' EVENING**



**PAUL YOUNG**

**(TGAM Associate)**  
**on BREAD MAKING**

**Wednesday, 20th July at 7:30 pm**

# HOW MUCH IS YOUR SAFETY WORTH?

**By Kevin G. Grose**  
**Chairman**

DO you know the IAM have a range of products from £15 to £460 to help towards your own safety? Got a bicycle, then spend £15.00 and become an IAM Cycling Member. There are three stages: CycleCheck, CycleRide and CycleRide+, all ages/ability.

£25 will get you a DriveCheck – work towards being a better driver, an hour long assessment drive with a local IAM Group Observer with a comprehensive written report at the end. All you need is to be 17+ years with a legal vehicle - £25 – bargain!

£30 – RideCheck for all you motorcyclists – one hour ride with IAM Group Observer with a comprehensive written riding report at the end. Do something about your riding ability...NOW - £30.

£35 will get you a DriveCheck55 – aimed at the “older and wiser” Motorists. Like the normal DriveCheck but undertaken with an IAM Qualified Examiner. One hour drive, comprehensive written report. Improve your driving for only £35 – make a start now.

£40 for the youngsters – Momentum Young Driver Assessment, an initial online assessment along with a 60 minute on-road general assessment by IAM Qualified Examiner finishing in a written report.

Help your offspring/grandchildren/nieces/nephews start on the road to safer driving. £40 could drastically save their life...now.

£139 – the IAM Skill for Life package either in a car or on a motorbike. This is the FULL course – really what the IAM is all about. Full support from your local IAM Group and your own IAM Qualified Observer to guide you through the necessary to bring your driving/riding skills up to the required standard to undertake the IAM Advanced Driving Test. This is high standard for only £139.

Lastly - £460 is the fast track option of the IAM Skill for Life package. In a couple of weeks, you could be taking your IAM Advanced Driving Test. This is intensive and requires absolute dedication and commitment. £460 – still not a lot to save your life along with others in the long run. Time is money, as they say.

Oh, there are also various Track/Skill days from £189/£239 so don't say the IAM don't have a lot to offer – I think they have an absolute huge lot to offer at all prices, £15 to £460 – bargain!

**BOOK YOUR COURSE ONLINE AT**  
**<http://www.iam.org.uk>**



# THE ROYAL WEDDING

**By Kevin G. Grose**  
**Chairman**

I think we should congratulate William and Kate on their recent marriage. We appear to now have a couple of connected and considerate members of the Royalty who are actually admired and revered by the general public. The recent ceremony was excellent, well organised and not too over the top and YES...I did watch it all the way through (I have been ill you know).

I mainly watched all the various modes of transport from old Rolls-Royces to newer Bentleys, Jaguars and Range Rovers, the old carriages of many different styles, the Police Escort Motorcyclists, the fleet of VW Minibuses, the many horses, etc., but mainly the way they all proceeded along the preset route and of course, William and Kate leaving in the "old man's" classic Aston Martin complete with balloons, ribbons, bunting, etc., brilliant. Did you note all the excellent driving skills displayed by all the car, van drivers, the horse riders, the carriage drivers and of course, our Metropolitan Police Force Motorcyclists – all IAM/RoSPA Advanced Certificate holders, I bet, displaying to all the outside world, how it should be done – slow, controlled and evenly paced – excellent.

It appeared to be a normal wedding day albeit on a grander scale but not out of touch with reality. People were genuinely emotional and I therefore sincerely wish William and Kate all the best for the future whatever that may hold for them, especially as the "new generation" of Royalty that can connect with us, the general public.

I was married once to Princess Anne...not that Princess Anne, another one – she went off with a pauper! I think she is still floating around in the Bristol docks somewhere...still on a boat, I hope!

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## IS THIS FOR REAL?

**By Kevin G. Grose**  
**Chairman**

I read some interesting reported details recently in my local daily newspaper but I am not sure that they are the true facts. The report stated that 154,000 motorists were "clocked" speeding by 42 volunteer teams using their hand held speed cameras 748 times throughout Wiltshire villages during the year 2010. 4,807 were speeding and received official letters from the police along with 9...yes, 9 receiving penalty points.

Are you telling me that out of 154,000 recorded "speedsters", only 9 were actually penalised or officially reprimanded, 9 out of 154,000?

4,807 out of 154,000 is not a lot – about 3% - that's 3 out of every 100 whereas 9 out of 154,000 equals about 0.006% which sort of makes a complete mockery of everything in place to curb the alleged constant excessive speeding of ALL us motorists.

The report does say "154,000 motorists were clocked speeding" yet only 9 were officially acted upon with court repercussion. If the facts are to be believed, it tells many stories: firstly, 154,000 motorists may have been clocked by the volunteers but were they actually deemed speeding given the new guidelines nationally introduced and being adhered to by the Somerset and Avon Constabulary and many other Police forces recently?

It now appears you can travel at 42 mph in a 30 mph zone; 53 mph in a 40 mph zone; 64 mph in a 50 mph zone and 75 mph in a 60 mph zone and get away with it before a prosecution route involving points or a fine is considered. You can also travel at 86 mph on the motorway and get away with it before anything serious is instigated.

These new guidelines have been signed up to, by 37 police forces so far (April 2011) and beggars belief, the reason why the volunteers actually bothered – were they told about the guidelines? Are they not, now, completely wasting their time?

Another story it tells is – who is on whose side? Do the police condone or support speeding? Do the police condone or support the volunteers? Are the volunteers clocking anything and everyone doing over 30 mph? Why bother when you can "legally" do 42 mph in a 30 mph zone? Are they NO deterrent at all? The list can go on and on and on but I have always firmly believed that 30 mph means 30 mph; 40 mph means 40 mph; etc., etc., if the speed limits are not actually indicative or enforceable then why have them? The required administrative and legal procedure to put a speed limit in place is colossal, costly and time consuming. It finally gets put in place and can be immediately ignored. One has to ask, "What is actually happening out there?"

These volunteers gave up their time over a whole year throughout many villages within a large county to clock 154,000 alleged "speedsters" and only 9 get prosecuted – is speed really the issue it is always made out to be? Excessive speed; inappropriate speed; inconsiderate speed; uncontrollable speed – all these are extremely dangerous but some drivers do drive over the indicated limits by a few miles an hour but are they really dangerous? If we raise any speed limits do the drivers then drive even faster above the new limits? I can't answer most of these questions but I am sure there are plenty of

comments and views about them – think about your speed next time you go for a drive and remember to stick to the speed limits – it's the ONLY way you can guarantee keeping your licence – maybe your life or someone else's life. 30 is STILL 30!

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## **SUMMERTIME DISTRACTIONS!**

**By Kevin G. Grose**  
**Chairman**

IT'S summertime...well almost. We have had a lot of that strange stuff called sunshine recently and when the sun shines, strange things happen to drivers. Firstly, they start opening windows and sunroofs. Those fortunate enough will lower their tops...if you know what I mean! Someone recently emailed me: "I'm going topless if the sun shines...!" See, that's what happens to normal, safe drivers when we see a bit of sunshine after all the grey.

We then start changing our normal glasses (if worn) to designer shades, etc., as we have to look "cool" especially when going topless! We then start wearing less clothes – we finally dump the three winter jumpers we have been wearing and now don only a tee shirt or no shirt at all – well, the gents do. Then the shorts appear – long, short, baggy, skimpy, etc., some covering a lot and some that need to cover a lot more. Finally, the footwear gets less – the socks might stay but the actual walking material will diminish to flip flops, sometimes sandals or even down to completely bare foot.

So, we have gone from sub-arctic all weather gear to tropicana garb in a very short time. So why, you may ask – does all this matter? Yes, it does – it really does, because we are now exposed to so many more things than we were when it was cold. We have removed barriers and barriers of protection just because the sun is shining.

You could get fined for "inappropriate footwear" – i.e. flip flops, loose sandals, etc., but what about "inappropriate clothing"? Come on gents/ladies – you are driving down a road or along a street and there is a very scantily clad lady/bare-chested builder/etc., just walking/working along that road; one's eyes are diverted and before you know it, you have to brake very hard; your flip flop slips off the brake pedal; your designer shades slip off your head onto your nose; you grab the steering wheel where it is very hot; you start to slide down the hot seat because you are covered in sun tan oil; you panic again trying to find the brake; your flip flop has now fallen off so you stamp on the brake with your bare foot which is now covered in dust and grit from the floor of your vehicle – OOOOWW!

You now just about stop in a dishevelled mess – not looking very cool at all, wincing in pain and embarrassment as everybody can now see you in this state because you have also gone topless.....by that I mean, you have put the roof down on your convertible.

So, please, PLEASE pay attention to the road. The hazards and dangers are all still there and now you are even more exposed to them, you need to display even more care and consideration for your fellow road users. Enjoy the sun, enjoy the fresh air but most of all, stay safe and stay alive.....and then you will look really COOL!

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## **UNWELL!**

**By Kevin G. Grose**  
**Chairman**

I am writing this whilst recovering from a severe flu/virus type infection and it's certainly not just a case of the dreaded "manflu", no, this is more like a case of "swamp fever" even though there are not many swampy areas around here. I feel like "note" – nothing on this earth...at this moment in time. I also feel like complete sh\*t and I don't think I need to explain that one!

What's my point to all this? One major point – I am rendered incapable of driving a motor vehicle. Better than that, I am incapable of walking a straight line or standing up without feeling dizzy, my chest hurts, my nose will not stop running, all my limbs ache and weigh about two tonnes each, when I do cough, it feels like someone is hitting me with a sledgehammer, mucus, pain, aches, dizzy spells goes on and on, so how can I drive a car? Or more correctly, how can I drive a car safely and in control? I can hardly control my own body at the moment let alone a car.

That's my point – if you are unwell, then don't drive. If you do drive when feeling unwell, you may crash and then you'll have a lot more to worry about than a touch of "manflu" or whatever other virus is circulating at the time. On the other hand, you may not have much to worry about because you will know nothing about it. If you are unwell, or you start to feel unwell, get someone else to drive.

The law infers "You must be in full control of your vehicle at ALL times" – you cannot be in FULL control of your vehicle if you cannot be in FULL control of your body – don't take the chance and make sure you have fully recovered before sitting behind the steering wheel again – your life, and others may depend on it.

**1981-2011 TGAM 30 YEARS**

## NEW IAM LOGO'D STUFF!

**By Kevin G. Grose**  
**Chairman**

HAVE you really noticed any of your Taunton Group's new IAM logo'd stuff recently? I am sure that those of you who attend the Members' Evenings must have seen some evidence of this and for further good measure, we have now added some more "stuff".

Apart from the original batch, there are now some more new leaflet holders with different IAM logo'd details on them; all our Group Committee and Group Observers will now have new identity badge holders - the lanyard type again with the IAM logo on them; there are all our Group display boxes; our display white board; our Group owned video projector; the quality aluminium flight case that holds the projector; our excellent Group Newsletter now carries both IAM logos and we try and promote the IAM logos everywhere we can.



We promote both IAM logos because the original roundel type IAM logo is recognised worldwide even throughout the subtle changes that have occurred over the years and the newer IAM Driving Road Safety logo makes the absolute statement to whoever sees it - "it does exactly what it says on the can" to coin an expression! It also fits in with the "I am..." creativity mode in advertising which has been prevalent for quite a few years. This enables us to get the IAM message over in three ways now - the older style, the new logo style and in keeping with the "I am..." style - three for the price of one, so why not do your bit and try and promote the IAM message to the general public within your locality.

Why not put up a poster or leave a few leaflets at your workplace, the village shop, your village hall, your local pub, in fact any place where it can be seen. By doing this very small gesture you could be helping immensely towards the overall driving road safety message throughout the UK. All leaflets/posters etc., are available from any of our Members' Evenings and they are all FREE...yes, FREE along with a cup of tea, coffee, biscuits, advice, parking, talks/entertainment, etc., just pop along and see what we are all about as everybody is most welcome to attend any of our events for FREE!

In return for your FREE entertainment, maybe you would like to grab a few posters/leaflets, etc., and display them elsewhere or even hand them out to your family, friends, children, grandchildren, parents and grandparents - anyone who may wish to improve their level and standard of driving and road awareness - whatever age.

## **CALIFORNIA DREAMING – PART 2**

**By Stuart Bullock**

**RoADAR Senior Motorcycle Examiner**

**RoSPA Motorcycle Diploma Course Director**

IT was in fact to Williams that we headed for on that fine sunny morning. Just after Kingman we joined Route 66 riding leisurely through rural communities such as Berry, Valentine, Peach Springs and Crookton. Absolutely fantastic to be on this quiet part of American life. We took a tea break at a Hualapai Indian owned roadhouse at Peach Springs before reaching the end of the old route and joined I 40 through rolling grasslands to the town of Williams. It is fair to say the Americans have woken up to the historic value for tourism of Route 66 and it is well signed and in good repair. As we rode through Williams we found an extra section not shown on our map but finally said farewell to the iconic road and continued north on the 64 and 180 to Tusayan, and very close to the south rim of Grand Canyon. 245 miles for the day and we had 2 nights to look forward to at this hotel.

We checked out what was on offer and booked up for a helicopter trip across Grand Canyon and a part walking part bus trip into the Grand Canyon National Park. The Canyon is almost beyond description because it changes too much, including as the sun passes across the sky. It has been formed by the action of three oceans and the Colorado River. It is just magnificent. It is possible to walk into the Canyon, drive, take a boat ride or in some places fly to the bottom. Our helicopter flew across forest areas to reach the rim and as we slowed, stirring music came through our headphones as the 'copter flew across the rim. One second there was forest and firm ground beneath us and the next, nothing for more than a mile! Ooer. An hour passed like seconds and we soon returned to our hotel to check out the photos we had taken. As the guidebooks will say, a photo does absolutely no justice to the magnificence of the Canyon. We visited the superb museum on the south rim. It is free and a brilliant educational point for all ages. It made me cringe at the thought of Americans visiting Stonehenge and what they must think of the so-called visitor centre there. Having persuaded my wife and friend to take a helicopter ride, with the assurance that it beats fixed wing flying by miles, I didn't tell them that out of the rides I have taken (in military craft) this was the first one where I didn't shout for Burt into a paper bag! The locals told us to take the last flight of the day. This is because the sun shining at an angle into the Canyon gives a better perspective than when it is shining down. Do you know? They were spot on.

Now we were riding east again, 170 miles to Kayenta. The Navajo Native American Indians own a huge reservation covering a lot of Arizona and Utah. The area uses 'Summer Dream Time', one hour ahead of USA time. We soon reached our hotel and booked in. 45 minutes later were in Cowboy Pete's Suburban and off, with me totally over excited, to Monument Valley itself and real cowboy country. Yeehaw. The area is dotted with huge rock 'pillars'. No I don't mean huge. I mean Monumental. Monumental? Geddit? At one time the land was the bottom on an Ocean and the pillars are harder rock that resisted erosion caused by the effects of tide action, wind and rain. It is spectacular and our guide filled us in on the history of the land, its current ownership and took us to where 'normal' tourists don't normally go. This was because I mentioned The Eiger Sanction. This is a film starring Clint Eastwood and in the film he climbs a single pinnacle of rock. Cowboy Pete took us to the very spot, warning us about sand scorpions and snakes as he did so. I also mentioned 'Ford Valley'. This where the director Ford made most of his iconic cowboy films, many starring Marion Robert Morrison. He changed his name to John Wayne, strangely. Finally we watched the sunset with its accompanying range of colours as the red sand reflects more and more on the sky. Monumentally awesome.



Next day we were up early and setting off to Bryce Canyon, Utah. This day's mileage would be 340 and not many would be on Interstate roads. We rode past Black Mesa, the biggest coalfield in America and the second longest conveyor belt in the world. Our route late morning took us through the heart of the Navajo reservation reaching the town of Page. Page is near Glen Canyon Dam, owned by the Navajo Nation and holding Lake Powell back to provide water and electricity for the region. At a fuel, or gas station I was stung by a wasp. On asking directions to a Pharmacy a local lady advised me to cover the bite in mud. I did put some chemical treatment on it later but it does appear that the mud took the worst of the sting and itching initially. There is no direct road across the mountain range containing Bryce Canyon and with only a third of the journey behind us we didn't tarry long. From Page we left the flatter land and began to climb, and climb, and climb.

The hotel pool was indoors here and received some weary travellers. It was also time for a laundry session (no not in the pool) and of course a good old poke around the tourist shops in the village. We were here for 2 nights so had time for a lengthy trip right to the top of the Canyon. Bryce Canyon is renowned for its bright pink rock formations. The Canyon extends south from the town and climbs up to around 9500 feet. The rock formations are really weird, from rock bridges to loads of round rock pillars, like so many soldiers, created by softer rock being eroded away. The guidebook told us that 'Canyon' is misleading as Bryce is carved by freeze-thaw cycles, not a river. Yet, 'world's largest pothole' is neither adequate nor flattering. It is certainly different. The view from the top is incredible as you can see for miles in every direction.

**Look out for the third part of this trip in the Autumn edition.**

## **AUGUST MEMBERS' EVENING**

**Presents**

### **IAM/HQ ISSUES**

**by RICHARD FURNEAUX  
(SW Region Coordinator)**

**Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> August at 7:30 pm  
at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall**



# OCTOBER MEMBERS' EVENING ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Followed by a talk by an  
IAM representative**

**Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> October at 7:30 pm  
at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall**

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**Closing Date for the  
Autumn, 2011 issue  
of the**

**TGAM Newsletter is  
Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> August.**

**All contributions  
would be very  
welcome.**

**All items should be  
sent to "The Editor"  
at [ed@tgam.org.uk](mailto:ed@tgam.org.uk) or,  
if you do not have  
e-mail, by mail to  
John Gilbert at  
The Coach House,  
Stockland Bristol,  
Bridgwater, TA5 2QA.**

# MEET YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBER

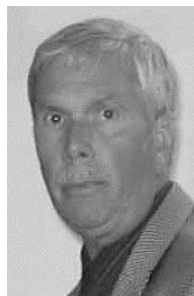
**Name:** Tony Hucker

**Group Position:** Committee Member  
& Trainee Observer

**Drives:** Jaguar XF 3-

**Dream Car:** Bedford OB Coach

**Current Job:** Semi-retired



**Hobbies:** IAM, gardening. Visiting NT Houses and Gardens. Parish Council, Quantock Cluster Group & generally helping out in village life

**Pet likes:** Spending time with family, especially granddaughters, and dinner with friends

**Pet dislikes:** Litter louts and being asked if I need a bag in supermarkets

**Favourite Food:** Home grown new potatoes, homemade Victoria sponge and scones

**Favourite Drink:** Tea

**Favourite Actors:** Sean Bean, Colin Firth, Clint Eastwood

**Favourite Actresses:** Dame Helen Mirren, Julie Walters, Meryl Streep

**Best TV Programmes:** Nature Programmes, Antiques programmes, History Channel, Quest, How it's made/Mega Engineering, some soaps, golf coverage

**Best Films:** King's Speech, Mamma Mia, Slum Dog Millionaire

**Best Group/Singer:** Beatles, The Killers, Johnnie Cash, Tina Turner, Katherine Jenkins, Russell Watson

**In Car Radio:** Radio Two

## PHOTO GALLERY – CARS OF 1981



Rolls Royce Silver Shadow (Photo by Aleksander Sowa)



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