

# Sefton Advanced Motorists

Issue: 273

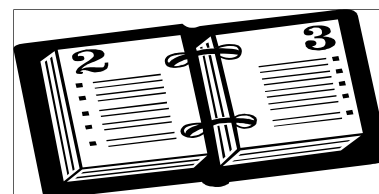
Registered Charity No. 517780

May 2007

## ***Inside this issue:***

Chairman Writes .....	Page 2
Work of Sefton Group recognized .....	Page 3
Region 5 Spring Meeting .....	Page 4
Test Passes & New Associates .....	Page 5
Alan Mates and Ann Thomas .....	Page 6

## **Forthcoming Attractions**



**Monday, 14th May; New Associates Meeting** marking the start of another course.

**Monday, 21st May; Sefton Advanced Motorists Annual General Meeting.** Our newly elected Divisional Council Member (DCM) **Bob Rowles** will be coming along and also taking the opportunity of speaking.

**Monday, 18th June;** a retired policeman, **Brian McVann**, will be telling us about his **Life and Career in the Police Force**. We understand the delivery of his topic can be very amusing as well as informative.

Please make a note of these events in your diary and try to come along and support our guest speakers who give up their free time to come and speak to us. All meetings are at the



# Chairman Writes

Hello again,

I am proud to inform you that Sefton Group was the recipient of an I.A.M. Group Support award at the recent Regional Conference. The award took the form of a very nice engraved silver plate and a cheque for £150. The award was jointly for all the publicity we have undertaken in the recent past i.e. Woodvale and our progress as a group. We will find something special to spend the money on and the plate will be on display at the A.G.M. this month.

Well here we are again at the A.G.M and my last job as your chairman will be to open that meeting, the last 12 months has flown by. Looking back the group has progressed well. We have had a couple of changes on the council, the latest happens at the A.G.M. with Stewart Gaukroger from the bike section joining us. I would like to welcome Stewart to the council especially as he is taking over from me as Bike Section Secretary.

Retiring from the council at the A.G.M. this year is Frank Bennett who, it sounds like, is going on years of holidays. Frank has for several years worked tirelessly on the training team. He has helped and then led the team through a huge transformation brilliantly culminating in what we have today, an enthusiastic, capable and successful training team.

Frank's dedication to advanced motoring was evident the first time I met him, finding out he was also an advanced motorcyclist made us pals straight away, though his love of the German motorcycle did become apparent early on. Whenever he can Frank will always help. He has been a keen attendee at Woodvale, often gently talking to an interested passer by trying to convince them to take up the challenge. Always the gentleman Frank has a natural ability and eloquence when talking about advanced driving. As usual behind every good man is his wife, in this case Marjorie, who we thank for letting Frank spend so much of his time on advanced motoring. So I must thank Frank for his dedication and hard work, I wish him and Marjorie all the best for the future.

I also need to thank the whole council who have made me look good over the last twelve months as it's really not the Chairman who does the work, it is the rest of the council. Stella has been there as Vice Chair when I have needed her, Jan who deals with the organisation we all need so well (now bravely on line), Paulette our excellent Treasurer has kept us all on the straight and narrow financially. I should really go on but I can hear the editor shouting make it brief so I will keep the rest of my thanks for the night itself. It only remains for me to wish Stella well in her coming year as Chairman I hope she can enjoy it as much as I have.

Alan Filson



## Work of Sefton Group recognized by IAM

As our Chairman has already said in his monthly address, our group was presented with an award at the recent Regional Conference.

The delegates who attended the conference proudly stepped forward to accept the silver plate and cheque for £150 on our behalf. Pictured (left to right) are Tom O'Malley, Jan West (Secretary), Paulette Haigh (Treasurer), and Tim Starkey.

## ***It's Time to Pay!***

*If you have not already paid **your annual subscription** to Sefton Advanced Motorists , now is the time to do it. Apologies to those who already have; you are free to turn the page and enjoy the rest of the newsletter.*

*Those members who still need to renew their membership (it is separate from the IAM fee) are invited to write a cheque for £15 payable to Sefton Advanced Motorists and **send to***

***David Paton, 7 Cummins Avenue, Freshfield, Merseyside, L37 7AL.***

***Please note:*** *Turning the page of this newsletter without attending to the above request will probably result in embarrassing phone calls from David, at his own expense! He will be most appreciative of your help.*

## News from the Region 5 Spring Meeting

A lovely sunny Saturday morning saw Sefton group arrive in force at the Birchwood Park conference centre, Warrington or thereabouts. After a leisurely brew and gossip we were welcomed to Region 5's spring meet by Bob Rowles our DCM.

After a brief outline of the days agenda Martin Greenwood, a new staff examiner for our region, gave a quick hello. A new face for our senior observers to watch out for.

Next up was a progress report of sorts on the institutes' young driver network. This was delivered by Ben Devlin a young member who has been acting as a youth advisor. He explained how all 6900 under 30 year old members had been sent a survey. The aim of which was to find what the younger members were looking for in their local groups, what the groups were lacking from their viewpoint. The response was over a 1000 which is a reasonable return. Many expressed an interest in getting involved but didn't want anything to do with their local group. Ben went on to say that the bones of the network could start to be put together but the aim must be to keep the network associated with the local groups, even to use the network as a stepping stone into the groups. As a further incentive the IAM intends to start a series of track day style events to attract younger members.

Christopher Bullock, the chief executive, then delivered the head office report. He explained that after the slight rise in the renewal fees there was a slight dip in member numbers, this was expected from past rises. He also warned that now the anniversary year was over, the IAM would now review the cost of the advanced test. So if anyone knows someone thinking about taking the plunge, now is the time, before the inevitable price increase. A slightly updated "How To Be An Advanced Driver" book has also been issued. The feedback on the new look website has been overwhelmingly positive. There are also further updates to the site due in the coming year.

The region 5 awards and reports were delivered by Regional Co-ordinator Pauline Smith and Regional Motorcycle Advisor Ian Marginson. Sefton group came out of this covered in glory as we got the silverware this year. To wild applause and much acclaim our secretary Jan West took the bow in place of our esteemed Chairman (winding his way home from Spain).

PC "Nobby" Clark of the Cheshire Constabulary gave an excellent talk on the multi award winning Drive Survive course. He explained that during a day, young drivers and driving offenders were mixed together and exposed to a hard hitting program. The full effects of dangerous/careless driving repeatedly hammered home. If the small sample we saw of the course materials was anything to go by I can well understand its effectiveness. The course also involves talks by the relatives of RTAs to show the emotional consequences of accidents.

After an excellent lunch we split from the motorcyclists for a brief by Simon Protano from IAM fleet. This organisation is hoping to drive up IAM membership by giving company drivers the taste for furthering their skills. To this end when a company puts their employees through fleet courses the employee gets a year free associate membership.

Ian Hughes from Cheshire group gave a talk on his role as police liaison officer for his group and outlined his groups activities. Congleton group then gave a talk on how a merger with the Macclesfield group had been effected. This sounds like it had been difficult but very

successful in many respects.

Bob Rowles then gave a quick outline of a group website survey that had been performed and gave some (tactful) constructive criticism for the groups. He then opened the floor to questions.

The main point to arise was concerning the mobile display units which are being returned to Head office control. The idea being to have central pool of MDUs that can be maintained, modernised, transported and sited by one company. This will hopefully be a boon to Sefton's regular Woodvale Rally presence. Fingers crossed we will get a shiny new all-singing, all-dancing stand delivered to woo the crowds with.

We then made a swift and safe exit to avoid the Grand National traffic.

Attendees from Sefton Group were Jan West, Paulette Haigh, Stewart Gaukroger, Tim Starkey and Tom O'Malley who contributed this article.

# New Associates Test Passes

## Hearty congratulations go to

**Paul Walsh** observed by Kathleen Tattersall



## Sefton Group would like to extend a warm welcome to

Laura Davies	from	Skelmersdale
Craig Warwick	from	Skelmersdale
Christine West	from	Aughton
William Northcott	from	Leyland
Michael Montgomery	from	Southport
Adam Whitehurst	from	Southport
Ian Duff	from	Ainsdale
Peter Dunne	from	Formby



## **Be warned .....**

*80% of people consider themselves to be above average drivers.*

## Alan Mates

As we head for our AGM in May and the possibility of new Council Members, we remember that we are losing some long standing hard working members from our Council. One of these is Alan Mates. Alan's resignation has already been reported to you in a previous Newsletter but a few words about his contribution are appropriate at this time.

Alan joined the group as an Associate member in March 1990 and passed the test a few months later. Soon after that he became a car Observer and one of the few observers that could also turn his hand to HGVs and towing.

I have to confess that it was all my fault that Alan became a Council member! He was foolish enough to ask a couple of questions about finance at an AGM and knowing that we would be looking for a new treasurer in the future I eventually managed to persuade him to "volunteer" for a Council place. Alan did indeed become treasurer. A post he held for many years.

His contribution to the Council though was much wider. He was a voice of common sense, someone who could get his head around insurance and most of all he was reliable and always willing to help. This thoroughly nice man will be missed as a friend on the Council. I am hoping that when his work commitments ease he may return to an AGM to ask a few more questions!

Stella Owen

## Ann Thomas

Ann is another member of the Group Council who is stepping down and leaving a gap that will have to be filled with a person, or persons, with a great many qualities. I say this because Ann has filled so many positions and done so many jobs in the Group that it is difficult to say what she couldn't do!

I guess it is well over 10 years ago that Ann introduced herself to me as my Observer and, from there, my own involvement and enjoyment with Advanced Driving began. She successfully, but oh so gently, knocked all of my bad driving habits away. Thanks Ann!

I remember that not so long after that time the Group went through something of a crisis and was in need of a Chairman who could steady the ship. Who should step forward but Ann Thomas, and she did this for an unbroken two-year stint showing many qualities that included patience, diplomacy and a good deal of steely persistence.

Later on Ann and I trained together to achieve Senior Observer status and, once again, she found just the right tone that would bring improvements. I'm sure I am not the only one who has benefited from Ann's enthusiasm for Advanced Driving and Sefton Group in particular.

All members of the Group will wish Ann, and her husband Frank, every good fortune in the future.

Gil Taylor



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