

# Sefton Advanced Motorists

Issue: 292

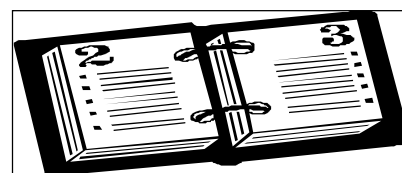
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## Forthcoming Attractions



**Monday, 12th January;** this evening sees the start of a new “**Skill for Life**” course with a meeting for **New Associates**. All of our members are welcome, especially if they bring a friend or relative to enrol.

**Monday, 19th January;** We are starting 2009 with a “**Cars on the Screen**” prize quiz compiled by **Cam Cunningham**. Whatever the prizes may be I don't think you will be able to drive them away; but you can hope!

**Monday, 16th February;** we will be taken into the confidence of **David Piercy** tonight when he reveals the **Confessions of a Coach Driver**.

**Monday, 16th March;** this month sees a return visit from **Bill Croskell** who will be talking to us about **HGV Awareness**.

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 Royal Clifton Hotel, Southport, unless otherwise stated, and start at 8 pm.

# Chairman Writes



Hello to you all,

I begin by wishing you all a Happy New Year, I hope 2009 brings you all you wish of it.

December was a quiet month for the group particularly with the cancelling of our Christmas dinner due to low numbers. (Economic downturn?) On the plus side we have had a good turnout for our previous monthly meetings with interesting speakers.

Have you visited our newly reworked group website at <http://www.seftonadvancedmotorists.co.uk/>. It has had a recent make over by our webmaster Nick Bartlett. All information is now up to date.

On a more contentious issue is the cost of IAM membership, which sees a £10 increase from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 09 going from £18 to £28. Lets hope the extra money is put to good use.

Here's to another successful year with Sefton Advanced Motorists.

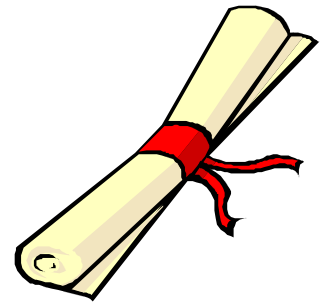
Tim Starkey  
(Chair)  
Sefton Advanced Motorists

***In this difficult economic environment .....***

If you don't pay your exorcist, you could be repossessed.

# Test Passes

Hearty congratulations go to



John Robinson observed by

Tim Starkey

George Milburn observed by

Paulette Haigh

David Ashton observed by

David Williams

## Motorcyclists

Guy Griffiths

and

David Culshaw

# New Associates

Sefton Group extends a warm  
welcome to



Mark Rowson

and

Colin Wright

(both motorcyclists)

From guest contributors, Alan and Sheila Ramsay.

## Eye Witness account of the Mumbai experience.



The memory of terrible attacks in Mumbai was still fresh in Alan and Sheila's minds when they set off, before, Christmas to visit their son and daughter-in-law who live in this heaving, bustling and noisy city. Rather than dwell on recent atrocities they brought back plenty of examples of how differently the people of Mumbai get around and what seems quite normal to them, but to us appears quite chaotic.

First of all there does not seem to be any heed given to the rules of the road, as we would understand them. It's definitely every man for himself! As a consequence,

most cars on the road bare scars of battle. The only vehicles that get any consideration at all are the ox-carts that are often seen, even in such a big city.

In this country the use of the horn is, on the whole, rather restrained. We as Advanced Drivers are advised never to use it as a form of rebuke but merely as another means of warning of our presence, in the cause of road safety. In India it seems that it is an automatic accompaniment to the movement of the wheels and a necessary aid to making the required amount of progress. Alan was struck by this on their first taxi ride along the city motorway from the airport. Every vehicle the taxi driver passed got the obligatory blast!

If contending with other drivers was not enough, the motorists of Mumbai have to be very watchful of road workings. If a road is to be repaired and your car happens to be parked in the street at the time the work commences ..... it does not matter.

The crew will just work around it and leave your car stranded. And,



once a hole

has been dug it need not, necessarily, be guarded with a barrier. It is expected that drivers are wary to dodge and dart around them with no thought to who else may be alongside or the consequence of the sudden change of direction. Maybe, this sort of situation contributed to their son, Mark, coming into contact with a tuk-tuk, a three-wheeled taxi whilst avoiding a bus.

Another memorable sight on the roads was old but highly decorated trucks that carried all kinds of personal belongings. Alan and Sheila got quite used to seeing whole families moving their possessions through the city in this fashion, but the best sight of all was one carrying two massive thrones with one serenely occupied by the driver's assistant!! King for the day??



Alan & Maggie in tuk-tuk.

## Man dies after two bus accidents

A New Delhi labourer survived getting hit by a bus, only to get hit and killed by a second bus 20 minutes later, police said.

Raj Kumar was on his way to work on Wednesday morning when a bus hit him from behind.

Police officials said local residents took the injured man to the hospital inside a three-wheeler taxi. Before they reached the hospital, however, Mr Kumar said he felt fine and jumped out of the vehicle to cross the road - when another bus hit him.



Police say both vehicles were Blueline buses, infamous for running red lights and speeding through the city's free-for-all traffic.

*pa.press.net*

### Editorial Comment:

When I first read the above report I assumed it was a tragic, one-off accident but it is not.

Apparently, Blueline buses of New Delhi have been responsible for around 120 deaths in the past year, 2008. There are over 4,000 buses in the fleet and now the authorities are beginning to take action to restrict the number of poorly maintained and badly driven vehicles.

The Delhi government announced it would phase out 100 Blueline buses every month starting from March. The authorities impounded over 150 of these privately-owned buses and cancelled their licences. The Delhi Police spokesperson said permits of 158 Blueline buses were cancelled for flouting norms.

## If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes .....!!

The car on the right is an Audi Q7, one of those trendy and eye-catching cars that fall into the category of SUV's or, as some like to say, Chelsea tractors.

The BBC Top Gear website describes the car as "everything a modern SUV should be; ugly, massive, not very good off-road".



Well, when I was out and about Southport just before Christmas on my annual dash in search of appropriately desirable and expensive gifts for my dear wife, I noticed one of these machines exiting the car park of the Carlton Bar on Lord Street. I did hope that the driver had not taken one too many!

What, really, attracted my attention initially was a rather expensive scraping noise from over my right shoulder. So, I turned away from studying the menu in the Vincent Hotel window to see the Audi half in, and half out of, the Carlton's car park. Unfortunately, the driver was attempting to use the steps into Market Street rather than the usual gateway onto Lord Street. The sound was that of the underside of the car dragging across the top step.

To the driver's credit the car did stop whilst some consideration was given to the predicament. Should I reverse back up the step - perhaps repeating the damage already done? Or, should I carry on, being 50% committed to the manoeuvre, anyway?

Well, the latter option was taken. It almost worked until the back end grounded with the top step with the result that some quite expensive body parts landed in the road. The next question was "Should I get out and retrieve them, or should I just drive on to avoid facing the bemused onlookers, and considerable embarrassment.

Yes, you've guessed right; it was the second option again!

## You are (still) invited to a Fish and Chip Supper!

You are reminded that Wirral Advanced Motorists group have invited any of our members to their Annual Quiz Night on **Tuesday, 27th January**. It starts at 8pm and takes place at The Roundel Club, 17 Shrewsbury Road, Oxtou, Birkenhead.

We believe there are four or five rounds of questions which will include motoring topics with prizes on offer. After the quiz, supper will be provided for which there will be no charge. Sounds like a good evening out!

If interested in going, please let Jan West or Tim Starkey know. You don't have to be a team of four as any individuals can be placed with others to make up a team.

**SEFTON ADVANCED MOTORISTS  
GROUP No. 5143**

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