

Sefton Advanced Motorists

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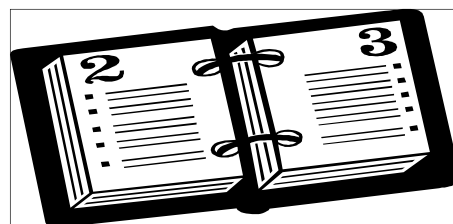
Forthcoming Attractions

Monday 11th January; New Associates meeting.

Monday 18th January; Dennis Nicholson & Steve Moon our new IAM Examiners will talk about their work as Police Officers and also about their positions as IAM Examiners.

Monday 15th February; Gordon May, author and journalist, will speak on "Overland to India by classic British motorcycle".

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

A very happy New Year to you all,

I hope the cold weather isn't having too many ill effects. These conditions often expose drivers whose skills are adequate for the majority of the time, but would massively benefit from further honing.

When you see those uncontrolled wheel spins or graceless skates toward a set of traffic lights, encourage your fellow drivers to improve themselves with a skill for life. Think how much easier life would be if drivers picked the right speed for the road surface, upcoming hazards and kept a vaguely sensible following distance. Maybe, even venturing to the passenger window with their ice scraper before setting off.

I'm not sure if the above counts as a rant or some kind of unattainable dream. At least as advanced drivers we can hope to keep as cool as the weather behind the wheel. Dealing calmly with the myriad of trials and tribulations our fellow motorists beset us with is, perhaps the most useful skill we can hope to achieve (and modesty). Definitely worth saving the vitriol and mouth frothing for this monthly diatribe (if anyone wishes to complain of not having this opening, the nomination papers are on the way).

The road surface shouldn't catch us out if we make good observations of microclimates like bridges/overpasses that freeze more readily and look out for patches of ice where the gritting has failed. Icy roads can be dealt with if care is used; it is more often a change in road surface that offers the biggest challenge.

I was mildly heartened this week whilst waiting in queuing traffic on the way to work seeing what I think was a BMW M6 wallowing along at walking pace on the opposite carriageway while a Citroen 2CV, with its' skinny tires cutting a swath through the slush, glided past it. A minor reversal of fortunes possibly but I suspect the BMW driver was probably warmer at least.

Wirral group have kindly invited us to their quiz night & free fish and chip supper. If we can rustle up a select band of highway code buffs who don't mind embarrassing themselves for their tea then let me know as soon as possible (the diet resolution is bound to have failed by then anyhow). Details as follows

DATE: 26th January 2010. VENUE: The Roundel Club, 17 Shrewsbury Road, Oxton, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH43 1UU. TIME: 8pm

My tel numbers are 07719867576 or 01704228715.

It is also worth noting (if you haven't received this direct from the IAM) the dates for the Malory park track days -: bikes are on 15th April & 21st October; cars 19th February & 5th November. I believe places went quickly last year so ask a council member if you need further details.

Finally, from all the hardy souls who braved the arctic weather for our Christmas meal a very big thank you to Paulette. The company and the meal were excellent and the mystery packages were practically inscrutable.

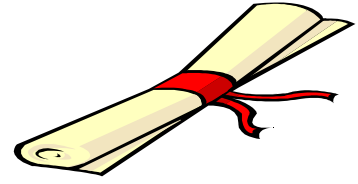
Best wishes and happy motoring for the coming year

Tom.



Test Passes

Hearty congratulations go to



Martin Charlton observed by **Mike Brown**

&

Keith Mawdsley

(motorcyclist)

Preview of our February meeting on Monday, 15th.

Overland to India by Classic British Motorcycle

by **Gordon May**

Last year I rode a 1953 Redditch-built Royal Enfield 8,390 miles from the UK to South India via Turkey, Iran and Pakistan.

The talk lasts about one and a half hours, including Questions & Answers. I discuss my bike's history, restoration and preparation for the journey. I talk about the mechanical challenges, the road conditions and driving standards I encountered. I try to cover some culture, geography and certainly talk about a few of the many positive and touching experiences I had with people who helped me along the way.

I finish with my arrival in India and visit to the Indian Royal Enfield factory in Chennai.



Please do try to make it for what sounds like a very interesting talk.

Picture by courtesy of www.overlandtoindia.co.uk

Winter weather driving tips from the IAM



With snow and ice affecting many parts of the country the IAM

(Institute of Advanced Motorists) has issued advice for safe winter driving.

Skidding on ice is the main concern for those driving in freezing conditions.

Peter Rodger, IAM Chief Examiner says: ““When driving in snow, get your speed right - not too fast so that you risk losing control, but not so slow that you risk losing momentum when you need it – and brake, steer and accelerate as smoothly as possible,”

“Start gently from stationary, avoiding high revs. If you get yourself into a skid the main thing to remember is to take your foot off the accelerator and steer, never use the brake.”

More winter driving advice for the IAM:

- Double or even triple your normal stopping distance from the vehicle in front.
- Plan your journey around busier roads as they are more likely to have been gritted.
- On motorways stay in the clearest lane where possible, away from slush and ice. Keep within the clear tyre tracks if you can.
- Stay in a higher gear for better control.
- As conditions improve make sure your foglights are only on if necessary – they can dazzle other drivers.
- In falling snow use dipped headlights to make yourself visible to others (especially pedestrians)

Preparation

- Check the weather in advance – don't ignore police warnings about closed roads.
- Make sure you have an emergency kit so you are prepared in the event of a breakdown. This should include a torch, food for energy, water and a blanket. On longer journeys always let someone know you have set off and tell them your planned route.
- Ensure your mobile is charged up so you can make a call in an emergency – but don't use it when driving!
- Do a proper winter check of your vehicle, looking at washer fluid, de-icer/scraper and tyres



IAM highlights the dangers of low sun and dirty windscreens



Low winter sun and dirty windscreens mean there is more risk of dangerous dazzle at this time of year than any other, says the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists).

Peter Rodger, IAM Chief Examiner, said: “Dirty windscreens make it even more difficult for drivers to see in the low winter sun we get every morning and late afternoon at this time of year. Your heater is often on demist, blowing traffic fumes, suspended oil and smoke onto the inside of the screen which quickly builds to a film of grime which is a major cause of glare.

“The wet roads mean more dirt on the other side of the screen, too, and a low sun highlights scratches and grime making it even more of a problem,” added Mr Rodger.

“The best solution is to clean your screen inside and out, with water or glass cleaner at least once a week, drying with paper or leather.”

More low sun advice from the IAM:

- Always keep a good pair of sunglasses in the car – they really help.
- If you can't see, do the obvious thing and slow down accordingly, keeping an eye on the vehicle behind, in case the following traffic doesn't see you against the sun.
- If the sun is behind you, it's in the eyes of drivers coming towards you – be aware they might not see you.
- Low sun behind can dazzle you through your mirrors so be ready to dip the mirror and check over your shoulder for vehicles in your blind spot.
- Keep your washer bottles topped up with a good quality screenwash.
- Change your windscreen wipers every year.



Watch out for Potholes!

All the bad weather we have been experiencing is taking its effect on road surfaces as rain, snow and slush gets into small cracks, freezes, expands and breaks up a previously reasonable road. The web site www.Potholes.co.uk estimates potholes cause as many as 1 in 5 mechanical failures on UK roads and cost motorists an estimated £320 million every year.

Potholes are a major factor in causing axle and suspension failure, not to mention tyre damage. Tyre damage is not always immediately obvious so you need to keep an eye on the condition of your tyres, especially if you think you have encountered a particularly nasty patch of road.

So, be very watchful this winter and try to avoid these worn out surfaces and don't assume the puddle is just a puddle as it may be hiding something far nastier! Plus other road users may be taking avoiding action and veer towards you. This is particular true of motorcyclists and cyclists.

The above-mentioned web site has a facility to report potholes and offers other advice. It may be worth a look! Another web site where you can do this is www.FillThatHole.org.uk hosted by the CTC, the UK's national cyclists' organisation. I think both sites could be quite useful in getting these hazards repaired sooner than they would otherwise be if remaining unreported.



Invitation from Wirral Group

Hello everyone. It is time, once again, for us to invite you all to our

ANNUAL QUIZ NIGHT AND FREE FISH AND CHIP SUPPER!!

Those of you who have been before will know all about this event and we welcome new and old friends alike.

DATE

26th January 2010.
8.00 pm

VENUE

The Roundel Club, 17 Shrewsbury Road, Oxtou, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH43 1UU.

It may not be too late to book yourself on to the team representing Sefton Advanced Motorists and, if it is your wish to join in the fun, all you need do is to give our Chariman, Tom O'Malley a ring. His 'phone number is 01704 228715.

*Here's hoping for a very pleasant and successful night,
especially if "our team" can come up with all the right answers!*

**SEFTON ADVANCED MOTORISTS
GROUP No. 5143**

NOTICEBOARD

SAM shirts available.

Polo shirts & sweatshirts are now available embroidered with the IAM logo. The red car roundel is illustrated but there are also green ones for motorcyclists.



Cam Cunningham has arranged the supply and orders can be placed with him at any of the Group's meetings or by ringing him on 01704 892816.



Disclaimer

The Editor and the Group Council wish to make it clear, that the views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter, are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Group or the Institute.

Data Protection Act 1984

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