

Sefton Advanced Motorists

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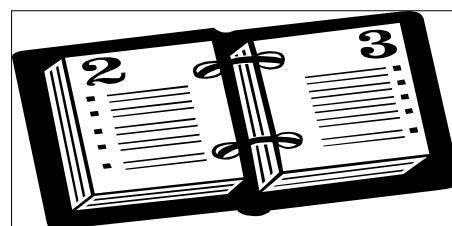
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Forthcoming Attractions



Monday, 19th July; Anne O'Brien, magistrate, (currently serving as the Chair in Magistrates Courts in Sefton) is coming to talk to us and will include information on motoring offences, fines, penalty points etc.

August; no meeting

Monday, 20th September; a retired police dog handler and author, **Dave Jackson**, will be our guest this evening. His talk is entitled "The Making of Cassius". It is a true story of a courageous police dog.

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

In my comments last month I mentioned that the numbers of new Associates coming to us, specifically in the Car Section, have been low over the past year. How to turn this around has of course been a matter for concern which Council have been discussing over the last months. Promotion and publication of the training in “Skill for Life” courses that Sefton Advanced Motorists offer is our main area of focus. Plans for a leaflet drop through the local press and possibly an open day are in motion. Neighbouring Groups seem to have had a good deal of Associate recruitment success, particularly with the latter, so we should learn from them. I’ll share more specific details with you once these plans approach the implementation stage, as voluntary participation and support from the Membership will be an essential part of these recruitment activities.



Gil Taylor does a stalwart job as editor of our Newsletter, my personal thanks to Gil for this fine contribution to the Group. Our speaker this month, Terry Martin I.A.M. Examiner, in his opening remarks complimented the Group on the content of the Newsletter. Welcome praise and reassurance that under Gil’s stewardship, as editor, our Newsletter is a valued driving publication. It is also a useful communication tool for the Group, as not all Members make it along to our monthly meeting in the Royal Clifton Hotel. So it can be used to share ideas, experiences and comment on driving issues you’ve read or heard of. Contributions from the Membership are always welcome to assist Gil in maintaining a varied and interesting content, so please feel free to forward to Gil any driving/riding articles, your informed opinion on matters driving, or anecdotes that can be shared through the Newsletter. Contact details for Gil are in the list of SAM Council Members in the Newsletter rear inside page.

I mentioned our speaker at the Royal Clifton Hotel this month was Terry Martin – I.A.M. Examiner, as always an interesting and entertaining evening. He talked of the expectations of the examiner during the Advanced Driving Test, but stressed that we are all on the same side regarding safer driving. The Test should be an enjoyable experience so try to remain relaxed. For the Bike Section Terry gave us his views on “group riding”, specifically bike groups of ten plus. I found this interesting, as a non-biker, particularly the attention to safe riding and keeping the group together by using the “drop off” method which he explained in some detail. Aspects of making progress were a prominent part of Terry’s talk which interestingly included the subject of “zip merging” covered in our Newsletter last month. However, jumping the queue is not a very British thing to do so I fear that although this new rule is in the Highway Code (Rule 288) it may be some time before car drivers cotton on that it is an acceptable driving method that best assists and eases traffic congestion. Make a contribution to the learning process of those not wise in the ways of Advanced Driving, be bold, take that path of least resistance “zip merge” and make progress.

Richard Hardie – Chairman
Sefton Advanced Motorists

Terry Martin presents



At our June meeting at the Royal Clifton Hotel Terry Martin was on hand to present a number of certificates to successful test candidates.

On the left we see him awarding the prized certificate to **Pam Walmsley**.



On the right can be seen **David Doring**, one of four motor-cyclists who received their Advanced Certificates.



On the left is **Stephen Tracey** getting his certificate from Terry.



On the right is **Geoffrey Martin** who has his hands on the well-earned document for the first time.



Finally, it is **Cliff Ray** who is pictured proudly being presented with his certificate from Terry Martin.

Well done to you all and may you have many years of enjoyable and safe riding and driving.

North to Alaska!

*This article has been sent in by **Trevor Wooding** who has just returned from a trip he took in June to Alaska. Rather than giving us an account of his holiday he has written the following piece from the driver's point of view which we hope you will find interesting.*

The 'Alaska Air' 737 touched down at Anchorage Airport and we wondered what this wilderness of a land had to offer, as we looked across the misty, wet landscape to snow-capped peaks to the east. Had we made the right decision for our holiday destination? In a very short space of time that question was answered with a resounding and positive 'yes'.

We collected our Chevy Impala hire car which was to be our transport for the next two weeks as we ventured into the Alaskan interior only on sealed roads, as strictly dictated by the Alamo car hire agreement. Gravel and earth roads were definitely 'no go' areas! These road restrictions would limit us to main highways and would not allow us into The Yukon or indeed The Dalton Highway, made popular by the TV series, 'Ice Road Truckers'. We were also denied access to British Columbia via 'The Top of the World Highway', an enticingly named road of earth and gravel running between the township of Chicken in Alaska (named Chicken as the original settlers couldn't spell Ptarmigan, the national bird of Alaska!) and Dawson City in the Yukon. Later in the trip I spoke to a Canadian who had taken this precarious road the previous day in his RV and wished he hadn't!

Our first stop was in the town of Anchorage (or Ink-Ridge as the locals seem to pronounce it!) for a couple of days whilst we drew breath and acclimatised to the 9 hour time difference with the UK. This is a city of 270,000 inhabitants of the total 620,000 citizens of the 49th US State. Despite Anchorage being the biggest city, the state capital is actually Juneau, down to the south-east on the remote coast of the famous 'Inside Passage' route for cruise ships. Anchorage streets are laid out in the usual US city grid system which includes a one-way system which was a complete mystery, except perhaps to the city engineer! Most of us know the term 'sidewalk' when in the U.S., however roads are known as pavements. Practically every street junction has traffic lights with the usual pedestrian signs for crossing. Roundabouts, however, are a new phenomenon in Alaska, and are vehemently hated and not understood by the locals!

From Anchorage we headed north on the Glenn Highway to Wasilla (home of Sarah Palin, the ex-Governor of Alaska) then into the George Parks Highway to complete the 250 mile drive to Denali National Park, a stunning 6 million acre park with America's highest peak, Mt



McKinley at 20320 feet. In the park we also saw wolves, dall sheep, a fox, snow shoe hares, caribou, golden eagles and a grizzly & her cub, thankfully from a safe quarter of a mile away.

The highway quality now deteriorated and the width reduced to a single carriageway for the final 150 miles north up to Fairbanks, despite it being the only road link from Anchorage. Fairbanks is a sprawl of a town and similar to Anchorage in layout style. 'The Milepost', an encyclopaedic mile by mile log of each main highway route, was an essential guidebook to help us on our way

throughout this trip. Despite the remoteness of Alaskan highways, people stayed at the 55 or 65 mph limits, as dictated by the road signs, tedious as it may have been on these long stretches of road. Whilst Alaska is 24% more expensive than the rest of the States, fuel equated to a very reasonable 77p per litre.

After three days in and around Fairbanks, we headed east on the Richardson Highway to Delta Junction, then south-east to Gakona. Had we continued east from Delta Junction, we'd have joined the Alcan Highway (built in WW2 as the link road from Canada to Western Alaska), which covers the 700 remote miles eastwards to Whitehorse in The Yukon and on to Skagway, a further 150 miles drive. Between Delta Junction and Gakona we drove through some wonderful scenery of the snow capped mountains of the Alaska Range. The road now deteriorated markedly and 'frost heave' of the tarmac often made driving tricky, throwing the car wheels unexpectedly.

Difficult road conditions were often exacerbated by mile after mile of gravel surfaces in readiness for road re-surfacing.

Gakona is at the confluence of the Gakona and Copper Rivers, renowned for their King Salmon. As we left Gakona we had good views of the Wrangell-St Elias National Park Mountains, covering some 8.3 million acres with glaciers the size of Rhode Island. We however headed south-west on the Glenn Highway en-route for the Kenai Peninsular, which lies to the south of Anchorage, a drive of 300 miles which took around 10 hours. Our



original plan was to shorten this journey by dropping directly south from Gakona to Valdez to take the 'Alaskan Marine Highway Ferry' across Prince William Sound to Whittier on the east side of the Kenai, but alas the ferry wasn't running that particular day! Valdez is the southern terminus of the Trans Alaska Oil Pipeline running some 800 miles from Prudhoe Bay in the far north on the Beaufort Sea coast and is also the scene of the infamous 'Exxon Valdez' environmental disaster in 1989.

We spent three days in and around The Kenai experiencing more brilliant scenery. It was the start of the salmon fishing season and the area of the Kenai and Russian rivers teemed with fishermen anxious to catch their first King Salmon of the season. We then returned to Anchorage for our flight to Seattle and our onward visit to Vancouver.



My favourite two road signs in Alaska were "Prison Working Party – No Stopping" (as if we needed to be told twice!) and, in the hunting areas, "No Shooting from Highway"! This was a fabulous holiday in the remote wilderness of Alaska and we certainly plan to return there, probably at a time when we can experience The Northern Lights as well.

Trevor Wooding

Highly Recommended

Visit to Coventry Transport Museum



In 'Mobilise' magazine, March 2010, I saw an advertisement for an exhibition of vehicles for disabled people down the ages. Having worked on these for a number of years in the 1950/80's, I visited the museum and had a very enjoyable day out.

Apart from my interest in this particular exhibition the collection of vehicles covering over a century proved most interesting. There was everything from cycles to tractors, and buses to vintage cars and commercial vehicles.



With a cafe and a warm welcome from staff I recommend a visit to this museum.

(www.transport-museum.com)

Roy Carr

Another Rider/Driver Skills Day; this time at



Knockhill – 28th September

This skills day has been planned to attract Riders and Drivers who want to improve their road skills. It is not intended to be a free for all track day. The venue has been carefully chosen, not because it is a race circuit but because it offers us a very controlled environment away from the usual two way traffic, junctions, pedestrians, and street furniture. Therefore, if you are looking to improve your road skills then you can certainly benefit from this type of training.

If you want to take part in this day the cost is £135 with a cheque made payable to 'The IAM' and sent to: -

Lyn Francis (Skills Days)
Institute of Advanced Motorists
510 Chiswick High Road
London, W4 5RG

Or you can purchase it on line at www.iam.org.uk and click on Motorcyclist Car on the top bar then onto events diary.

There are motorcycle sessions in the morning and afternoon as well as a driver session finishing at about 7pm; you may want to stay overnight.

If more details are needed , contact me (Gil Taylor) and I can send you the associated file attachment.

NOTICEBOARD

For Sale

Motor Cycle Gear

Shoei Crash Helmet:

Blue Raider II, double glazed, brand new, worn 3 times.
Size 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ to 7 $\frac{1}{4}$.

Paid £220

BMW Leather/Kevlar Boots

Black, size 45 (10), brand new, worn 3 times

Paid £180

BMW Gloves

Size 9—9 $\frac{1}{2}$, worn 3 times, black.

Open to offers

Ring
Tim Howarth
07793 748115

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