



The Road Observer

The Newsletter of the North Down Advanced Motorists (Group 8199)

Helping to Improve The Standard of Driving and Riding on the Roads in Northern Ireland and the Advancement of Road Safety



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**Congratulations this month go to -
Christopher Ward
on becoming a Member of the Institute.
Good luck and safe driving to any Associate(s)
approaching their test.**

This month we would like to welcome, as a new member, George King. We hope that he will not only gain from being a member of our Group but will also enjoy the friendship and camaraderie of our get-togethers. We usually meet (unless otherwise stated) at the Boathouse, which is situated in the harbour carpark, at Groomsport at 7.00pm on the second Tuesday of each month (except July). For more details of our programme please see the section entitled "Dates for Your Diary".

If anyone has recently done their test, don't forget to contact John (07967 010443) for a debrief. Observers, please keep John acquainted with the progress of your Associate(s).

April Group Meeting

14th April, 2010

To fit in with a free night at the Slot-car racing we had to change our usual Group Night to a Wednesday this month. Trevor very kindly has furnished us with the results of what appeared to be, a very exciting evening. It seems that everyone got acclimatised to the course using slow, practice cars but then changed to Audi TTs. The difference between these two types of cars in terms of their performance, according to Trevor, was unbelievable. The result of the night's racing was - 1st Aaron Macquarrie, 2nd Alan Miller and 3rd Angela Bell. Then everyone had a go with a Le Mans type car to see who could establish the fastest lap. The honours in this case went to Alan with a lap-time of 10.9 seconds. Well done to the competitors for an enjoyable night's racing and thanks to Trevor for providing us with the results.

What to do when your kids start to drive

New drivers, particularly the under 20s, are most at risk in the early weeks and months after they pass their driving test.

The IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) has produced top tips to help parents encourage responsible driving in the crucial first few months - and to encourage safer, more responsible drivers.

Parental involvement is one of the sections in the IAM Motoring Trust report *Younger Drivers, where and when they are unsafe*.

The IAM recommends the following tips on how parents can help their new novice drivers:

- Use a professional instructor to teach them to drive whilst giving them extra practice
- Teach by example: always use a seat belt and keep to the speed limit restrictions
- Take them on routes they are likely to drive on regularly and talk to them about where the risks are
- Help them to practise driving in various conditions, such as night time, in poor visibility and if possible on rural roads
- Educate them on the potential risks (i.e. lack of concentration, showing off) and the distractions that can follow having their friends in the car for the first time
- Help them to further develop their driving skills by proactively encouraging them to continue developing their driving by undertaking further training, such as an advanced driving course.

Northern Ireland Groups Liaison Forum (Region 8)

22nd April, 2010

This year it was North Down's privilege to host this conference which was held in the Signal Centre of Business Excellence, Balloo Road, Bangor. After a hot buffet meal Angela welcomed everyone from all over the Province to North Down. Comprehensive reports were then given by the Chairperson, Treasurer and Motorcycle representative.

This led straight onto the election of Officers for the incoming year and this resulted in the re-election of Norah (Chairperson), Brian (Vice Chairperson) Keith (Secretary) and Treasurer (Ruth).

Due to the administrative fallout from Eyjafjallajökull the Icelandic volcano that erupted causing massive disruption to airline schedules, Dave Shenton (IAM National Motorcycle Manager & Group Support Manager) was unable to attend. However our Guest Speaker Ronnie Trouton, MBE, was able to attend and he gave us an extremely interesting and enlightening talk on his involvement with cars, bikes, motorsport and road safety during his lifetime. He said that he had been very lucky in that he was able to make a "career out of a hobby".

He entertained us with anecdotes of his growing-up with cars and the races he attended at the circuits of yesteryear. The latter part of his talk concentrated on how he had tried to have an effect on Road Safety in Northern Ireland.

The audience really appreciated his talk and the impression was that they could have listened to more.

Angela then thanked Ronnie for his talk and wished everyone a safe journey home.

Driver behaviour is top road safety priority: IAM Manifesto

26 March 2010

The IAM has today published its Road Safety Manifesto for the upcoming election, calling for urgent support from all political parties to promote driver and rider improvement on UK roads.

Two of the more radical ideas in the IAM manifesto, which is designed to cut the unacceptable number of road deaths and injuries every year, are new incentives for Chief Constables to provide high profile policing, and tax breaks for companies offering their staff drivers further driver training.

"A lifelong approach to learning, delivered through advanced training, is the single biggest factor that can benefit road safety," said Simon Best, IAM Chief Executive.

"Human error is the biggest cause of crashes, so improving driver ability is the best way to deliver real reductions in road deaths and injuries: better driver behaviour must be the key road safety priority for the next ten years.

"Young drivers, older drivers, motorcyclists and business drivers are the groups that would benefit the most from further training, and the IAM has solutions that could potentially improve their safety record," added Mr Best.

The IAM calls for Government to play its part by providing simple incentives for those considering further training such as tax breaks and VED (Vehicle Excise Duty) discounts, with any cost to the exchequer being redeemed through savings from fewer crashes.

The IAM considers visible policing to be a much overlooked deterrent to reckless driving. More police on the road will encourage good driver behaviour and deny the use of the road to a reckless minority.

And finally - Some Car Insurance Excuses

The other man altered his mind and I had to run over him. A cow wandered into my car. I was afterwards informed that the cow was half witted.

I knocked over a man. He admitted it was his fault and had been knocked over before.

The indirect cause of the accident was a little guy in a small car with a big mouth.

I pulled away from the side of the road, glanced at my mother-in-law, and headed over the embankment

I was on my way to the doctor's with rear-end trouble when my universal joint gave way, causing me to have an accident.

Dates for Your Diary

- 4th May, 2010 STAC 19/7. Classroom and Driving Practice Session
- 11th May, 2010 **Group Evening at Boathouse. Talk on Offroad driving.**
- 25th May, 2010 STAC 19/8. Classroom and Driving Practice Session
- 1st June, 2010 Additional Driving
- 8th June, 2010 Navigation exercise and Barbecue. 7.00pm Crawfordsburn Scout Centre. Don't forget to bring pencils, eraser, magnifying glass, and romer.

July No Meeting

The views expressed in the 'Road Observer' are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Group or the Institute of Advanced Motorists

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