



The Road Observer



The Newsletter of the North Down Advanced Motorists Group (Group 8199)
Helping to Improve the Standard of Driving on the Roads in Northern Ireland and the Advancement of Road Safety

September 2011

<http://www.amni.org.uk/>

Vol 14.9

Congratulations this month go to Irene Magowan, and to motorcycle members Raymond Clarke, Norrie Masson and Robert Hughes on becoming Members of the Institute

Good luck and safe driving to any Associate(s) approaching their test.

New Members

This month we would like to welcome, as new members of the Group Becky Harcourt, Melanie Ware and Garry Cairns. We hope that you will not only gain from being a member of our Group but will also enjoy the friendship and camaraderie of our get-togethers.

Meetings

Our Group meetings are usually held (unless otherwise stated) at the Boathouse, which is situated in the harbour carpark, at Groomspoint at 7.00pm on the second Tuesday of each month (except July). For more details of our programme, including the associate course (STAC), 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).

Group news

Observers

Our Observing Team is a vital part of the organisation of the Group. These are the people who give up their time to help Associates prepare for the Advanced Test. In preparation for our new Short Term Associate Course (STAC) an Observer evening was held at the boat house on 30th August where six observers were re-certified for a further three years and Gareth Hughes completed his observer training (congratulations). Thanks go out to our Senior Observer team who ALL turned out to conduct the assessments and to the six Observers who put themselves forward for re-certification.

We have currently a total of 17 in our observer team:
Senior Observers: John Bingham, Angela Bell, David Harcourt, Frank Robertson, Graham Deane.

Observers: Tony Ablett, Alistair Gillespie, Wendy McCormick, Nancy Derby, Leslie Ashe, Trevor McKeown, Ken McMullan, Jim Monaghan, Peter Osborough, Jim Regan, Nicky Bloch, Gareth Hughes.

We will be conducting a rolling re-evaluation programme at our STAC sessions throughout the year, so any of our lapsed observers can come along and conduct an observed run with a Senior observer in the back in order to gain re-certification. We are always pleased to see some old faces again!

We currently have three observers in training, David Hammond, Lesley Steer and Annie McFarland and we hope to get them plenty of experience during the new STAC sessions.

4 members of our Observer Team attended a Region 8 Group training day hosted by the Ballymena Group on 24 September. We had an enjoyable day on some interesting roads in the area, sharing good practice and helping to ensure consistent standards.

If you would like to join in the observer training programme, please join in with the STAC sessions and make yourself known to Graham, Angela or David who will be happy to talk you through the process and get you started. Observing is a great way to keep your own advanced driving skills up to date and useful way to add a coaching accreditation to a CV.

Marie Curie Ladies Driving Challenge 2011- Saturday 15 October

Once again we are giving support to the Marie Curie Ladies Driving Challenge at Kirkistown Race Track on Saturday 15 October. The participating ladies, who have raised sponsorship, have the opportunity to drive anything from a double decker bus or fire engine to a limousine or mini digger. Experienced drivers will help them get to grips with an array of vehicles – from HGVs to street sweepers.

NDAM helps to provide a vital service marshaling the event to ensure that it runs safely and smoothly. A total of 50+ volunteers are required to help run the event on the day (lunch is provided) and we also need some to help set up the driving tests on Friday 14 October.

Come along for a fun day and support those who have raised funds for a worthy cause. If you (or spouses and friends) can help out on either day please give your name at one of the STAC nights, at the AGM on 11 October or contact Angela by email - angelabell696@yahoo.co.uk

Monday 10 October: Stephen Davison

The Mid-Ulster Group have extended an invitation to attend a talk of particular interest to motorcycle members by Stephen Davison, Photographer, Columnist and author of books on road racing. It starts at 8pm in the Jethro Centre, Flush Place, Lurgan. A location map is available on the Jethro Centre website <http://www.jethrocentre.org/contact.html>.

AGM – 11 October

Our October Group night is the AGM. This is your chance to elect the office bearers and committee and to hear about the work that has been going on all year.

This year we are privileged to have as our guest speaker Pat Doughty, Operations Director at IAM HQ in London who is making his first visit to a NI Group. Amongst the topics he will cover will be the future priorities for the IAM. It promises to be an interesting session and will provide an opportunity to ask questions about the IAM generally, its organisation, and the direction it is taking to promote and support safer driving. We would encourage as many members as possible to attend.

Dates for Your Diary

- 27 September ... STAC 2
- 4 October ... STAC 3
- 10 October... Mid-Ulster Group – Talk by Stephen Davison
- 11 October ... AGM and driving practice
- 15 October... Marie Curie Ladies Driving Challenge, Kirkistown
- 25 October ... STAC 4
- 1 November ... STAC 4B and 5
- 8 November... Group night and driving practice
- 22 November... STAC 6
- 29 November ... STAC 7

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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