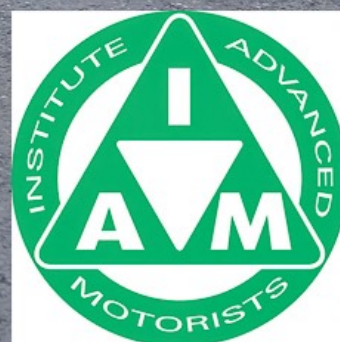


The Road Observer

The Newsletter of the North Down
Advanced Motorists Group



May 2019





The Road Observer

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

Helping to Improve the Standard of Driving and Riding on the Roads in Northern Ireland and the advancement of road safety

May 2019

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

Vol 22.5

Group Contact - David Harcourt

Tel No 07760 578444

[e-mail: david.harcourt@gmail.com](mailto:david.harcourt@gmail.com)

Test Passes

No test passes to report this month.

Good luck and safe driving or riding to any Associates approaching their test.

April Cover Picture

This proved to be a difficult one for members to identify. It was a picture of the roundabout at the top of the on-slip / off-slip from the A2 (Belfast - Bangor Road) to go into the Hollywood Exchange. Congratulations to the two members who were able to identify it - Annie McFarland and Shaun McKittrick.

This month's cover picture is also a local scene. No prizes, just the satisfaction of good observation and, of course, a mention in the Road Observer next month.

Dates for your diary

28 May - STAC 8: Manoeuvring
4 June - Test preparation and additional driving practice
11 June - **Group night** - driving for ice cream
25 June - Additional driving practice

The June Group night will be an opportunity for car Associate members to get in a good long observed drive. It is also open to all Group members - cars and bikes. We are going to Rhinka in Islandmagee for what has been described as the best ice-cream in Northern Ireland. Lets put it to the test! Further details will be issued in a week or so.

STAC - Short Term Associate Course. Associate Members should ensure that you are familiar with the relevant section of the "Associate Handbook" before each STAC night so that you can get the most benefit from the theory session as well as your observed drive.

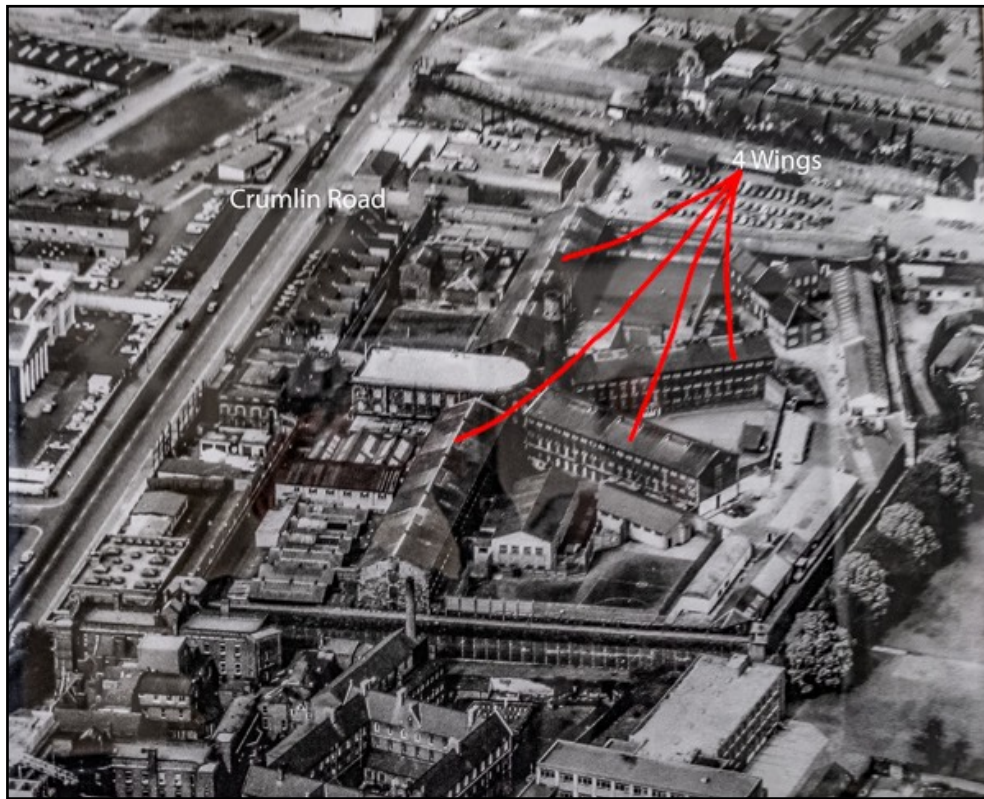
May Group Night - Visit to Crumlin Road Gaol



Queen's University, the Custom House, Belfast Castle, the Palm House in Botanic Gardens are all buildings designed by Sir Charles Lanyon. He also designed churches, viaducts etc. the Crumlin Road Courthouse and the Crumlin Road Gaol. I doubt very much that the inmates of the Gaol appreciated Sir Charles' work.

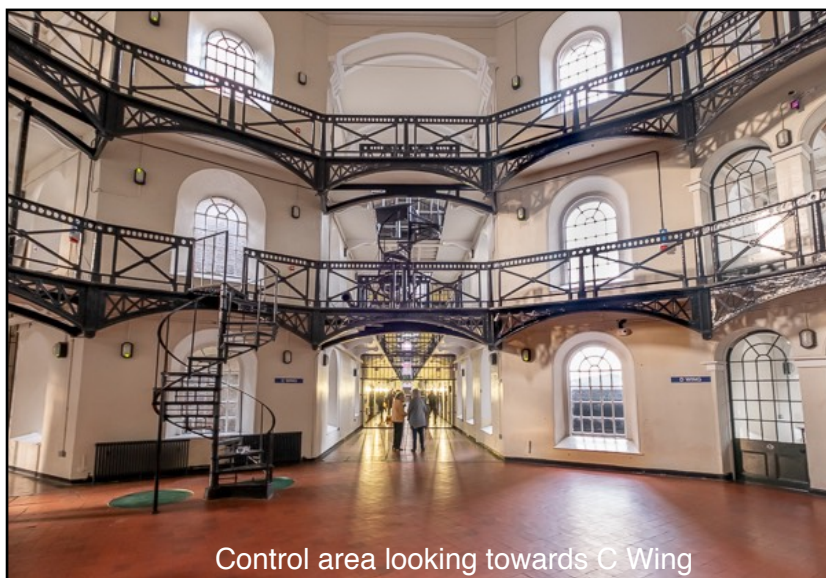
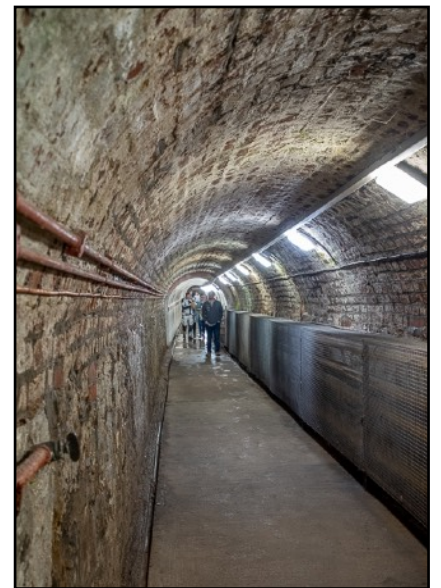
It was built between 1843 and 1845 at a cost of £60,000 as a replacement for the Antrim County Gaol in Carrickfergus. The design is known as the "radial cellular system" which has four separate wings, each one either 3 or 4 stories high. In total there are 640 individual cells leading to the control area.

In 1846 the first 106 inmates were shackled and walked from Carrickfergus to the Crumlin Road. At its inception the Gaol was intend to operate on the basis of one inmate per cell but later, especially in the 1970's when there were cells with 3 or even 4 prisoners in each.



An underground tunnel 84 metres long, under the Crumlin Road, was built in 1849 to link the gaol to the courthouse (also designed by Sir Charles Lanyon, on the opposite side of the road). Inmates were incarcerated for a variety of misdemeanours ranging from petty theft to murder and during the gaol's operation up until 1961, 17 inmates were executed by hanging. The first 5 hangings were conducted in public but from 1901 they were conducted in an execution chamber in C wing. The bodies of executed prisoners were buried in unconsecrated ground within the prison against the back wall. Apart from one prisoner whose initials are carved on the wall it is not known exactly where the remains were buried.

Our tour began with a visit to the prisoners' reception area and then to the tunnel under the Crumlin Road. In a visit to the Governor's office Angela attempted to negotiate her early release!



Control area looking towards C Wing

We then made our way to the ground floor section of the control area and into C wing where there are a number of exhibits in the cells depicting life in the prison including a cell for women prisoners, a 2 person cell, a padded cell, and a cell with a flogging rack. Women were held in the gaol until the early part of the 20th century after which they were held in Armagh Gaol. Children were also imprisoned for stealing food or clothing and sentences ranging from a week to a month could be imposed. This could be increased to 3 months in the case of subsequent offences.

A 10 year old Patrick Magee was sentenced to 3 months for a second offence in 1858 and resulted in the boy committing suicide by hanging in his cell. That same year a law was passed forbidding children under the age of 14 being sent to an adult prison.

Between 1922 and 1961 corporal punishment for someone over the age of 18 was with a cat o'nine tails or a birch rod but only with a birch rod if the prisoner was under 18. Over 18's could get up to 36 lashes and up to 18 for someone under the age of 18.

Cells were 13 feet long by 7 feet wide and originally had a fixed basin and a WC. These were later removed because of frequent blockages and to prevent prisoners from using the pipes to communicate with each other. They were replaced by chamber pots and the resulting practice of slopping out each morning.

Towards the end of the tour we visited the condemned man's cell. Explaining the sequence of events on the morning of an execution, our guide suddenly slid a bookcase to one side to reveal the execution chamber itself. It was only a couple of steps from here to the macabre sight of the hangman's noose hanging from the very beam that was used in the gaol's executions. We then visited the outer perimeter wall where the bodies were buried and were shown the initials on the wall of the only known grave location (thought to be been inscribed by a prison officer who established a rapport with the condemned man during his period in the condemned cell).



Flogging rack



Female cell

The Gaol was closed in 1996, a restoration project was announced in 2010 and it opened as a visitor attraction in 2012.

This was a fascinating visit and if you weren't able to get along on the night it is well worth making the effort to do a tour sometime.



Angela and the Governor



2 inmate cell

Group Subscriptions

Thank you if you have already paid your your Group Membership subscription and a gentle reminder if you haven't done so yet. Details of your subscription were issued to email on 2 April by Simon Beckett our Membership Secretary. If you didn't receive an email it is either because you joined the Group within the last year or you are an honorary member. Details of how to pay your subscription are set out in Simon's email.

The picture below demonstrates the consequences of failing to pay!



New IAM RoadSmart Chairman

In his new role as Chairman of IAM RoadSmart, Managing Director of Ford of Britain Andy Barratt has pledged to focus on driver and rider behaviour in the road safety debate.

In his new position, which starts on 1 April 2019, he will launch a revamped IAM RoadSmart Manifesto. The Manifesto highlights the seven areas where IAM RoadSmart believe they can make the most impact in reducing the number of people killed and injured on UK roads.

With an emphasis on the potential that improved driver and rider behaviour could have on the safety of our roads, the Manifesto acknowledges the importance of driving to the economy and business. It should be seen as a core skill for business and a health and safety responsibility for all organisations in the public and private sector.

The Manifesto will form the basis of a submission from IAM RoadSmart to the House of Commons Transport Committee Inquiry into Road Safety.

Andy has taken on the prestigious role of IAM RoadSmart Chairman from Ken Kier OBE, who steps down this month having been in the role for three years.

Andy has almost four decades of experience at the Ford Motor Company where he started as an apprentice. Since 2015 he has been Managing Director of Ford of Britain.

Speaking of his appointment, Andy said: "To be appointed chairman of IAM RoadSmart is an honour. I wholeheartedly support IAM RoadSmart's Manifesto pledge that post-test training is vital for safer roads. I'm delighted to be taking a leading role for a charity whose principal purpose is to make better drivers and riders."



“In my roles at Ford, developing safe vehicles is the number one priority. In taking the Chair of IAM RoadSmart, my focus will be to ensure that human factors are high on the road safety agenda in order to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on roads in the UK.

“As a cyclist, driver and pedestrian I’ve been pleased to lead Ford’s ‘Share the Road’ initiatives, encouraging cooperation and understanding between road users. As a motor industry representative chairing IAM RoadSmart, I believe that we can continue to find common ground, cooperation and practical ways forward to make sure that real change happens - with vehicle makers, politicians, the media, and with all road users.”

IAM RoadSmart’s Manifesto focuses on the importance of boosting the confidence of drivers and making it an enjoyable activity, while keeping everyone safe at the same time.

Embracing all stages of a driving and riding career from immediate post-test into older age, the Manifesto underlines the importance of periodic refresher courses. It also includes extending driver rehabilitation after a conviction for a wider variety of motoring convictions.

It also highlights the changing world of new technology as the switch to autonomous and connected vehicles continues to gather pace.

Mike Quinton, IAM RoadSmart Chief Executive Officer, said: “I am delighted that we have attracted someone of the calibre, standing and seniority in the UK automotive industry as Andy to the role of Chairman.

“I am confident his knowledge and contacts will be invaluable in driving us forward and I look forward to drawing on his skills and leadership experience.”

And finally..... on a more serious note this month. Always be able to stop in the distance you can see to be clear on your side of the road. On single track roads you need to double that distance....you might meet one of these coming towards you around a blind corner:



The views expressed in the “Road Observer” are not necessarily those of the Editor, the North Down Advanced Motorists Group or the Institute of Advanced Motorists.