

GUILDFORD & DISTRICT GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

Registered Charity No. 1051069

NEWSLETTER



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Autum 2007

www.guildford.iam-org.uk



Clocks Go back 28 October!

Data Protection Act

Members and Associates are reminded that your name, address, telephone number and membership details are stored on computer files to assist with the management of the group and the distribution of Guildford Group correspondence.

We do not pass your details on to anyone else.

Editor's Notes

Please note that the views and comments herein are published without prejudice, being those of the writers and not necessarily those of the Group or the IAM.

Copy date for the Winter edition is Friday 23 November 2007.

KEY DATES

FREE TO ALL: Police 'Better Driving Lecture' Thursday, 29 November
7pm, Ripley Large Hall

Observed Runs

Sunday runs 2007 - all 3rd Sundays this year

21 October

18 November

16 December

Sunday runs 2008 - all 3rd Sundays next year

20 January

20 July

17 February

17 August

16 March

21 September

20 April

19 October

18 May

16 November

15 June Father's Day

21 December

Committee Meetings - Ripley Small Hall

Thursdays between 8pm and 10pm

1 November

2008:

3 January

6 March

1 May

3 July

4 September

6 November

Observers Meeting - Ripley Large Hall

Saturday, 9 Feb 2008 9am - 1pm

AGM and Observers Meeting - Ripley Large Hall

Saturday, 13 September 9am - 1pm

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Third Sunday of each month at 9.15am, 10.30am and 11.30am

Guildford Borough Council, Woking Road Dept, Guildford.
Telephone 01483 564 814 on Sunday from 9am to 1pm

Appointments for Observed runs -
contact the Chairman on 07817 490 446 or 01252 519 355



Associate Membership £85

Entitles the Associate to 6 Observed Runs in their own vehicle during the 12 months following the date of their first appointment, and includes:

- + the cost of the IAM Advanced Test
- + the first year's membership of the Institute on passing the test
- + copy of 'How to Be an Advanced Driver' book
- + copy of 'The Highway Code'

Full Group Membership (whilst a Member of the Institute) £5 per annum

DON'T FORGET! Associates aged 25 years and under enjoy a discount of:

£10 off the Associate fee

£10 off the IAM fee

- that's all the benefits of IAM training for only £65!

Help a younger driver be a safer driver - pass on our details!

Hello and welcome to the Autumn 2007 edition of the Guildford and District IAM Group's newsletter.

We'd like more stories about you, our Members, so please don't be shy in sending in your letters, both good and bad! Your feedback is invaluable, and your positive stories offer inspiration to new Members. Send in your contributions to the Editor via the website.

I look forward to hearing from you soon,

Louisa Wright-Wastell
Editor

GIFT AID - Thank You to Our Members

We extend a heartfelt thank you to all the Members who were able to Gift Aid their membership fees. We have been able to claim an impressive £860.62 to help fund the group's activities to bring the benefits of the IAM to even more Members.

CHRISTMAS PRESENT DILEMMA? IAM CAN HELP

Christmas is coming and with it the perennial problem of what presents to give. We all look for something, which is useful, affordable, and enjoyable and has an enduring value.

Then what better present is there which meets all the above criteria than to give a loved one a 'Skill for Life' Course? It is a sure way to help them become a safer road user.

Remember; someone who has passed the Advanced Driving Test is 75% less likely to be involved in an accident. As an Advanced Driver you are well aware of the advantages improved driving skills can bring so why not offer others the opportunity of benefiting from the advice and guidance provided by your local IAM group?

The 'Skill for Life' costs £85. For those under 26 it is £65 when purchased through the Guildford Group.

Contact Chris Hughes on 07814 172531 and solve a present problem!

Paul Wallace-Stock
Chairman
Guildford and District Group



CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2007

Well another year has flown past, congestion/road charging is well established (and apparently successful) and we will certainly see a number of other schemes over the next few years. A trial of active traffic management is being conducted on the M42 following on from the success of variable speed limits on the M25. We have already seen prototypes of driverless cars. I suppose it will have to come but I do feel we risk having the fun taken out of driving. On that theme, the IAM is seen by some as a 'kill joy'. We should all try to put over the message that driving well can also be fun as it is that much more enjoyable!

We continue to be involved with the Surrey Police Driving School. In June the Police gave an excellent 'Better Driving' lecture at Ripley Village Hall, which was very well attended and perhaps sends a message about the subject and the publicity for this type of event. I thank Terry Moody for taking on the organisation and for doing such a good job in ensuring so many attended. Of interest there is a follow-up lecture, which will deal with motorway driving on Thursday 29th November at Ripley Village Hall at 7pm. All are welcome to this, our next free lecture.

The level of test passes remains good and you may well have seen the local publicity the group gained from the Wilson twins who passed the test within weeks of each other, and are the youngest twins to pass the Advanced Driving test. However, the flow of new Associates into the system has failed to keep up with the numbers who are going forward for their test. This means that we have no waiting list for Associates to start (what a difference a couple of years makes!) and the Observers are under worked and I don't wish them to become bored. It also means it is more important than ever that you attend your booked runs. So if you have friends, relatives or work colleagues you think might be interested please broach the subject.

We appreciate that not everyone may wish to prepare for the Advanced Driving Test so do not forget about 'DriveCheck'. This is a single Observed run and provides individuals with an assessment of their driving. Should they then wish to undertake the full 'Skill for Life' package there is a discount on the usual price. Also don't forget about the reduction for those under 26 years old. If 'Skill for Life' is purchased through the group they will get a £20 discount. In addition the group will hold a draw of the names of all those under 26 years who pass their test this year and the winner will receive a prize to the value of £50. Road deaths account for half of all accidental deaths for those under 30 years; help us ensure our young people live to a ripe old age.

At this time in the year I think of all those people in the group who give freely of their time and without whom the group would cease to function. It is their enthusiasm, energy and commitment, which ensure that we continue to play our part in improving road safety within our area. I would like to thank all of the Observers and the team who help on the Sunday runs (Shân, Christine and John), Tony our Webmaster, Louisa our Editor and last but not least my fellow committee members without whom the management of the group would not function. I would also like to thank those Members and Associates who gave freely of their time to stand in the pouring rain at the Surrey County Show. If you have some skill or time you can spare to help the Group we are always looking for additional helpers. Could you help publicise the group or organise a social activity? Every little helps to ease the burden on the rest of us and make the group more meaningful for the other Members.

Finally I would like to devote some space for a special thank you to someone who has supported the group over many years.

From the moment he passed his Advanced Driving test in 1992 Paul Whitehead has been involved in many activities within the group. It was not long before he qualified as an Observer and was soon elected to the group Committee.

Paul has always been a willing volunteer and he assumed the role of Group Chairman in 1999 which he held for 3 years before becoming Group Secretary for the past 5 years. Always at the forefront of any event, Paul managed the attendance at the Surrey County Show and this often involved collecting and returning the IAM caravan to/from various parts of the country.

I offer my personal thanks to Paul for the support he has given me over the past 5 years and welcome his intention to remain on the group committee in order to bring his sound guidance and council to our deliberations.

Stella Croom-Johnson is taking over the role of Group Secretary from Paul and we wish her every success and thank her for taking on this important role.

Wishing you continued safe and enjoyable motoring

Paul Wallace-Stock
Group Chairman



Paul Whitehead (left) receives his IAM Certificate of Commendation from Chairman Paul Wallace-Stock

Thank you to everyone who has written in letters of praise to the Guildford and District Group's team of Observers. We're delighted so many of you are passing the advanced test; not only a testament to the driving talent and ability we're lucky enough to have come through our doors, but also to the talent and dedication of the Observers.

Well done to everyone who's passed recently. The Observers are delighted to lend their time, expertise and support and appreciate those who have taken the time to let us know.

"Dear Mr Wallace-Stock,

I recently did the Advanced Motorists programme at Guildford. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and all your instructors for spending the time you do to help others become better drivers.

I took my test today and am pleased to say I passed.

Please pass on my thanks to all the Observers. I do appreciate the time and effort put in by them all. Keep up the good work.

**With very best wishes,
Mary-Claire Travers"**

"Paul,

I took the Advanced Driving Test today and was "recommended for membership".

May I thank the Guildford Group for their help with the preparation for the test and their encouragement during the observed runs. I appreciate that you and others give up your spare time to do this work.

*Thanks
Martin Marriott"*

"Hi Gerry,

Just to let you know that I passed my advanced test on Sunday 5th August.

Also, Terry mentioned to me about becoming an Observer myself which I am definitely interested in doing.

**Hope to hear from you soon anyway.
Carole Stacey"**

The 32nd AGM of the Guildford Group took place on Saturday, 8 September - here is my AGM report and review of the past 12 months at Guildford IAM.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

Your committee has welcomed some new members during this year. Louisa Wright-Wastell accepted the challenge of producing the Newsletter and she has already made very good progress with new ideas and some fresh input. The newsletter is still an important way for us to keep in touch with Members, Associates and our many friends and contacts, and circulation is close to 500 each issue, including those who see it on our website and those who get a 'second hand' copy. We send a copy to all the other IAM groups in Region 2 and receive some in return; occasionally we get requests from others who wish to use material we have published, a positive measure of the success of the newsletter.

What do you do with your newsletter when you have read it? Perhaps it could go to the local doctor's or dentist's surgery, or be put on the notice board where you work? We could vastly increase the circulation of the newsletter and therefore the exposure of the group if every copy was put in a place where others could read it. If you need further copies, please let Lou know and we can increase the print run for very little additional cost.

We also welcomed Shân Hughes to work on our Front Desk at Sunday Runs with Christine Wallace-Stock. This is another important role keeping track of all the Observers and Associates as they come and go during the course of some 4 hours on a Sunday. Shân and Christine look after all the paperwork, organise changes to Associate runs, make sure the right Observer goes out with the right Associate, and generally ensure the smooth running of our monthly meetings.

Observer training has been continuing this year with a number of new Associates arriving and some refresher training for the seasoned members of the team. The Observer team remains at a good level with new Observers to support those who have been with us for some time.

REGION 2 AND HEAD OFFICE

Trevor Pembroke, Region 2 Co-ordinator has been to visit us on a couple of occasions this year to offer support and advice, most recently at our last committee meeting.

We supported a Region 2 meeting earlier in the summer. These events are a great place to get alongside other groups and see how they operate, and often an opportunity to borrow some of their ideas. Nick Wright attended the last meeting and we hope other Observers will take the opportunity to go to these events in the future. We were also invited to a London Group's meeting but it unfortunately clashed with other events. Nevertheless, we appreciate the opportunity to maintain contact with other groups and will continue to support them over the coming years.

The IAM National Conference in October 2006 was held at Alton Towers as a finale to the 50th anniversary celebrations. We sent a representative to the conference as usual - the focus was on Young Drivers and how to attract them to the IAM, a subject we have spent many hours debating in the Guildford Group, and with some success as I report later.

ASSOCIATES

The intake of new Associates this year has been one of the disappointing aspects of 2006/7. We would have hoped for a strong showing from the high profile advertising surrounding the IAM 50th Anniversary and the 'knock-on' effect of that activity, but this has not been the case. We have struggled to maintain Associate numbers this year, and despite some useful marketing initiatives, we seem to be in a lean period at the moment.

We have had a few members of the Public ask for 'DriveCheck' which is a £25 assessment of their driving by an Observer. If the candidate then wishes to join the IAM as a result of that assessment they receive a healthy discount on the full 'Skill for Life' fee, and some of our Observers have been successful in converting such candidates to full Associate status. However, although this is very welcome, this is a small part of the shortfall we need to make up in the months to come.

Much was made of the success we had preparing local 18 year-old twins Chloe and Martine from Cobham; they were probably the youngest twins to achieve IAM test success and the story was publicised in the IAM magazine, the local newspaper, and other places. We hope that initiatives such as this will encourage more young drivers to sign up with us. Also, we received sponsorship from a previous group Observer and Secretary, Kevin Farquharson, who offered two 50% discount vouchers for two Under 26 Associates to help with the cost of their IAM test preparation. Kevin's vouchers were used to good effect during the summer, and this sort of practical help for young drivers is greatly appreciated.

OBSERVED RUNS AND TESTS

Sunday runs continue to provide the monthly meeting place for the Group, and we have been reasonably busy at each session. Although Associate numbers are down we are still sending a steady stream of test ready candidates to local Examiners, so we have filled the gaps by training new Observers and refreshing and re-testing those Observers who were first assessed some years ago.

This year we recorded 33 active Observers and 58 new Associates - unfortunately both these figures are down on last year although we retain our enviable record of close to a 100% test pass rate. We believe that nearly 50 passed their test during the year - well done to them.

MARKETING

Our usual plot at the Surrey County Show on May Bank Holiday Monday this year was another great disappointment. To say the day was a wash-out was an understatement! The whole show was affected by the most awful winter weather, both during preparation and on the day itself. Unfortunately our plot, although bigger than last year, resembled a muddy motorcycle park, and many of the people who turned out to help spent the day wringing out their clothes and wading around the site, freezing and quite despondent. We saw very few potential Associates and eventually gave up at 4pm much to the relief of those who were left. We must thank everyone who turned out on the day, since all those who said they would help did actually turn up, and this at least made the day a bit more fun!

We are continuing our efforts to place leaflets in motoring related retail outlets, and we hope that this will lead to other sources for new Associates in the near future. Marketing our group has been the subject of lengthy discussions at committee meetings recently, and any help that can be offered to 'spread the word' will be gratefully received.

ACTIVITIES

Two Surrey Police Driving School Instructors delivered a lecture in July and a large number of Members and Associates turned up to share experiences and discuss the finer points of hazard perception and management as Advanced Drivers. Our thanks go to Terry Moody for organising this event and for his efforts to plan future events for the benefit of all our Members and Associates. Look out for more dates in the newsletter and on the website.

We also managed to get a number of Observers and committee members together for a skittles match and this was very successful. If you would like to organise something for fellow Members or you need us to assist with an event you are involved with we would be pleased to hear from you. Skid pan sessions remain popular, so this activity will continue in future.

VOTE OF THANKS

My annual report is never complete without a big 'thank you' to all those who make the group as successful as it is. John Murphy stands on the gate at Bellfields yard in all weathers to greet you, and never complains! Shân and Christine sit at the desk each month and manage all the appointments and paperwork, keeping the Observers in control and looking after the Associates. All the Observers turn up voluntarily each month to take Associates out and help them improve their driving skills, and the committee keep the whole thing together, running as a well oiled machine! Thank you to every one who has helped us during the year, and particularly to my fellow Officers for their continued support and all those who responded to my call for 'wet weather' experts at the County Show.

I have served as Secretary for a number of years now, and Chairman for 3 years before that, and feel it is time for someone else to take over and help to steer the Group in a new direction. I therefore, stood down at the 2007 AGM and I delighted you voted for Stella Croom-Johnson as your new Group Secretary. Stella has been attending committee meetings during 2007 and gradually become au fait with the normal running of the Group. I am sure she will quickly take over the reins and make a positive contribution. I wish her and my fellow committee members well for the future and hope that you will accept me as a 'back-bencher' from now on!

Paul Whitehead

On Thursday 6th September Hampshire Fire and Rescue held a Road Safety Day at Sainsbury's Farnham.

Trevor Pembroke, our Regional Coordinator spent the afternoon there and we gained four new 'Skill for Life' Members.

There was a brake reaction tester linked to one of the emergency fire vehicles (see picture) and a set of goggles that give the impression of consumption of alcohol while you try to walk a straight line (see picture)

David Thomas, casualty officer for Surrey was on site with a police camera as used in the camera van. Apparently it can see a gold tooth at 1200 metres! Dave was also demonstrating a breath testing kit.

We had the excitement of some of the crew being called away to an emergency! I guess it was not exciting if you were the one needing these guys to help you out!

Another day to be arranged in Spring 2008 and details will be

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FREE Lecture with Surrey Police: MOTORWAYS

Thursday, 29 November

7pm

Ripley Village Main Hall

Free refreshments

ALL WELCOME!

A report published earlier this year by the House of Commons Transport Committee makes for grim reading. Just consider the following statistics :

More than 1,000 people are killed on the roads every year in crashes involving young drivers under the age of 25. This works out at nearly twenty young people each week.

A third of all drivers killed in road collisions are under age 25.

Half of all drivers killed AT NIGHT are under age 25.

Since only one in eight licence-holders is under the age of 25, we can see that this age-group is responsible for a disproportionately high number of accidents.

In the face of these figures the Government is considering raising the age for holding a full driving licence from 17 to 18. Such a move would be welcomed by the insurance industry, road safety campaigners and motoring groups including the RAC. However, in a recent telephone conversation with Steve Mead, Assistant Chief Examiner at the IAM, he explained that simply raising the age-limit would not help. Instead, he favours better post-test driver training - and this is where we come in.

As Members of the IAM we can all help to do something about this appalling situation by encouraging young people to get in touch with their local Group and take the Advanced Driving Test. All of us must know someone who has recently passed their driving test, and provided they have gained at least a few months' experience "on the road" we should be trying to get them into the Group. Steve believes we should be looking at new Associates who have a minimum of three months' experience. However, as far as the Guildford Group is concerned, we would not normally want to take on a new Associate who has been driving for less than about a year, and who feels they have gained experience in all types of weather and on all types of road.

It has to be said that - on a typical Sunday morning - we see very few drivers who are under 25. Yet these are precisely the kind of drivers we need to attract.

So I am appealing to you, reading this article, to spread the word and maybe help to make an impact on the casualty figures.

Terry Moody
Senior Observer
Guildford Group IAM

DON'T BE A STATISTIC

If you are under 25 and you've done your Advanced Test, you could help prevent more statistics like this by helping Guildford IAM encourage more under 25s complete the training.

We are looking for under 25s to sit on the Guildford IAM committee. It is less than one evening a month, to give your advice and experience on why you were attracted to doing the IAM and helping the committee find the best ways to keep more young drivers safer on our roads.

If you'd like to be involved, contact the Chairman. Thank you.

Every year, motorists find themselves at the mercy of the British winter. Taking a few simple precautions BEFORE setting off on any journey could be the difference between becoming stranded or broken-down and completing your journey successfully. Here are some tips:

BATTERY In cold weather, starting your engine causes more strain on your car battery than during any other time. Have your battery checked by your local garage for efficiency and if necessary, have it replaced. At the very least, carry a good set of jump-leads to enable you to be started by someone else with a healthy battery, should the worst happen.

FUEL Ensure that you have more than enough fuel for your journey. A good rule of thumb for normal fuel levels is never to let your tank get more than half-empty. This way, you could at least keep your vehicle running to keep the heaters active before you have to rely on the blankets and warm clothing.

SNOW SHOVEL If you can, carry one with you in your boot, in case you need to dig your car out of deep snow. Also carry snow chains if you have them.. If you don't, a length of strong rope will suffice in an emergency.

When driving in snow, bear the following in mind:

1. Keep in the highest gear possible to reduce the chances of wheel-slip and, therefore, skids.
2. Avoid harsh steering and harsh braking - these could lead to skidding .
3. Keep to a steady speed - avoid speeding up or slowing down quickly, these could lead to skidding and loss of control over your vehicle.

If you are unlucky enough to be snowed in whilst travelling:

Try to ensure that your vehicle's exhaust outlet is not covered. This could cause your engine to stall and perhaps prevent it from restarting (as the exhaust gasses cannot escape and will starve the engine of the air it needs to function.)

Another danger is exhaust gasses leaking into the car itself (especially if your exhaust system has a fault) a potentially causing carbom monoxide poisoning. Open the windows every half hour or so to replenish the fresh air in the car...they only need to be open for a minute or so to do this. If you or your passengers must sleep in the vehicle, make sure that at least one person is awake at all times (take it in turns to do so, if you are stranded for long periods of time.)

Bear in mind that, when your engine has been switched off, cold air gathers first in the footwell of the car, so raise feet to a higher level to sustain warmth for longer.

TAKE SOME ESSENTIALS to keep you as safe and warm as possible should bad weather strike:

Water - to keep you hydrated, but keep a second bottle to top up car levels or screen wash.

Snacks - chocolate is best for instant sugar and to lift your mood. It also keeps longer.

Entertainment - to make waiting for help more bearable.

Warm clothing and blankets - huddle together under a blanket to keep warmer

Mobile phone - charge it, programme the numbers you need, and take a car charger if you can

Autum draws the nights in... but also closer towards Christmas and New Year when the party season starts hotting up! So with the usual mission of slimming down into party outfits, the bright sparks at Sheila's Wheels (the women's car insurance people) have come up with the answer to the common problem of driving in dangerous, high-heeled party shoes. The solution - they propose - could be Sheila's Heels!

Here's what some recent PR said about the new shoe concept:

"Sheila's Heels - a driving shoe for ladies that goes from flat to heel at the push of a button...

Besides looking glam - we don't know about you but aesthetics always top our list when we're cruising the M25 - the design concept is aimed at those 11.5 million women drivers in the UK who put themselves and others at risk by wearing the wrong footwear when they're behind the wheel.



"Stilettos, sling-backs and strappy sandals aren't the sensible choice when it comes to controlling a car," says Jacky Brown from Sheila's Wheels. "Our Sheila Driving Heel design could provide safety-conscious female motorists with the ultimate driving shoe - allowing women to wear a safe flat shoe whilst driving, and a fashionable heel once they are out of the car."

Unlike your average pair of Jimmy Choos, Sheila's Heels won't get scuffed at the back - the heel tucks up and into the shoe - and won't get caught under the pedal, thanks to the flat shoe option. Head over to www.ilovesheilas.com to give your opinion on the 'Sheila Driving Heel'."

There is a serious side to the story; More than 11.5 million women drivers in the UK are putting themselves and other drivers at risk by wearing the wrong footwear when behind the wheel, according to new research from Sheilas' Wheels.

One in ten female motorists admit that they have had a car accident or a 'near-miss' because of their shoes slipping off or getting stuck between, or under, the foot pedals whilst driving.

The 'Safe Shoes' report shows that a massive 80% of female drivers wear inappropriate footwear when in control of a car - choosing style over safety.

A third of all female drivers confess to wearing flip-flops, while 18% claim that they have worn no shoes at all when driving, which experts say can be extremely hazardous and is currently illegal in some parts of the UK.

In fact, just under half of women drivers said they chose what shoes to wear when getting ready in the morning based on what went best with their outfit rather than being the safest for driving in.

Under a fifth of female drivers keep a spare pair of 'driving shoes' in the car to change into, while nearly a quarter admit they can't be bothered to change their shoes when behind the wheel even if they know they are not the safest for driving.

Jacky Brown continues, "It's astonishing that so many women are putting themselves, their passengers and other drivers at risk by wearing the wrong shoe or no shoe at all whilst behind the wheel.

"Our Sheila Driving Heel design could allow women to wear a safe flat shoe whilst driving, and a fashionable heel once they are out of the car."

The report highlighted that 63% of women called for better guidelines to advise them on the correct form of footwear to wear when driving. A lack of understanding is clearly evident as over half of female motorists believed that sports trainers were the safest shoes to drive in - even though their thick soles and chunky design limit both movement between, and contact with, the pedals.

Dianne Ferreira, spokesperson for Brake the national road safety charity, added: "An alarming



number of female drivers simply do not realise the danger they are putting themselves, and others, in by driving in inappropriate shoes. High heels, platforms and flip-flops can seriously hamper your ability to drive safely, and could have fatal consequences. It only takes a few seconds to change your shoes before each journey to help ensure you arrive safely."



The Safe Shoes report also reveals that although two thirds of women wear heels when behind the wheel, they cited a number of disadvantages - all of which are eliminated by the 'Sheila Driving Heel' design:

"It damages or scuffs the back of the heel" (52%)

- with the 'Sheila Driving Heel', the heel tucks up into the shoe and out of harm's way

"Heels can sometimes get caught under the pedal when driving" (49%)

- the flat shoe option removes this potentially dangerous problem

"Wearing heels causes an uncomfortable driving position" (43%)

- the flat shoe option lessens pressure on the knee and lower back, improving comfort behind the wheel

"Heels don't provide enough grip" (31%)

- the 'Sheila Driving Heel' shoe has a discrete yet effective tread on the sole, to aid grip on the pedals

"It wears out the driving mat" (17%)

- the 'Sheila Driving Heel' shoe has a curved back to aid pivoting of the ankle and remove the possibility of damage

Well I can't wait to see this great innovation hit our shops soon! Ed.

FIRST ON THE SCENE?

Those Members who were able to attend our open meeting on Saturday 8th September were involved in a lively and most useful discussion on the subject of what to do if you come across a road accident. The subject was outlined first by Kevin LeGrand and Paul Wallace-Stock who had prepared a series of questions and possible scenarios to help us understand the issues and think about the way we would approach an accident scene. Specialist advice then came from Trevor Dickinson, IAM staff Examiner AND Traffic Accident Investigation Consultant, plus Superintendent Tony Davenport from St John Ambulance service; a local volunteer ambulance man and trained first aid specialist. Between them they managed to dispense some very sound advice to the audience, and guide us in the right way to handle these situations. And it was all done with good humour and a healthy dose of common sense.

As with many things, there is not always a right answer for every situation since circumstances can vary greatly from one incident to the next, but there are some golden rules that will work on most occasions.

SAFETY FIRST There is no point in arriving at an accident scene and adding your name to the casualty list. Lots of things can conspire against you and it can be a tough decision to make if there is someone trapped in a vehicle and it is on fire. The risk of injury to rescuers must be balanced against the chance of saving a life. Always stop and think about the risks to yourself and others around you before leaping into action. It may be better to stop other cars and prevent them from hitting the wreckage first before trying to go to someone's aid - at least you will then have someone else there to call for help.

Once alongside the vehicle, watch out for all the airbags as you don't want to be hit in the back of the head whilst releasing a driver's seatbelt - some have a delayed reaction. And use gloves and goggles if you can to protect your hands and eyes - carry them in the car.

Never take chances with tankers or spilt liquids. It is almost impossible to tell with certainty what might be spilt on the road - it may be water or it may be 95% Sulphuric Acid, an instant killer; they are both clear colourless liquids. Keep out of the way and 'up wind', read the numbers on any Hazchem orange plates if you can, and call the emergency services with the information.

Anyone injured and shouting is breathing - first look for those who might not be breathing. Establishing the number of casualties can be hard since people get thrown from cars and sometimes walk or run away from the scene, confused or on purpose. Finding a casualty who is not breathing and restoring their airway by a simple lift under the chin can save a life.

Work out what to tell the emergency services. Think about what you need to tell the operator. Where are you exactly, remembering that the call centre may be in Ipswich and they do not know the "Hare and Hounds" near Aldershot. On a motorway, try to use the static phones as they locate you precisely - there is no point in using your mobile phone and asking for help on the wrong carriageway by mistake. Note how many are injured, and roughly how badly. Is there access to the scene or is the route blocked, by a fallen tree or electricity pylon for instance?

Are there hazardous chemicals on any of the vehicles? Look for the orange diamond signs. The more detailed the information at the first call the better the response will be, as the right

number of the right people will be dispatched. And you can use 999 or 112, the EU standard number.

TAKE CHARGE An accident scene needs a leader to make sure that everything gets done efficiently. Send someone to get help. Send someone to stop traffic. Ask someone to help the injured if it is safe to do so. Brief the emergency services when they arrive. Use reflective coats if you have them, and park so that you can be seen whilst leaving room for ambulances.

TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS if possible. There is often an overriding desire to get the road open and move the bent metal, but in this litigious age we live in someone will be making a claim from someone else, and a set of photos of the accident scene will be of immense help to the accident investigators. It is possible for a skilled investigator to work out speed and direction of travel from the evidence at the scene, and anything that is moved (even a bit of glass or a bumper) will change the assessment and may invalidate the evidence. Unless there is a real safety issue or a life threatening situation, leave everything as it is at the scene until the Police arrive, or at least until you are sure there are lots of good photos. This is particularly true for the slight injury accidents where civil claims for injuries and insurer's counter claims can go on for ever if evidence is disputed.

Tony then encouraged us to think about the forces involved in an accident with a motor vehicle. Energy has to go somewhere, and if your body is travelling at 30mph one minute and zero the next, it keeps going until restrained. Hopefully this energy is dissipated through a properly fitted seat belt, but if not then there is a tell-tale 'bulls eye' in the windscreen. Internal organs will often be badly damaged in high speed accidents and the theory is that at speeds over 40mph it is very hard for the human body to survive in a normal car accident. Looking at the damage sustained by the vehicle can give clues to the damage to the person inside and guide the first aider to the injuries if the casualty is unconscious.

Recent TV adverts asking us to slow down to 30mph to save a child have a rationale behind them - at 30mph the forces in the accident are around half those at 40mph. The current trend to have 20mph zones in towns follows the same logic - there are half the forces involved at 20mph as there are at 30mph. Mathematical fact. Slow down!

Finally we were treated to the sight of our Group Secretary being rolled around on the floor of Ripley Village Hall, but with a serious purpose. The 'recovery position' is the standard way of placing an injured but breathing casualty in a safe position until they recover or are taken to hospital. It is a simple manoeuvre that everyone can do; even children can manage to place large adults in the right position with a little training as it involves technique over strength. Go to a first aid training course to learn all these techniques - it costs very little other than your time, and it is time well spent.

There is not enough space here to cover all the fascinating facts and interesting anecdotes that we discussed at the meeting. If you think you may have missed a really great presentation, you are right. Come along next time and join in the fun! We have open meetings every February and September as well as occasional events at other times of the year. Look out for the dates in the newsletter and bring your friends and family. Someone who was there on Saturday may have learned something that could save a life. Was it you? Will you be first on the scene?

Is it a Jungle Out There?

We'd like your photos of signs and notices that are obscured by overgrown hedges and trees for an IAM initiative.



Please email your images to
the Chairman

Thank You!

Well... following last issue's appeal, it seems, occasionally, it IS a jungle out there!

We had two pictures come in from the Farnborough area. As you can see, they are very important for all motorists using these stretches of road. But they're not much good in these conditions!



Something about a bridge?
Lorries maybe..?

Er...let's hope the cyclists
don't rely on this one!



**Keep sending your pics in via the
website**

**if you see any
and can snap them... safely!**

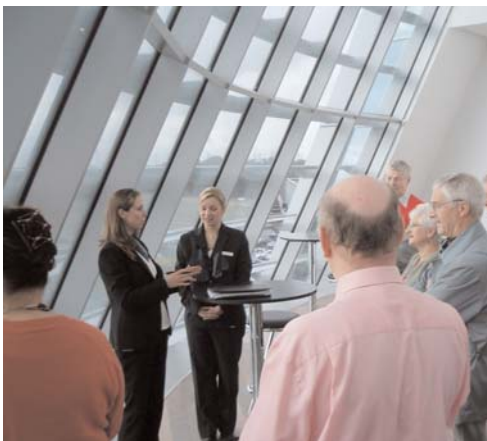
GUILDFORD IAM VISIT TO MERCEDES WORLD Saturday, 29 September 2007


16 Members of the Group visited Mercedes-Benz World at Brooklands. The visit was very well organised by Terry Moody and our thanks go to him for a sterling effort. Upon arrival the group assembled in one of the main display areas to be welcomed formally by our guides Samantha and Liz.

We were also treated to a glass of Champagne! Well we were not

driving for a few hours. Then followed the history of the site from its early days as an airfield and racetrack where Mercedes cars performed so well in the early years.

There are a number of 'M-B World' centres in the world and they are part museum, part vehicle handling facility, part show room. Yes, they will sell you a car if you insist. We also covered the various driving activities available at the centre. These included; Skid pan (½ hr - £75), Off-road



(1 hr - £100), Performance (1 hr - £125) and a Kids driving course (½ hr - £30). The guides were at pains to stress the efforts M-B had made to preserve parts of the original track and also some of the wildlife habitats. To emphasis the point a healthy looking fox ran out in front of my car as I was leaving - the training worked!

We then moved on to be regaled by Stewart who told us about the early years of the motorcar and how Mercedes and Benz came together in the first place We had the opportunity to inspect a number of M-B cars from right across the range.

We were then split into two groups. The first went off to a cinema where they experienced a virtual reality show of being a new car being built. It was an interesting 15-minute show, despite being an unashamed sales pitch for Mercedes-Benz quality. Meanwhile the other group had a further session with Stewart on some very early pictures, which had been found recently and also some details about the racing cars. Then there was the opportunity to see some of the other cars on display. They have the complete range of current cars as well as some lovely old ones. The older vehicles are changed every few months so there is always something new to see.

We saw the AMG range, which is where only one engineer puts together the engine and when it is complete his signature is put on the engine.

We then moved on to the top of the range SLR and Maybach display. From all accounts Lewis Hamilton was seen driving an SLR.

I suppose I can dream - anyone got a spare £350,000?



With the formal part of the tour over 10 of our number opted to stay for lunch in the Gullwing restaurant, named after the famous Gullwing sports car from the fifties. The meal was excellent, it was not cheap as you



might expect but the service and quality of the food was excellent. As you can see Terry is looking very relaxed after a highly successful visit.

The centre has cost a lot to build but entrance is free so well worth the visit. You can make a day of it by combining it with a visit to the Brooklands Museum, which contains aircraft, including a Concorde as well as vehicles of all types.



Finally our thanks again to Terry for organising the trip.

DO YOU LIKE A PARTY?

THEN THINK ABOUT BEING OUR EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR!

The Group is seeking a suitable person to take on the role of **events co-ordinator**. We would like to increase the number of social events we put on for Members, just like the Mercedes World visit, but the existing committee members do not have sufficient free time to take on this additional task.

We are looking for someone to organise only 4 or 5 events per year for Guildford Group Members. These can be social evenings, bowling, theatre or visits to places of interest.

If you are interested please contact Paul Wallace-Stock on 01252 519 355

Thank you!

By Terry Moody

I thought it might amuse some of you to hear about my very first (and only!) motoring accident.

It happened one cold, dark night in December, a few days before Christmas, about forty years ago (I was very young at the time!)

It was snowing, and the roads were icy in places. I was travelling from my parents' house in Eltham, south-east London, back to where we lived in Sutton. I was driving my very first car, a Mark 1 Ford Cortina. And I still remember the registration number. It was FLN 509 C.

Downham Way, between Grove Park and Bromley, is a long right-hand bend which runs down hill. I was travelling at about 35 mph when the car hit a patch of ice and started to skid towards a row of vehicles parked on the left-hand side. I frantically tried to steer into the skid, but this threatened to cause me to collide with several parked cars and it was only at the last moment that I managed to avoid them. With the danger past - as I thought - I continued towards the bottom of the hill and a set of traffic lights. The lights were red and one or two cars were stationary waiting for them to change to green. I gently applied the brakes, but to my dismay the surface was still icy and I continued to slide towards the car at the back of the queue. With only 15 feet to go, I was still travelling at about 4 mph with the hand-brake full on. There seemed no way to avoid running into the back of the car in front.

Here comes the comical part. At the last moment I leapt out of the Cortina - which was still sliding forwards at about 2 mph - and ran in front of the bonnet, attempting to push it back with all my might.

It didn't work.

I jumped clear just in time as it gently " nudged " the back of the car in front with quite a jolt and a dull thud. Fortunately, a close inspection revealed no damage to either vehicle apart from a slightly bent front number-plate.



*We don't recommend jumping
in front of this! Ed*

This experience gave me quite a shock at the time, since the damage could easily have been much worse. Ever since, I always drive with great caution whenever there is ice or snow about.

WE WELCOME...

Terry Corben	Sophie Gartside	Michael Lambert	Mary Pain
Allessandra De Clara	Chris Hunt	Adrian Muir	Thomas Alexander
Gabriela Ciorte	Shane Hyde	Martyn Dix	
Jean Bonham	David James	Stephen Christopher	

RECENT TEST PASSES

Our congratulations this issue go to:

Edgar Buckley, Robin Fowler, Paul French, Geoff Johns, David Marsh and Mary-Claire Travers

Well done for passing your Advanced Test!

OBSERVED RUN STATS

Month	Numbers Booked in Advance	Cancelled	Failed to Attend	Runs Conducted
July 07	50	15	2	33
August 07	54	14	4	36
September 07	51	6	4	42

Do try and make your booked run so that we can help more drivers!

NEW FEATURE!

We're now featuring Observers, Associates and Members so we can find out a bit more about who's who in the Guildford & District Group.

This issue... Paul Wallace-Stock, Group Chairman:

Why did you take the test? I knew I was a good driver and intended to prove it. I was soon brought down to earth on my first Observed run!

First Car: Ford Anglia, the one with the cut back rear window. It was very uncomfortable on a long drive, but did have seatbelts fitted long before the law required them.

Current car: We have two in the family; a Peugeot 205 and a Toyota Corolla - both have diesel engines. I am a fan of diesel, as I believe that by using less fuel for a given distance they pollute less and exhausts last a very long time. Also I never have a problem starting as a result of damp electrics.

Most scary moment: Being 10 yards from an annoyed elephant and the car would not start!

Best lesson learnt: Don't believe your navigator on a night rally when they tell you it's only a gentle bend!

Other Activities: Golf, Skiing, Orienteering and Ballroom Dancing.

Flag up to others Drivers: Use the commentary during those times when the journey gets boring, it helps concentration, keeps you alert and makes for a better, safer and smoother drive.



Do you have a friend or relative that would benefit from our advice and guidance?



**If so, please put them in touch with
Chris Hughes
Contact details on the inside back page**

**Please pass on or recycle this newsletter
once you're done with it!**