

Chairman's Letter

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Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2004 and my first as Chairman. I would like to thank Beryl Schofield for her leadership of the Group over the last four years and I look forward to the challenges to come.

I set myself two objectives for this year: to help maintain the successful associate scheme and to involve the wider membership more fully in the activities of the Group.

The number of associates in the scheme at any time rises and falls to extremes. At the moment we are going through a period of very low numbers and the publicity team is putting a lot of effort into novel methods of promoting the Group, as well as keeping up the tried and tested methods.

You the readers can also help by mentioning the advanced driving course at West Pennine to friends, neighbours, relatives, work colleagues etc. Word of mouth and personal recommendations are the most effective way of attracting new associates to the Group.

As the popularity of the Internet grows, we have re-launched our Group web-site. You can visit us at www.wpg-iam.com where we look forward to receiving your news, views, feedback on the site and even articles for the newsletter. The newsletter is our primary form of communication with members and I encourage you all to contribute to it.

Safe driving,



Steven Slater.

How we failed the driving test

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A television programme called The Great British Driving Test has highlighted the shortcomings of modern drivers, although most viewers seemed to concentrate on the "battle of the sexes" element as men and women were pitched into a contest to find the most accomplished motorists.

Women make up about 42 per cent of the driving population yet, according to Government figures, less than 12.5 per cent of Britain's 33,000 registered approved driving instructors are female. So can the latest generation of women drivers match the men on the road?

That was the question posed by Carlton Television's programme, in which a studio audience of 200 and millions of viewers had to answer 35 driving theory questions based on the standard theory test that became mandatory for all non-qualified drivers from 1996. The show, hosted by Gabby Logan and Neil Fox, revealed that there is little to choose between the men and women, with the men shading the national vote but the women the most successful in the studio.

The results raised serious questions for driver education and road safety, however. For instance, only 41 per cent of TV viewers passed the interactive test - the equivalent of almost 20 million of the 32 million licence holders in the UK driving without an acceptable knowledge of signs and laws.

"The levels of drivers' awareness and understanding in this country and throughout Europe are nothing short of abysmal," said advanced driving instructor Adam Keehil of driver training company LetsDrive.

Thanks to Alison Ashworth for submitting this clipping.

Membership Renewals

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I am taking this opportunity to thank all of you for renewing your membership with the Group for a further year.

When I look down the list of renewals I often notice the names of members who I remember but haven't seen for some time. However, it is nevertheless gratifying to know that you value your continued membership. If members who have chosen not to become Observers ever want to call in to see us on Sunday mornings at the Bank Top they would be very welcome. Furthermore, if any member would like to have confirmation that the Advanced standard of driving achieved at the time of Test has been maintained then we would be very pleased to help.

Thanks again,

Beryl Schofield
Treasurer

Many of you automatically renew by direct debit and for those members nothing needs to be done other than to return and sign the renewal form and to let us know of any change in contact details.

Other members renew by post or by hand, don't forget to let us have your completed renewal form.

Associates who have joined during 2003 are invited to renew their West Pennine membership, effective from Jan 2004 to continue receiving Newsletters, to be eligible to vote at the AGM and to continue their involvement with the Group as an Observer or to have their driving checked periodically.

Those members who have passed the Test during 2003 will automatically receive a reminder from the IAM when their first year's membership is due for renewal. This membership is separate from that payable to West Pennine but members are advised that they cannot be a member of the West Pennine Group unless they are a current member of the Institute.

WPG AGM 2004

March 06

Annual General Meeting February 2004

I am taking this opportunity to include passages from the Chairman's Report which was given at this year's AGM before it is circulated at the end of the year, particularly because it recognises the work of Committee members who have either resigned or retired this year.

Tonight, 3 of our Committee members are stepping down. Brian Mooney was elected a year ago, not knowing what was in store for him in his personal life---Brian is feverishly getting ready for his marriage to Maureen next month. Our very good wishes go to them both and my thanks for the work Brian has done whilst on Committee this past year.

I turn now to John Rostron who couldn't have envisaged being with us for 20yrs when he came along to an Open Day in Rochdale in June 1983. John later joined the Group, Eric Ridgway did his assessment and John passed his Advanced test with Cyril Jones in December 1983. John became an Observer, although John reminds me that I failed him at first when he was training---(I'm embarrassed!) John has also been one of our valued Demonstration Drivers. On Committee, John has been Vice Chairman and then Chair in 1992/3. He has had lengthy involvement with the Group Newsletter, being a member of what was affectionately called ET (Newsletter Editorial Team) and more recently dealing with stapling and mailing it. He has helped with Publicity and with social events. Thank you John for everything you have done at West Pennine. I know you are going to continue behind the scenes but we'll miss you on Sundays and at the Committee meetings.

Tony Bottomley is unable to be here this evening. Tony has almost completed 25 active years with West Pennine. He joined as an Associate in Rochdale in September 1979, passed his

Advanced Test the following year and became an Observer. At Open Days, Tony paired with Allan to do Demonstration Drives and to encourage visitors to join the Group. Tony joined the Committee in 1988 bringing a level of common sense to any debate. For some time he was well placed to support all areas of the Committee's work. He attended National and Regional Conferences but in later years took on the onerous task of maintaining the database and producing Newsletter and Publicity material. I would like to thank Tony for everything he has done over a remarkable period of time. His support and his friendship will be missed.

And finally, there is the position of Chairman. I am stepping down tonight after 4yrs. I wish to thank Norma and Eric who proposed and seconded me at that time. They gave me the opportunity to take the responsibility of Chairman during 4 years which have been full of interest and development. I feel that the Group is now ready to welcome a new Chairman and I know that with the support of a fine Committee that works tirelessly to uphold the aims and objectives of the IAM, the new Chairman will be well placed to take the Group forward.

In closing, my thanks go to every Committee Member, the Trustees, the Observers and Group members for all their efforts and continued support.

Thank you
Beryl Schofield

Please remember: Commercial Advertising space is available at £60 for half a page and £100 for a full page per year.

Personal adds to subscribing members are free.

Contact the Newsletter Co-ordinators for information.

Thank you.

TINTED windows have become de rigueur among owners of exclusive vehicles who hope they might be mistaken for a passing celebrity. But beware, for as civil servant Brian Burgess found out when he was stopped in Manchester by members of the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency, there are limits as to just how tinted your windows can be. "The legal limits for visibility are 75 per cent light through the windscreen and 70 per cent on the front side windows for vehicles built after April 1, 1985," a spokesman says.

HANGING furry dice in the window of your flash Citroen Saxo might amount to a double six with the ladies, but you'd also be gambling with the prospect of an MOT failure. Originally hung from the interior mirrors of customised wrecks during the 1970s, the spotted motoring accoutrements have a nasty habit of obscuring a boy racer's view of the road. Oversized air fresheners are likely to cause a similar stink with the good folk at the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency.

ROMANTIC memories of a bygone motoring age will surely be stirred by the sight of a thin, green plastic visor proudly boasting the name of the driver, Wayne, and his current squeeze, Tracy. But like the owner of a hastily acquired tattoo declaring undying love for a lady who then ditches him, Wayne begins to look a little silly when Tracy no longer requires a ride in his 1989 Ford Orion. Fortunately, he is probably better off without Tracy and the visor, which would result in an MOT failure.

TINKERING with a car number plate to make it read 1 AM ACE won't wash with the powers that be. It is in fact an OFF3NCE to relocate fixing screws, alter spacings and turn numbers to awkward angles in order to personalise a registration plate.

REMOVING a mobile phone will be akin to chopping off the arm of some motoring contortionists, who can negotiate a busy junction while balancing the latest Nokia between shoulder and ear. Not for long, however, as, from December 1, using a hand-held mobile phone in a car is an offence punishable by a fine of up to £1,000.

LOW-RIDERS with suspension cut so low that their car doors scrape the floor are likely to receive a notification of MOT failure. "You really shouldn't lower your suspension by shortening the coil springs so they displace or fall out when the vehicle is jacked," a Vosa spokesman says.

AND, finally, take care if the urge descends to convert the family Ford Focus into a modern take on the General Lee, vehicular star of eighties American TV show, The Dukes Of Hazzard. By all means paint the Focus red and slap a Confederate flag on the roof, but stop short of fitting air horns which play an ego-boosting, Colonel Bogey tune, because, as Boss Hog might have said: "Them ain't allowed".

But if you think we've got it bad, taking a look at Stateside motoring rules might cheer you up:

AMOROUS young medics have a tough time of it in Tremonton, Utah, which has ruled that no woman may have sex with a man while riding in an ambulance within the town limits. If she's caught breaking the law, her name is published in the local paper. It's a law which also tests Utah's patients.

ENTIRELY sensibly, but perhaps unnecessarily, the state of Alabama has declared that it is illegal for a driver to be blindfolded while operating a vehicle.

ROAD-BOUND sales representatives must have a hard time of it in Fenwick island, Delaware, where it is against the law for people to change their clothes in a car. "It shall be unlawful for any person to live, dwell, cook, sleep, change clothes or use toilet facilities inside any vehicle within the corporate limits," a citation declares.

ANY motorist driving along a country road at night in Pennsylvania must stop every mile and send up a rocket signal, wait 10 minutes for the road to be cleared of livestock, and then continue.

YOU may not drive a black car on Sundays in Denver Colorado.

BOY racers with a penchant for burning rubber should steer clear of Derby, Kansas, where "persons may not screech their tyres while driving". An over-inflated sentence of up to 30 days behind bars awaits anyone who dares to bend the rules.

ON the subject of tyres, it is illegal for a truck to drive with dirty rubber in Minnetonka, Minnesota, where the practice would be considered a public nuisance.

IN Glendale, Arizona cars may not be driven in reverse.

A HAIRY primate starred as Clint Eastwood's friend and passenger in the 1978 film *Every Which Way But Loose*.. Amazingly, film-makers would have a tough time making a similar movie in Massachusetts, where the law dictates that no gorilla is allowed in the back seat of any car

A LAW decided by spoilsports cites that the ice Cream Man and his van are banned from Indianola, Iowa.

But now for the good news...

PEOPLE living in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, are able to enjoy making love inside their cars without unexpected interruption from the police. An officer who suspects that sex is taking place must drive up from behind, sound his patrol car's hooter three times, then wait two minutes before they investigate.

Taken from Manchester Evening News 2003

⁹ Wildlife on the Road

Ever been surprised at all the wild animals on the road? Ever wondered how the Highway Code came to include zebras, pelicans, puffins and toucans? All imaginative ways of describing methods for pedestrians to get safely from one side of the road to the other – crossings of course.

Zebra crossings consist of black and white stripes across the road and anyone who still wonders how they got their name is long overdue a trip to Chester Zoo. Drivers are required to stop at zebra crossings when a pedestrian takes their life in their hands and steps off the pavement and on to the road – not exactly the safest form of crossing.

A safer way to cross is the pelican crossing. This has traffic lights which are activated by a pedestrian and this is where the name comes from: PEdestrian LIght Co(A)Ntrolled crossing. This is also the source of the jokes about not starting to cross when the green man is flashing.

Puffin crossings are similar to pelican crossings but the traffic lights have sensors which measure the pedestrian flow and allow the lights to remain on red for different lengths of time. Also, the lights do not automatically change to red if the sensors detect no traffic. The name derives from Pedestrian User-F(F)riendly INtelligent crossing.

Finally we have the Toucan crossing. These are wider than normal pedestrian crossings and are designed to allow cyclists and pedestrians to cross the road at the same time. Someone was by this time running out of exotic birds for acronyms and the name derives from "two can", a reference to the fact that pedestrians and cyclists can cross at the same time.

Safe crossings!

Steven Slater

We need your feedback – Have you got something to say?
 This newsletter is published for you by you, and we welcome any contributions from the readership. We cannot guarantee that submissions will appear in the next newsletter, .
 But we will try! Thank you.

Dunlop Award 2004

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At the Region 5 conference held on 20th March the Dunlop award for the group contributing most to road safety in their area was awarded to...

West Pennine !!!

This award is to the group who, in the opinion of the regional co-ordinator, has worked most closely with their road safety officer and the local police in order to promote road safety in their area. Well done to us, and thanks to Dion Etheridge, our road safety officer for his help and support.



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News Release Number 05a/04

**WEST PENNINE GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS WIN
2004 DUNLOP ROAD SAFETY AWARD**

Issued: 22 March 2004

Members of the West Pennine Group of Advanced Motorists have beaten off rival bids from more than a dozen regional IAM groups in the North West England & North Wales to win this year's Dunlop Road Safety Award.

Presented at the IAM's Regional Spring Meeting at the Birchwood Conference Centre, Risley, near Warrington on Saturday 20 March, the Dunlop Road Safety Award marks the "best road safety partnership in the region".

As well as the Dunlop Road Safety Award Certificate itself, members of the West Pennine Group of Advanced Motorists were also presented with Dunlop Crystal Tumblers.

Presenting the Dunlop Road Safety Award to Lorraine Brown, Secretary of the West Pennine Group, IAM Regional Co-ordinator Bob Higginbotham, MBE said:

"The West Pennine Group of Advanced Motorists should be pleased that they have demonstrated how effective road safety partnerships can be formed here in the North West England & North Wales. I know too that Dunlop is proud of its long-standing relationship with the IAM and the practical contribution it makes to raising the driving standards on UK roads."

Dunlop is presenting a total of eight regional awards to mark best practice in the IAM group movement. The IAM has a total of more than 200 groups across the UK, and more than 100,000 members - all of whom have taken and passed the advanced driving or riding test. More than 300,000 drivers and riders have taken the advanced driving test since the IAM was established in 1956.

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On Saturday 20th March I attended the Region 5 Conference as the Group representative. This Conference is held annually and is an opportunity for the groups in the North West to gather together to hear from their own Regional Co-ordinator, Divisional Council Member and also representatives from Head Office in London. It was held at the Birchwood Conference Centre at Warrington, easily accessible for most groups, Carlisle having the furthest to travel.

Bryan Lunn, the IAM Chief Examiner, presented the Head Office Report. Membership is still rising, now at 122,000. Test applications are constant at 8,000 per annum, 1,500 of these being motorcycle tests. Some new promotional materials, leaflets, posters etc have been printed. Bryan told us that the discount for under 26's will now be automatic, being generated by the date-of-birth. Skill For Life will soon (end April) be able to be purchased on-line through the website.

Daewoo (now GM Daewoo) are still offering free courses to purchasers of their cars, Jaguar will offer a similar package from April, and IAM are entering into a reader scheme with MaxPower magazine from mid-2004 - their editorial staff are doing the course and will write about it in the mag. (At this point I thought that Bryan was a little patronising when he explained what sort of magazine it is - even I know about MaxPower - now, if we could get Jordan to do a course with West Pennine, that would get the punters in!) HQ are thinking about ways of getting IAM/Group memberships to coincide.

(A young member of an IAM Group at this point pointed out that he had saved £70 on the Admiral on-line website when quoting his IAM membership and renewing his car insurance)

Bob Hinchliffe, the new Marketing Manager, introduced himself. He has recently moved over to marketing from IAM Fleet. His staff include Sandra Worsfold, Gill Downey and Dave Shenton.

Roger Taylor gave a very interesting talk on the Senior Observer Qualification Test. Roger conducts tests for cars, bikes, hgv, and pcv. He pointed out that the Senior Observer test is about experience and passing this on to newer observers. Everyone cannot know everything, if you don't know, say so, then find out and get back to the enquirer.

The test has changed in the last year or two. Now there is a need to provide someone to observe. The route is decided in advance. Try to get an associate at the early stages of the course. Assess your associate – know how to speak to them in order to get the best result. Cover all faults (unlike normal runs, here you are aiming to show your full proficiency – not to mention something may indicate that you have not noticed it) Your own driving has to be right – if your own isn't right you can't do it for the associate. Teach to the skill level of the associate; system, safety, smoothness, progress.

Bob Higginbotham MBE, the Regional Co-ordinator, then announced the winner of the Dunlop Award for Road Safety, and this year's winner is... .. WEST PENNINE!!! Bob announced that this group works so closely with their local Road Safety Officer to the extent of him writing in defence of the group when threatened, they work closely with the local Police, attending all events, despite losing half their catchment area to Rochdale some years ago they have continued to work hard with great success, and there was no doubt in his mind about this year's winner. What a surprise! Such delight! We have received a framed certificate and a set of four crystal glasses. The only downside was that I had to have my photo taken!

Bob also announced that he is hoping to re-start the Isle of Man Group. For anyone interested an event will take place from 14 – 16 May – there will be demo drives, talks, etc. All welcome, let Bob know if you are able to go – unfortunately accommodation is not provided!

Mike Lyne, the Divisional Council Member, said that thanks to a link provided from the West Pennine Group (us again!) he had been in contact with the representative from the proposed GMP Young Driver Safety Competition. This scheme is aimed at young drivers with hopefully the Manchester Evening News offering a new car for a prize. It will involve the groups acting as 'testers' to the young people entering, so would be a regional event. Unfortunately since the initial stages of development, the journalist at the MEN who was liaising with GMP has now left the company and the MEN say that it is now up to individual journalists if they want to get involved. GMP are eager to get this under way so are still working on it and are pushing to get something started. Watch this space, and remember that we got the ball rolling at West Pennine!

After an excellent lunch we had a Question Time – items pertinent to us included:

1. A member asked about caravan towing courses – the reply from Bryan Lunn was that the Camping and Caravanning Club offer manoeuvrability courses for caravanners then we can do an on-road assessment.
2. Personal risk assessment when on road - mainly from the associate point of view. The NGC is to look at guidelines for this. An examiner has been dismissed in the past for making a remark to a female associate which could be misinterpreted. It is important that observers are careful not to say or do anything which may be upsetting or offensive to an associate. Bob pointed out that associates are always told 'If at any time you are not happy (ie with any aspect of your course or an observer) then let us know'. At this stage I pointed out that at the same time observers may be at risk from associates – after all they are complete strangers, may have behavioural or other problems which we don't know about. Bob says that this is one reason why he would not advocate a one-to-one run – if there are two associates per observer or vice-versa then there is always a 'witness' to what is happening during the run.
3. Chris Tatlow, the Quality Examiner, pointed out that it states on the back of the test application form that another examiner may be in the car during the test, he is checking the quality of the examiner. The associate should be made aware that this may happen, and it is not negotiable. The only time that this would be changed is if the vehicle being used did not accommodate another passenger. (Bryan Lunn here mentioned that he would leave copies of the examiner's report forms for groups to take, do they not already have them – I brought one back)
4. Automatic gearboxes – Bryan Lunn said that there are so many different automatic gearboxes now, but associates should know that they have one, how it works, and be able to use it and demonstrate its' use to the examiner, possibly using as a manual for five minutes during the test.

Workshops were then held – the aim being to raise ideas on how to get new people on to the committee – suggestions ranged from telling people that it is 'not time consuming' and 'make them feel needed'. Our system of inviting prospective committee members along to sit in on a meeting was considered to be a good idea.

Lorraine Brown, 22nd March 04

Stuck for a present?

Not sure what to buy?

Can't think of anything unusual?



**Why not buy a course of
Advanced Driving
from your local
Group of Advanced Motorists.**



For more information call
Pete on 01706 843127

New Associates

March 06

Welcome to the following visitors who have recently joined the group as Associate Members. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday mornings for advisory runs, in preparation for the Advanced Driving Test. Good Luck to you all.

Catherine Ortiz

Nina Lewis

Anne Brown

Philip Edwards

Alan Parker

Craig Pauley

Lawrence Sherwood

Adam Smart

Linda Grime

OBSERVER TRAINING

Welcome to the following recently qualified members who have joined our Group Observer Training School.

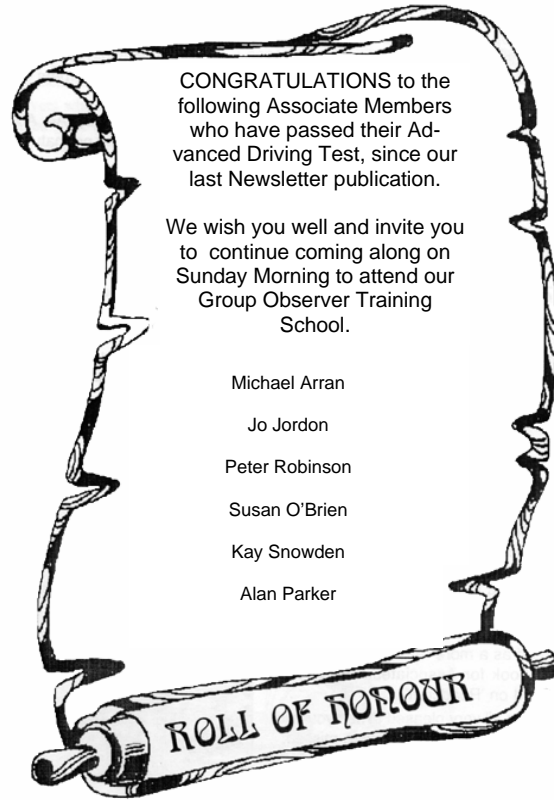
Claire Mitchell

Susan O'Brien

Congratulations to Noel Davies, Helen Znideric and Ronald Smart who have recently completed Group Observer Training. Welcome to the Observer Team!

Test Passes

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We are always at the Bank Top Tavern both before and after the morning's activities. Please come and talk to us if you are experiencing any difficulties and wish to discuss any problems relating to your driving.

Beryl Schofield – Peter Smithies – Allan Thorne
Associate Scheme Co-Ordinators

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March 06

REGALIA

The following items are in stock and available for sale to members:-

Circular radiator badges	@ £6.50
Square radiator badges	@ £6.50
Lapel badges	@ £2.00
Tax disc holders	@ £0.50
Key rings	@ £2.50
Rear window stickers	@ £1.00
T' shirts	@ £5.00
Ties	@ £5.80
Stick pins	@ £2.00
Ball pens	@ £2.00
Sew-on-badges	@ £2.00



The following items, each bearing the West Pennine logo, are available on order:-

Sweatshirt	@ £21.00
Polo shirt	@ £17.00
T' shirt	@ £14.00
Baseball cap	@ £9.00
Woolly hat	@ £9.00
Embroidery on own item	@ £8.50
Additional words to IAM logo	@ £3.00
Surcharge for XXL sweatshirt	@ £2.50

Sweatshirt colours:- black, bottle green, bright red, burgundy, light grey, navy blue, royal blue.

Woolly hat colours are as above except that light grey is replaced by marled grey.

BOOKS IN STOCK FOR SALE TO MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES:-

Road Craft	@ £12.00
Motorway Driving Explained	@ £0.95
Know Your Traffic Signs	@ £2.50
A Guide To Advanced Motoring	@ £2.50

All of these items are either on sale or can be ordered from Norma Scholes on Sunday mornings.

GROUP VIDEO/CD ROM LIBRARY

You may borrow any of the following videos for one week from Peter Smithies.

A returnable deposit of £5 is payable.

Video's are limited to one per person per week.

HMSO The Driving Video	Roadcraft IAM
HMSO Highway Code	Safe Motorway Driving IAM
IAM Maybe Too Late	Advanced Driving IAM
FORD Aggressive Driving	Test Drive IAM
FORD Driving Without Fear	"Crash" Channel 4 Video
Steps to Safe Minibus Driving	CD ROM Advanced Driving