

MELKSHAM & DISTRICT GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS



The Riverside Club

Social Evenings

Our monthly Social Evenings feature a guest speaker or other event, chat, tea and raffle, and are held every 3rd Thursday of the month. They take place at 19:30 at the Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP, unless otherwise advised – if needed, there is a map on our Website. There is a modest charge of £1 to cover refreshments and a ticket for the raffle.



Classic British Cars
1974 TVR 2500M

Bring a friend: All are welcome, including non-members and members of other groups.

COMING EVENTS (2019)

19:30 Thursday 18 April. There will be a talk on the St John's Ambulance organisation.

19:30 Thursday 16 May. This evening's event has not yet been identified – Please inform Richard if you have any ideas.

19:30 Thursday 20 June. Melksham Advanced Motorists Annual General Meeting. Please attend, and have your say on how the club is run. It's your club! Also, there will be a talk by operators of the "Bobby Van".

19:30 Thursday 18 July. Skittles evening at the White Hart, Atworth. Come along, it is always a good evening.

19:30 Friday 13 December. The MAM will be holding its Christmas dinner at the Barge Inn, Seend. Make sure you reserve your place/s early for this ever increasingly popular event.

NEWS ITEMS

Membership Cards.

Please note that you may collect your 2019 membership card from Caroline Marsden at the Riverside Club on social evenings.

Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Richard Clark has received the following communication from *Louisa Perrett of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance*:

“Dear Richard,

On behalf of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Charitable Trust, thank you for your wonderful donation of £40.00 we have been forwarded by our Volunteer, Clare. Your official receipt number is R000030450.

We are very grateful you all for your support and generosity. Wiltshire Air Ambulance is a charity and relies on donations to keep saving lives. It is not funded directly by the Government and receives no National Lottery grants. It costs £3.75 million a year to keep the air ambulance flying, that's just over £10,000 per day.

If you would like any further information about our Charity, please do call our office or send an email to hello@wiltshireairambulance.co.uk.

Sending all of the Melksham District Advanced Drivers our very best wishes from the Charity Team, and Crew, at Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Yours sincerely,

Louisa

Donor Relationship Assistant”

MAM Social Evening Thursday 21 March.

Gavin Mills provided a presentation on the Thatcham Research Establishment. Topics covered included:

- The company's connection with the motor insurance industry.
- Advanced driver assistance systems.
- Autonomous emergency braking systems.
- Safest car of the year.
- Safety – New Car Assessment programme (NCAP) ratings.
- Active passive safety tests.

- Active safety tests.
- Autonomous driving.

The session was aided by video presentations, and was well received by the audience.

ARTICLES

An obituary printed in the London Times.

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years.

No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- Why the early bird gets the worm;
- Life isn't always fair;
- And maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses, and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home, and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death,

- by his parents, Truth and Trust,
- by his wife, Discretion,
- by his daughter, Responsibility,
- and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 5 stepbrothers;

- I Know My Rights
- I Want It Now
- Someone Else Is To Blame

- I'm A Victim
- Pay me for Doing Nothing

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

Introduction of Long-Range Speed Cameras. Based on an article by Swinton Insurance.

Cameras that can spot speeding and using a mobile phone from two thirds of a mile away.

THE MAJORITY of motorists are in favour of the police adopting long-range speed cameras, a new survey has found.

According to the poll by the RAC, nearly three-fifths (59%) of those surveyed said they wanted traffic cops to use long-range cameras, which are capable of spotting motoring offences from two thirds of a mile away, and can catch almost 40 drivers a day, to help clamp down on illegal driving etiquette.

The cameras can not only detect speeding vehicles but also pick up a number of other offences including failing to use seatbelts, drivers using their phones, tailgaters and obscured number plates.

Just over a quarter (28%) of those surveyed said they were against long-range cameras being rolled out across UK police forces, with 44% saying they would be "unfair" to motorists and 13% admitting they were likely to be caught speeding by one.

A study conducted by Direct Line and Thatcham Research in April last year found that [nearly half of Britain's drivers believe it is acceptable to break the speed limit](#), and one third said they deliberately speed on an empty road. [Statistics from the Department for Transport](#) (DfT) released in November backed up the study, with nearly half of all car drivers found to have exceeded the maximum speed limits on UK roads last year.

The recent RAC poll was launched in response to Gloucestershire Police's feedback on the long-range cameras it trialed in November last year as part of Operation Indemnis - an effort to educate motorists about the importance of road safety.

The camera was used at 35 sites in November, and 1,293 speeding offences were detected. Ten drivers were caught travelling at 100mph or more, including one who was doing 126mph. The cameras also helped traffic officers identify five tailgating offences and seven seatbelt infringements.

While predominantly focused on catching unaware criminals in the act, the cameras can also help other road users in distress. During the same November trial, the long-range gear contributed to Gloucester Police assisting 10 drivers whose cars had broken down.

Following the camera trials, Martin Surl, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire, said: "This is not about bashing the motorist. I'm just as pleased to see police were there to help drivers in trouble, as well as being able to challenge those breaking the law.

"Many people have come to me with their concerns about speeding and other safety issues along this road. This is a new model of collaborative roads policing which, if it proves a success, can be put into practice elsewhere."

Editor's comment: By my estimation the percentage of speeding motorists must be 80 to 90%. Almost always, when travelling along a road at or near the speed limit, I suddenly have a car

tailgating me. The fact that they have come from nowhere, indicates that they must have been speeding to catch me.

Volvo introducing 112mph Speed Limit to all its Cars by 2020. Based on an article by Swinton Insurance.

"While a speed limitation is not a cure-all, it's worth doing if we can even save one life".

VOLVO HAS announced that none of its vehicles will be able to exceed 112mph as of next year.

The decision to peg its cars at that speed is part of the Swedish car maker's "Vision 2020" target, with its goal of making sure no-one is killed or seriously injured by a new Volvo car from next year.

Volvo is also assessing how the speed limiter could be made more effective with other technology, including how GPS could be used to slow the car down even further when it detects it is travelling past a school or hospital.

While Volvo boss Håkan Samuelsson concedes "speed limitation is not a cure-all" solution, he believes the move will be justified if it prevents even one person from being killed in a road accident related to speeding.

Samuelsson also hopes this move will help start a discussion on road safety technology in cars, and whether auto makers should be obligated to fit these potentially life-saving systems in their vehicles.

Volvo safety adviser Jan Ivarsson is optimistic that the 112mph speed limiter could also help educate drivers on the dangers of speeding: "People often drive too fast in a given traffic situation, and have poor speed adaption in relation to that traffic situation, and their own capabilities as a driver. We need to support better behaviour, and help people realise and understand that speeding is dangerous."

While Volvo has committed to fitting a permanent speed limiter to its cars, it's unclear whether other firms such as Volvo's performance-oriented Polestar spin-off brand will follow suit.

Volvo's announcement comes just before the European Parliament is set to vote on new road safety legislation. If it's passed, [all new cars sold in European Union member states by 2022 would need to have an intelligent speed limiter](#), which could use GPS data and road sign detection tech to limit speeds on public roads.

Department for Transport (DfT) data shows British drivers have a penchant for speeding, as [nearly 50% of drivers were observed to be breaking the speed limit on UK roads last year](#). The DfT's road traffic accident figures from 2017 reveal 4,805 incidents were caused by "excessive speeding", of which 203 were fatal.

[Official: nearly half of UK drivers break speed limit.](#) (Editors comment - I suggest this figure needs to be re-assessed.)

[Speed limiters and black boxes could soon be mandatory on all new cars.](#)

An article by Peter Soul of the Thames Valley Group (March 2019).



Peter Soul

A PHYSICIST WRITES . . .

I want to tell you about a small manufacturing company, AB Dynamics, located in Bradford-on-Avon, which you won't have heard of (the company, I mean). Though first I must declare an interest: after many years working for them as an engineer, my nephew Jeremy is the newly promoted Sales Director! But he and his team won't be cold-calling you, as you wouldn't want to buy anything that they make. Instead, their customers are test authorities, car-assessment laboratories, and vehicle manufacturers around the world.

ABD's wide range of products for this market fall roughly into two groups: laboratory and track. The laboratory items include a driving simulator that can be tweaked to reproduce changes to the configuration of a vehicle as it's being developed, and various machines for assisting with the optimizing of steering and suspension systems. But it's the track category that is really eye-catching.

The star item is the ABD Driving Robot, a mechanism that connects to the steering and pedals of any car, and which can be programmed to direct the vehicle repeatedly along the same path (on a test track) or else with repeatable wheel and pedal movements, so that (again) different configurations can be compared. This is just one example of several ABD robot designs:



Alternatively, any number of vehicles can be put through identical test runs by means of a robot. Or, perhaps most importantly, a car can be sent out on 'hazardous manoeuvres' without any risk to a human driver. The first robot was sold 22 years ago and is still doing its job – and last month, a national vehicle research and testing laboratory in Michigan was presented by Jeremy with ABD's 1000th robot!

A growing section of their products for use on test tracks relates to driverless vehicles (which I shall call simply autos, as always: one day the world will catch on to this term!) and, more generally, cars that have collision-avoidance systems. As far as I know, most of the major vehicle manufacturers are developing autos, in spite of setbacks like the accident I discussed in my January column. But how do you safely test your auto's ability to detect and respond to the

wide variety of moving obstacles that it might encounter? Part of the answer, at least, is to use soft robotic 'targets' that won't damage your test vehicle if there is a collision.

And so ABD will supply you with realistic-looking (that's as seen by an auto's detection system) dummy cars, bicycles-and-riders and pedestrians, each capable of being moved across the path of your vehicle under test, and exactly synchronized with it for creating the maximum 'danger' that it must respond to – though if it fails in this, no actual harm or damage will be done. Test authorities can assess vehicles that have been submitted to them for approval, in the same way.



One of the latest ideas from ABD is the driverless motorbike! Not so much for transporting from A to B people who are brave enough to be balanced on two robot-controlled wheels, more for the safe testing of how autos react to bikes generally: they are probably the hardest sort of traffic for autos to cope with, being likely to overtake at speed on either side, and to change lanes rapidly (no offence intended to my bike-riding readers). Like the soft targets I described above, they can be synchronized with the movement of the vehicle under test.



If you are interested to read more about all this technology that's aiding the development of the vehicles of the future, take a look at the home page of ABD, www.abdynamics.com, and follow some of the links. And here, www.youtube.com/user/abdynamics/videos, you will find many videos demonstrating the variety and versatility of the AB Dynamics product range.

Editor's Note:

Sadly this will be the last article from Peter that will appear in the Melksham News Magazine. Peter has decided to call it a day, after writing 167 articles for the Thames Valley Group Newsletter, since July 2002. If you wish to backtrack any of his past articles you will find them at: <http://www.petersoul.co.uk/>. I would like to thank Peter for all of his contributions to our magazine, which have been both amusing and informative, and wish him well for the future.

PUZZLES AND QUIZZES

Know Your Driving and Car?

Answers at the end of the News Magazine. **If you're not sure, have a guess.** (No cheating please!)

QUESTION		ANSWER
1.	Which car was driven by James Bond in the film Skyfall?	Aston Martin Vanquish, Aston Martin DB5, or Aston Martin DBS V12?
2.	What place did Lewis Hamilton finish in the 2013 F1 Championship?	2 nd , 3 rd , or 4 th ?
3.	What year did rear seat belts become compulsory in the UK?	1983, 1991, or 1994?
4.	Which car manufacturer celebrated their 65th anniversary in 2013?	Ford, Land Rover, or Porsche?
5.	What was the bestselling car in the 1980's?	Ford Escort, Ford Fiesta, or Ford Sierra?
6.	A businessman turned down an offer of over £6 million in 2013 for which registration plate?	F1, No1, or 1D?
7.	"Join the quiet revolution" is which car manufacturer's slogan?	Mercedes-Benz, Toyota, or Lexus?
8.	Which car was 'world's bestselling luxury car' in 2013?	Mercedes-Benz S Class, Range Rover Vogue, or BMW 7 Series?
9.	Which of the following was abolished at the end of 2014?	A rise in fuel duty, Car tax disc, or MOT
10.	Which car was crowned UK Car of The Year in 2015?	Mercedes-Benz A Class, Toyota GT86, or BMWi8?

FUN CORNER

Click on, or copy and paste this to your search machine, if you want a good chuckle:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UotZ_ZLB5A

Get out of that one!

A man and a woman were married for many years. Whenever there was a confrontation, yelling could be heard late into the night.

The old man would shout: "When I die, I am going to dig my way up and out of the grave, and come back and haunt you for the rest of your life!"

Neighbours feared him. And the old man liked the fact that he was feared.

To everyone's relief, he died of a heart attack when he was 98.

After the burial, her neighbours, who were concerned for the wife's safety, asked: "Aren't you afraid that he may indeed be able to dig his way out of the grave, and haunt you for the rest of your life?"

The wife said: "Let him dig. I had him buried upside down. And, I know he won't ask for directions!"

The last laugh.

A police officer pulls over this bloke who's been weaving in and out of the lanes. He goes up to the man's window and says, "Sir, I need you to blow into this breathalyser tube."

The man says, "Sorry, officer, I can't do that. I am an asthmatic. If I do that, I'll have a really bad asthma attack."

"Okay, fine. I need you to come down to the station to give a blood sample."

"I can't do that either. I am a haemophiliac. If I do that, I'll bleed to death."

"Well, then, we need a urine sample."

"I'm sorry, officer, I can't do that either. I am also a diabetic. If I do that, I'll get really low blood sugar."

"All right, then I need you to come out here and walk this white line."

"I can't do that, officer."

"Why not?"

"Because I'm drunk."

READER'S LETTERS/EMAILS

By John Morley (Editor),

Some feedback has been received from members, who said that they had enjoyed reading the February article on "The Bonk". Thank you for the comments, which were appreciated.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

None this month.

Please forward any questions on motoring and cars etc to john_morley@live.co.uk and an expert will hopefully answer them within the News Magazine.

Members who have news items or articles that may be of interest are invited to forward them to John Morley at: john_morley@live.co.uk. Please title all emails "MAM News Item".

FURTHER NOTICES

- **Email addresses:** Help the environment - if you have an email address but receive your newsletters by post please let the Editor, John Morley, know your email address. You will benefit from early receipt of the News Magazine, early notice of special events, and we save on postage, time and effort, as well as using up fewer trees! A win-win situation.
- **Speakers:** If you know of someone who could give us an interesting talk, or have a suggestion for a talk, at our social evenings, please advise the Events Coordinator, Richard Clark or Caroline Marsden.
- **Publicity:** Current post vacant.
- **Contact Details:** If you move house, or your email or telephone number changes, please inform John Morley so that you don't lose contact with us.
- **Drive Check:** Remember that MAM is offering a FREE observed run for all potential new members so tell your friends now! For more information please contact David Major.

CONTACT US

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Disclaimer

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Answers to the quiz:

1. Aston Martin DB5
2. 4th
3. 1991
4. Land Rover
5. Ford Escort
6. F1
7. Lexus
8. Mercedes-Benz S Class
9. Car tax disc
10. BMWi8