

SAMM

Autumn 2020

Meet Your
Committee

The
SAMM
Diploma

*Biker
Down*

American
Adventure
The Final
Part

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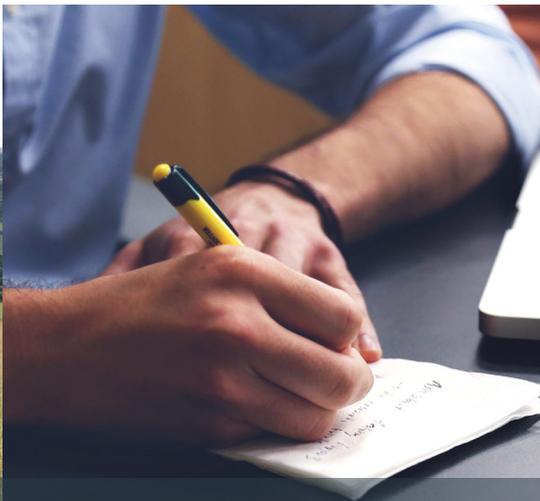
MOT FOR JUST £20
for all SAMM members

SAMM

YOUR local group newsletter



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View from the Chair

Paul Warren
SAMM's Chair

Well, what a year we are having.

Firstly, we were locked down and certainly no car or bike observing was allowed. Then the restrictions were lifted somewhat, and the less stringent rules allowed the bikes to return to Observing - albeit under strict IAM and SAMM conditions. Unfortunately, this has not helped the cars. With social distancing impossible, and of course as Associates use their own cars, it was decided to postpone the restart of car Observing. This is being reviewed monthly; however, a restart seems a long way off at this moment in time sadly.

Despite this background, the SAMM bike section managed to host a Biker Down / Slow Riding day at Shawbury only days before Boris announced new, tougher restrictions. The day was necessarily restricted in numbers to comply with Covid19 regulations. However, everybody who attended gained essential safety knowledge

presented by West Mercia Police, the Ambulance service and our own Dave Lowe. The feedback from all was fantastic and resulted in 10 new Associates signing up to SAMM on the day. My sincere thanks to all at RAF Shawbury and to our own dedicated Observers for putting on such an excellent event.

The November AGM will be an on-line event which might mean that we will have more attendees than usual – who



knows? It will be a bring your own coffee and biscuits this year – sorry!

There are posts that will need refilling as members have decided to stand down. Anyone interested should contact our Secretary, Dave Duggan. Dave will be sending out email invitations to the AGM shortly.

Our greatest loss from the SMMM Committee will be our Treasure of five years, Brian Yates. Please see his excellent article in this newsletter where he talks about the Treasure's role and his fascinating car history. Thank you, Brian, for your years of excellent work for SMMM in this role and we will all miss you greatly at our meetings. Fortunately, Brian will be continuing as a Car Observer.

If anyone has the skills to help refill this post, please let me know.

Sadly, this year's Christmas dinner has been cancelled. Our Newsletter Editor / Social Secretary, Sally, is sad as the venue was booked already to host us. Never mind, let's all look forward to

next year's event or even a Summer party instead!

However, despite the doom & gloom, we do have some really positive news to announce!

We are delighted to introduce the SMMM Diploma Course. Due to the Covid19 restrictions this will roll out initially to the Motorcycle group only and when appropriate, it will be launched to the Car section. Please read Paul Collyer's article in this newsletter for more information and the scheme will be officially launched at the AGM in November.

On a personal note, our MG's have hardly moved this year, but I did manage a camping motorbike event which was fun. Holiday rides have been restricted to days out, its been very frustrating so let's all hope to some sort of normality next year – roll on 2021!

Stay safe and catch up soon.

Paul Warren





The Safest on the Road

Neil Greig

IAM RoadSmart's Policy and Research Director

A recent study has highlighted that motorcyclists who have taken the IAM RoadSmart Advanced Rider course have safer attitudes on the roads and are involved in fewer collisions per mile than riders who have not completed advanced rider coaching.

Conducted for the UK's largest independent road safety charity, the survey of nearly 1,300 riders, split evenly between IAM RoadSmart members and non-advanced qualified motorcyclists, also revealed that advanced riders were more aware of the limitations of other drivers and riders and were therefore more likely to show consideration for their fellow road users.

Other key findings from the study revealed advanced riders were less likely to speed in residential areas

where the speed limits were less than 40mph, and were less likely to approach bends as quickly as other riders who hadn't taken part in an advanced course or taken their Advanced Rider test. Higher levels of riding confidence by advanced motorcyclists was also evident in their choice of speed, on various different road scenarios.

The study also revealed that advanced riders have fewer collisions per year when compared to other riders in their age group and have a lower rate of collision involvement per mile. IAM RoadSmart riders covered, on average, 15,000 miles incident-free compared to non-IAM RoadSmart riders who had a collision, on average, every 9,400 miles.

Neil Greig, Policy and Research Director at IAM RoadSmart, said: "The results of this study are reassuring. Road safety is paramount, and it is great to see that our members are some of the safest road users out there."



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here

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL IAM GROUP

Future issues of the SAMM newsletter will be supported by advertising from local Shropshire businesses.

If you'd like to be featured in a future issue email news@advancedmotorists.org

For a limited time, advertising is free for business who provide a discount to SAMM members.



Keeping Pedestrians Safe After Dark

Richard Gladman

Head of Driving & Riding Standards at IAM Roadsmart

Now that summer is well and truly over and the clocks have reverted back to GMT, the nights will be drawing in. Statistically we see more incidents involving pedestrians and vulnerable road users from October to March than we do throughout the rest of the year. Most incidents happen between 3pm and 7pm and we need to take special care to look out for pedestrians when it's dark. IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards, Richard Gladman, shares tips for keeping pedestrians safe.

Speed

When driving at 35mph, you are twice as likely to kill a pedestrian, then you would be when driving at 30mph. Be more alert near schools, the only predictable thing about children is how unpredictable they can be. Remember: in these areas 20mph really is plenty.

Children

They can be harder to see and may run out between parked vehicles. Remember to 'Look OUT': Over, Under and Through vehicles. You might just

spot a child before they step into the road.

Pedestrians

Pay attention to people who keep looking over their shoulder: they might be looking to cross the road. If you have a fair amount of space in front of you and vehicles following closely behind, the pedestrian may well run across rather than wait for all the traffic to come past. You also need to watch for mobile phone 'zombies': if you see someone fixated on their phone, they are not concentrating on the traffic, so be ready for them to just step out.

Stationary Vehicles

When passing stationary vehicles, keep at least a door's width whenever possible, not just for the car door that might open into your path but also to allow for someone or something emerging from between the vehicles.

Parking

Be considerate about where you park. Parking too close to a junction can obstruct someone's view and make it harder to turn safely. Also beware of obstructing pavements and dropped kerbs.

Rain

When it's raining and blowing a gale pedestrians are more likely to dash about and road safety often falls lower on their list of priorities than trying to keep dry.

With the clocks having just gone back it can take cyclists a bit of time to get used to the fact that they need lights and they may forget to use them – remember to look out for cyclists in the period after sunset.

Richard said: "In a perfect world, it would be ideal if pedestrians would all stay on the pavement and would never need to cross a road; it would also be ideal if all pedestrians wore flashing high-vis. In reality, it is up to us to share the road and be aware and help where we can. An effort to be courteous will go a long way toward making someone's day and will help keep us all safe."



Meet Your Committee

Brian Yates
SAMM's Outgoing Treasurer

As Treasurer for the Shropshire group of the IAM, I am responsible for collecting all your subs and any other income and then paying it out again to achieve our aim of enhancing road safety.

I have been doing this for about 5 years now, and in order to meet the Charity Commission recommendations on good governance, it is now time to pass on to new hands. I look forward to working with our new treasurer (perhaps you?) to achieve a smooth handover next year.

My IAM membership card says, "Member for 25 years". It certainly does not seem that long ago that at work we had a management meeting to discuss the increasing motor insurance costs. It was suggested that we put our drivers through the IAM "Skill for Life", but the question was "who?" Most of the insurance claims were from occasional drivers: regular drivers were not such a problem. After some

discussion, the MD decreed that all his Senior managers should set an example and pass the IAM test. So it was that I became an advanced driver.

My job was Customer Service Manager, so I was responsible for a team of engineers who had to travel widely by car. In that role, driving safety was particularly important. I also had to drive long distances to visit our customers and attend company meetings. Over the last 50 years or so, I must have driven nearly 2,000,000 miles in a variety of vehicles.

My first car, which I bought for £5 as a non-runner when I was 17, was a 1936 Morris 8 2 seat tourer.



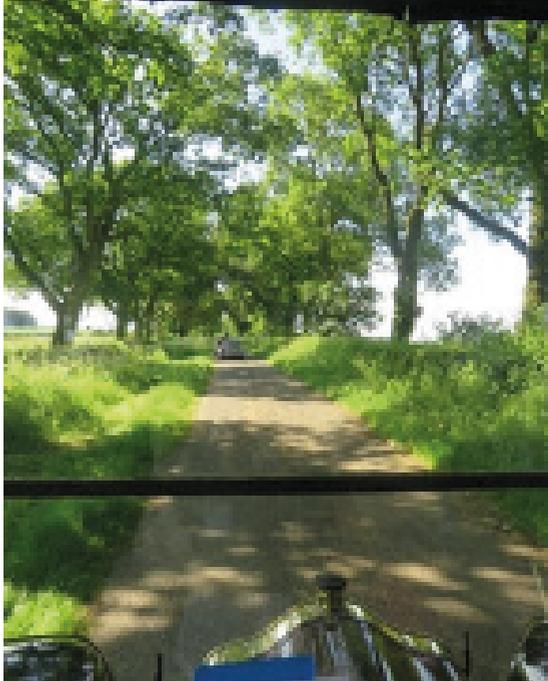


It was not considered a classic car then: just an old car which I could afford as a student. It was a pleasure to drive, with a beautifully smooth 3-speed gearbox. Although I soon upgraded to a car with a heater (a Morris Minor convertible) I kept the Morris 8 for over 40 years.

I have had many cars over the years, but one car has always been part of my life. In 1911 my Great Uncle, Harry Paul, bought his first car, a Type W Minerva, known in the family as "Minnie".

The history of Minnie is for another day, but I still drive this car today.

Driving a car which is over 100 years old needs all the advanced skills. Whilst the fundamental technology is remarkably similar to a modern petrol engine car, the ancillary aids we are used to have to be considered and applied manually. I am not just referring to such luxuries as Sat Nav or ABS, but more fundamental



items such as the electric self-starter, or even front wheel brakes.

Plenty of anticipation and skill is needed to stop a tonne and a half of car on very narrow tyres and brakes only on the rear wheels, whilst signalling by hand and remembering that the brake pedal is on the right and the accelerator in the middle!

I do also drive more modern cars. For enjoyment I have a BMW Z3 and for a useful load carrier a Volvo XC70.





Biker Down & Machine Control Workshop Success

Paul Collyer
SAMM's Chief Bike Observer

On Saturday 12th September 2020, RAF Shawbury hosted a socially distanced 'Biker Down', motorcycle safety training day.

The free, full day event was by delivered by personnel from West Mercia Police, The West Midlands Ambulance Service and the Institute of Advanced Motorists Shropshire Branch, organised by Mr Harry Palmer, General Manager of Ascent Flight Training at RAF Shawbury, and supported by personnel from RAF Shawbury, Ascent Flight Training and Babcock International.

The 25 students and 5 staff completed lectures on Road Craft and First Aid in

the morning, followed by a practical rider skills package in the afternoon.

We were very fortunate in that this event happened on the Saturday immediately preceding the enhanced lockdown restrictions, but even so numbers were half that we would normally expect, as we were restricted to an attendance of 30 people, both public and staff.

Our special thanks go out to all of the 8 Observer's that helped provide such an excellent event on the day, with special mentions going out to Dave Lowe, who gave a very well received talk on the 'science of being seen' in the morning Biker Down workshop and to Andrew Harrison who put together a fantastic

afternoon of 'on-bike' activities for the riders.

Of the 19 riders in attendance in the afternoon session 15 had either not attended the event before or had no previous advanced training.

So, by far the best testimonial of all to both the quality and success of the day was measured in a phenomenal sign up of 10 new associates, 8 of whom were for our own area.

Thanks again to all of those involved and to the many Observers who kindly offered their services and were prevented from so doing this time by the Covid restrictions.

Both RAF Shawbury and West Mercia Police Road Safety Team were delighted and have expressed the desire to run at least 4 of these events per year, subject to regulations in force at that time.

Well done to all!



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Motorcyclists - IAM RoadSmart](#)



SAMM Diploma in Riding Excellence

Paul Collyer
SAMM's Chief Bike Observer

I was silly enough to put the radio on this morning, just as the national news headlines were about to start and wished that I hadn't!

What a great way to start your day, it seems that we are all 'doomed' and not a jot of good cheer to be found anywhere.

Apart from here in the SAMM newsletter that is, as I am genuinely excited to officially announce today a totally unique new membership initiative that is poised to revolutionise the ongoing services that we are able to offer to our membership, both past, present and future.

A new initiative? Why is it so special, what is it, who is it for and why do I need it I hear you ask. All good questions that demand a full response, so why not take a minute to go get yourself a 'cuppa', switch off the bad

news and come with me now on a short journey of discovery, starting of course with the back-story!

This will give you something positive to look forward to I promise!

Within SAMM, we have much to be thankful for over the past couple of years, having been the only group in the UK having almost 'tripled' its observer core (Bikes) from 12 to 32 and therefore seeing a huge upsurge in new members and what with our new association with RAF Shawbury and Biker Down, things are definitely on the up and up.

And this was never a case of 'quality at the expense of quantity' either, with our amazing observer team helping to maintain a first-time pass rate in excess of 95% throughout the biking year.

It is this extra observer capacity that has now put SAMM in the fairly unique position to be able to offer our members something that many have hinted at wanting, but that has not

Concept & Foundation

necessarily been available through IAM RoadSmart directly.

Having been a regular attendee at IAM RoadSmart conferences and regional meetings over the years, it is abundantly clear that we all suffer with similar issues, one of the most often cited being the loss of both head office and group members once having passed the test, as there is limited opportunity for continual professional development (CPD) within the current structure.

Unless the member has elected to take 'Fellows' membership, the advanced accreditation lasts as long as our members are prepared to continue paying their annual subscriptions, however this does nothing to maintain or to advance the members skill set and you have to ask yourselves honestly 'Am I really still riding to an advanced level... or might some of those finely-honed skills have slipped, might it be possible that I have picked up some bad-habits?

Perhaps this is something that you have considered yourself, but wondered exactly 'what can I do about this'?

Recent statistics provided by IAM Surety have proven that there is a marked and significant increase in claims for riders/drivers after 3 years due to a dilution of advanced skills, hence the rationale behind the Fellows scheme and the insurance benefits offered.

At present, a member keen to upskill and to remain engaged has only the

following and limited options available though IAM RoadSmart:

Members riding/driving assessment - £39

A 60 minute check ride with a serving IAM Examiner to ascertain if still riding to test standard and with the possibility of achieving F1rst standard. No mentoring provided, although extra sessions can be purchased at additional cost if required.

IAM Observer - £0 cost

Whilst undoubtedly a great way to keep one's knowledge sharp, this is not directly attributable to upskilling riding performance and can in fact often have a negative effect over an extended period due to riding consistently out of position and concentration on others riding over and above your own. There is also the fact that many simply do not wish to train others.

Masters Taster - £89 (Bike) – £35 (Car)

A 1-2 hour 'taster' ride/drive with a serving Masters Mentor, followed by a focussed summary of your ride and suitability to undertake the Masters training programme. There is no mentoring officially provided, just a few golden nuggets of good advice thrown in.

Masters - £299 (Bike & Car)

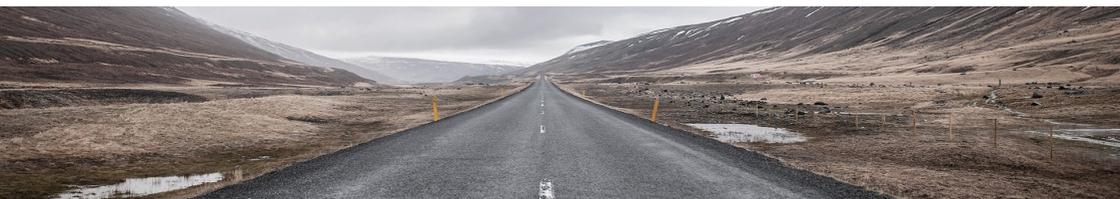
Including 6 x 90 minute on-road sessions with a serving Masters mentor,

including extensive brief/debrief and full preparation for the test (inclusive in price). Option for mentor to extend by two additional rides at their discretion at no additional cost. Top-up sessions can if required be purchased in batches of three at £75 and with a re-test upon failure.

Whilst providing the ultimate accolade in advanced riding/driving excellence, the cost and subsequent re-test costs

are prohibitive for many and simply not justifiable to others.

There is also the distinct possibility that this would be considered too big a step to take by some, especially in the event it may have been some years since passing the advanced test. Many riders would welcome the opportunity to train to the standard, but may simply not see value in the 'Black Badge' and find themselves unable to then improve their riding/driving beyond a given level.



The Solution

Aside from inactive group members that have paid their subs, there are currently 535 current IAM Bike & Car members listed as still living in Shropshire.

Many of these members will have disengaged with the group and even with IAM RS generally, though often maintaining their annual subscription in order to keep their advanced ticket.

But, are they really still riding to the standard? If not, what can we offer them to re-connect and to come back to the fold?

Introducing the 'SAMM Diploma of Riding/Driving Excellence' - A fully featured series of programmes that

provide both existing members and/or observers with a feature-packed and flexible opportunity to take their riding/driving to another level, but that level will be that of their own choice!

The programme will be a group-delivered Diploma set at three different levels that is non-discriminatory and open to all. The emphasis is on affordability and encouragement for all members to (a) re-visit and/or further develop their advanced training (b) re-engage with both with IAM RS and SAMM as a group.

This has been rubber-stamped by IAM RoadSmart via our ASDM, who welcomed the idea, hinting that this might be considered as a blueprint to be cascaded out to the network in the future. Praise indeed!

The Programmes

The proposal is to offer three Syllabuses, each with differing levels of achievement as decided upon by the applicant.

This will determine that current Local Observers will have first preference for all new associates joining the group, with National Observers then taking any overflow, as well as providing availability to observe those applying for the SILVER Diploma.

Local Observer Assessors (LOA's) will be trained to Masters standard during the remainder of 2020 and into early next year, in readiness to conduct mentoring to a 'First Plus' standard on the GOLD Diploma standard. This will utilise our LOA's, in addition to the standard Observer CPD that they will ordinarily conduct as part of their standard brief.

Masters Mentors will initially undertake training with the LOA's - taking them to Masters standard. It will not be a requirement that LOA's progress to the Masters test, but they will be encouraged to do so where possible, as this will swell the ranks of the Masters Mentors, providing capacity for everyone to then 'move up'.



Summer 2020

ROLL OUT

PHASE ONE

Seek and gain committee approval for the programme

Target Date: Aug 2020
Completed

Allocate LOA's to Masters Mentors & commence training

Target Date: Sept 2020
Completed

Completion of LOA training

Target Date: Feb 2021
Underway

PHASE TWO

Purchase 'loan' copies of Roadcraft and ARC/ARD course material

Target Date: Feb 2021

Creation of diploma certificates and purchase of frames

Target Date: Feb 2021

Programme Launch (LIVE)

Target Date: 1st March 2021

Diploma in Riding Excellence SILVER

Target Member Profile

Current or lapsed members wishing to re-join and whom may have been inactive since test pass and wanting to have a 'refresher' ride/drive to ensure that they are continuing to ride/drive to the standard.

Programme Objective

To provide an affordable and value driven offering that will suit members who have perhaps developed some bad habits/practices and would like a little more than just a 'check ride/drive' to bring them back to a good advanced test standard, but not necessarily seeking to advance to further levels of accomplishment.

Delivery

To be delivered by National Observers capable of conducting pre-tests and having a full understanding of test-standard requirements

Administration/Syllabus:

2 x 1 hour on-road sessions

IAM RoadSmart Test Standard

Development plan & standard written debrief

To be delivered using standard IAM RS stationery and support material

Using ARC Book – (NO's to be provided with 'Loan' copy for members which they remain responsible for)

COSTS

Cost to Member	£30.00
Payment to Observer	£20.00
Payment to Group	£10.00
Additional Runs	£20.00
purchased in blocks of 2 - all payments go to NO	
Upgrade to GOLD	£30.00

Standard IAM Run sheets to be used

No Video/Radio requirement

Identify & correct bad habits/issues

Diploma pass issued at NO's discretion – subject to performance at end of second run

Additional runs available in blocks of 2 – additional cost of £20 only (Group fee waived) – must be booked via group admin

Discounted upgrade to Gold/Platinum

Diploma in Riding Excellence GOLD

Target Member Profile

Current or lapsed members wishing to re-join and whom are wishing to upskill their riding/driving to a F1rst plus level but possibly not wishing to extend to Masters Level. This could also work for serving Observers seeking to check and improve their own advanced riding skills.

Programme Objective

To provide a cost effective, short but intensive programme that will seek to take riders/drivers to a F1rst level, but with additional 'sparkle' and a greater concentration on demonstrating 'The Thinking Rider' - providing a 'nod' toward Masters performance.

Delivery

To be delivered by Local Observer Assessors, specifically trained to Masters level by serving Masters Mentors, in order to empower LOA's to provide 'mentoring' as opposed to observing and making this an incubation programme for those wishing to progress to Platinum and/or Masters, should they so wish.

Administration/Syllabus:

3 x 1 hour on-road sessions

IAM RoadSmart F1rst standard with added 'sparkle'

Detailed Development plan & enhanced written debrief

COSTS

Cost to Member	£50.00
Payment to Observer	£30.00
Payment to Group	£20.00
Additional Runs	£30.00
purchased in blocks of 3 - all payments go to LOA	
Upgrade to PLATINUM	£90.00
Cost to serving Observer	£40.00
discounted from standard cost	

To be delivered using IAM RoadSmart Advanced Test run sheets

Using Roadcraft for reference – (LOA's to be provided with 'Loan' copy for members which they remain responsible for)

No Video/Radio requirement

Identify & correct bad habits/issues

Finesse riding/driving to a very high standard – with a nod toward Masters

Introducing an expanded level of forward thinking and hazard perception

Diploma pass issued at LOA's discretion – subject to performance at end of third run

Additional runs available in blocks of 3 – additional cost of £30 only (Group

SAMM Diploma in Riding Excellence PLATINUM

Target Member Profile

Current or lapsed members who are either considering or wishing to go through to their Masters test and/ or those members or Observers that are seeking to achieve full Masters standard, but do not see the benefit or cannot justify the cost of the full Masters test @ £299.00.

Programme Objective

To provide full and undiluted training that will provide the recipient with the necessary skills, knowledge and application to successfully achieve the IAM RoadSmart Masters test pass and with every possibility of achieving 'Distinction' level, subject to candidate performance on the day. It is anticipated that many who may not have the confidence to consider Masters may then choose to progress having achieved the required standard through this programme, though this is by no means an expectation or necessity.

Delivery

To be delivered by serving SAMM Masters Mentors. Whilst currently having just three serving members able to conduct this syllabus, it is anticipated that this will provide the encouragement for serving National Observers to 'step up' with the opportunity to add to this number,

COSTS

Cost to Member £140.00

Payment to Observer £80.00

Payment to Group £60.00

Masters Credit £140.00

Full credit to be provided should the member or observer go on to purchase Masters

Cost to Serving Observer £100.00

Masters Credit is reduced to £100 for serving observers

possibly even before the programme's official launch date

Administration/Syllabus:

6 x 1.5 hour on-road sessions (As per Masters)

Opportunity for 2 additional runs (FOC) at the mentor's discretion (As per Masters)

Radio instruction provided as standard

Detailed video debriefs provided for all runs along with enhanced and comprehensive ride summary

To be delivered using SAMM Masters mentor run sheets

Using Roadcraft for reference – (Mentors to be provided with 'Loan' copy for members which they remain responsible for)

Finesse riding/driving to a very high standard – with the goal of achievement to Masters Distinction level

Diploma pass issued subject to an internal 'check ride' with another serving Masters Mentor

There is one level available for this syllabus (no distinction), though candidates can be 'commended' in the mentor's final summary to reward exemplary performance

Additional runs not available – although further runs (could) be available for those progressing to Masters, this is not anticipated to be required over and above the discretionary runs provided for.

For Those Wishing to Progress to IAM RoadSmart Masters

The group shall provide a FULL refund of programme fees to those progressing forward to the Masters programme, irrespective of success

Candidate shall be advised to nominate their existing Masters Mentor on submission of application.

The nominated Masters Mentor shall in this instance be in receipt of standard £80 reimbursement from IAM RoadSmart directly, covering their direct costs

Upon receipt of notification from IAM RS, the Masters Mentor shall consider immediate submission of a test application for the applicant

The group will have fulfilled its role in providing a structured route to continual professional development (CPD) for its membership, culminating in the application to achieve the highest civilian riding/driving accreditation available in the United Kingdom should this be desired.



I'm Interested... So What Next?

We currently have LOA's being trained in readiness for our official programme launch in March 2021.

From feedback received from our members, we are expecting this to be popular and so with this in mind, places will be allocated on a 'first come first served' basis and we have started a waiting list for those wishing to take part.

Simply email: - bikediploma@advancedmotorists.org providing the following details: -

- Full name
- IAM Membership Number
- Contact number
- Email address
- Diploma Level Sought (Silver/Gold/Platinum)

All emails will record the date and time of application, so be quick and secure

your place if you are interested in taking part.

And for members that may not have renewed their SAMM group subs, naturally we would love to tempt you back into the family (and for £10 why ever not?), BUT this is not essential for you to take part. Just so long as you are still a fully paid up member of IAM RoadSmart, we would love to be working with you again.

And last, but most certainly not least, I may just finally make a mention to our many Car Members, who may well have read this through and wondered what is in this for them?

Very sadly, Coronavirus has effectively put the brakes on car activity at present, but please rest assured that Ian Rutherford and the committee have been fully on board and involved in the making of this programme with the Car membership in mind, so please rest-assured that this will migrate to our car members just as soon as we are in a position to do so in the future.

Very best wishes to you all.

Are you a SAMM car or bike member?

Are YOU media savvy?

Could you spare a little time to help promote SAMM?

If so, we need you to develop this role and publicise what SAMM can do for Road Safety in Shropshire.

PLEASE CONTACT US TO DISCUSS THIS POST FURTHER!

chair@advancedmotorists.org



American Adventure - Part Six

Fiona Parry
Advanced Rider and
Full Member of SAMM

Fiona's epic journey across the US has taken us 18 months to tell in full. Join us now for the final part...

DAY 15 - CEDAR CITY to VEGAS

This was our last full day on the Hog.

As we travelled from Cedar City to Vegas, the temperature in the desert soared, reaching 44oC (110F).

Travelling across the desert, we struggled to find fuel. Our final stop for fuel was a bit of a Phew! moment as

we were beginning to think we might actually run out of petrol.

It was during this stop that we took our 'cool dudes' photo with the Hog.

We arrived in Vegas at about 1pm after a beautiful ride through the desert. Having checked into the hotel we then went for a potter along the strip. It was very warm and being able to dive in and out of the air conditioned buildings was really the only thing that made the heat bearable.

One of the places we popped into was the Venetian, where we admired their indoor canals and gondolas. We also stood and watched the fountain display outside the Bellagio.



Day 16 - VEGAS

We got up early and dropped the Fat Boy off with the Eagle Rider dealership in Las Vegas. It was a much more professional outfit than the dealership in Denver. This time we were actually given a lift back to the hotel.

We spent some time wandering down the strip again.

We also explored the Flamingo hotel which had a lovely outdoor garden with terrapins, fish and flamingos.

Mostly, however, we had a lazy day, reading and lounging by the hotel pool.



DAY 17 – VEGAS

Temperature over 100F again today. We headed to the Bellagio Hotel again to look for their botanical garden. Instead we found an underwater sea garden display.

Apparently Las Vegas has 18 of the top 20 largest hotels in the world.

On the way back from the Bellagio, we went into Caesar's Palace – definitely a very opulent hotel and just completely over the top like all the other hotels on the strip seemed to be.

Then back to our own, more modest, hotel – just off the strip – for some down time by the pool.

In the evening, we went over to Circus Circus. It was tatty, grubby and run down looking. A huge disappointment.



DAY 18 – VEGAS to SAN FRANCISCO

An uneventful flight from Las Vegas to San Francisco today.

We booked into our hotel and then wandered round China Town before getting some supper.

DAY 19 – SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco was much cooler than I expected. It may have been mid-July, but I definitely need a jumper to keep me warm when outside.

The famous sea mist brought a noticeable chill with it when it rolled in from the sea.

We had arranged to do an architect's tour of the city.

Our guide explained about the 30 storey rule which was supposed to limit the height of buildings in the city.

To get around this, owners of buildings would sell the air above their buildings to a neighbour – allowing the neighbouring building to be built higher.

We were introduced to Polk's architecture and had the grandeur of bank interiors explained to us.

We were also shown POPOS – privately owned public open spaces.

These are a largely hidden 'secret' of the city. Beautiful, privately owned, open spaces – often on roof terraces – where the public are allowed free access – but mostly people don't know they exist, never mind how to get to them or that they are allowed to visit.

My favourite building was Polk's steel framed, glass fronted building – the first of its type to be built in the US.

In the evening we did a tour of Alcatraz.



DAY 20 – SAN FRANCISCO

Our last full day in America and we didn't plan to anything much other than walk around the city.

It was another cold day again.

First we went to Lombard Street.

We had intended to catch a streetcar, but when one finally came along it was full and we weren't allowed on – so we walked instead.

Leaving Lombard street behind, we went down towards the beach and had clam chowder in a loaf for lunch. I was very impressed.

We then mooched around Pier 39, hoping to see sea lions again. No joy today.



DAY 21 – SAN FRANCISCO to HOME

A long and uneventful journey home.

FLIGHT 1: San Francisco to Heathrow.

FLIGHT 2: Heathrow to Dublin.

We had a 5 hour wait in Dublin – so plenty of time to retrieve our luggage.

HINT: when going to America for 3 weeks on a hired motorcycle – take only

what you can easily pack in a rucksack. Make sure you can comfortably carry the rucksack on your back and then take it with you as hand luggage on the plane.

FLIGHT 3: Dublin to Liverpool.

4: Liverpool to home (by car).

Arrived home at silly o'clock in the morning, after an absolutely brilliant holiday. Not everything went to plan, but some of the best bits were actually the things that we hadn't planned and weren't expecting.

This article is dedicated to the memory of Kevin Williams - without whom this adventure would never have happened



WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

SAMM is run entirely by volunteers; from the observers helping train new associates, right through to every committee member.

If you could spare a little time to help your local IAM group see page 30 for more information.

Here are a just a few of the posts we have open:

Newsletter Editor

Social Secretary

Bike Observer

Car Observer



Ron Gardner

Ian Rutherford recently received this notification of the sad death of one of our Car Observers, Ron Gardner, from Lesley Fogg:

I am sad to report that Ron passed away in the early hours of yesterday (Sept 25th) at Telford Hospital.

There are no funeral arrangements yet but there will be a cremation. Ron said he lived by fire (retired firefighter) and would go by fire. Always the joker.

SAMM sends our condolences to Ron's friends, family & fellow car Observers.



Membership Notices

Autumn Membership

Despite the restrictions that have caused cancellations of many event that would normally help SAMM recruit new Associates, we had a flurry following the RAF Shawbury Biker Down Day. All have been allocated an Observer and most have commenced the IAM RoadSmart programme.

A steady trickle of new members have still been joining SAMM but, not surprisingly, numbers are down overall on last year. Roll on 2021!

Christmas Dinner

Unfortunately, the decision has been taken to cancel this year's celebrations but who knows, maybe we can plan a Spring or Summer event to replace it? Details will be emailed to members and included in the Newsletter if this is the case.

