

e-NEWSLETTER



WESSEX ADVANCED MOTORISTS

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WESSEX ADVANCED MOTORISTS

e-NEWSLETTER

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Members' details, i.e. names, addresses and telephone numbers, are kept on computer to assist group administration. This information will not be passed outside the IAM. WAM may from time to time publish photographs taken at group events in this newsletter and on the website or display them at publicity events. If you do not wish to have your photo taken or published by WAM, please contact the Editor in writing (contact details on the back page).

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Chairman's Corner



Welcome to the August 2020 edition of the Wessex Advanced Motorists newsletter. This is my opportunity to update you on what is happening in IAM RoadSmart and in WAM.

Before I get into that though, you will all have seen some of the lockdown measures being relaxed and for many of us, that means getting back into our cars and driving to see family. Some journeys are local but some - like mine - involve a 3½ hour drive to Surrey to see my daughter and her family and a 2 hour drive to Oxfordshire to see my son and his family. When Boris initially said that families can meet outdoors but not stay overnight, I think he was under the misapprehension that families lived in the same town, even the same street! I just couldn't face a 7 hour return trip to Surrey just to stand in a field 2m away from those I drove all that way to see. Barmy!



By Andrew Griffiths



But things are different now. In preparation for my long drives, I did some local ones first to restore my “driving stamina”, not having driven anywhere at all for 12 weeks. I found this invaluable. Additionally, I was able to break the journey to Surrey about halfway, for a coffee stop at my sister’s house/bubble on the outbound and inbound journeys. Again, this was invaluable and meant that I was as alert as possible (and Britain needs “Lerts” 😊).

It was great to get back into the driving seat again... and meet with family again (it has to be in that order because without the driving, I wouldn’t see family would I?)

I hope the relaxation of some lockdown restrictions has worked for you too, although some members, justifiably (in my view), continue to be nervous and cautious about going outdoors; well Covid-19 is still prevalent... it hasn’t gone away and it may be with us for a good while yet.

That brings me on to what is happening with IAM RoadSmart and its 190 or so Groups.

When the DVSA (Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency) recently gave approval to ADIs (Approved Driving Instructors) to restart

training learner-drivers and to its Examiners to resume testing, IAM RoadSmart took steps to get its Groups back to resuming observed drives. The date for this to happen was 20th July and it was with the proviso that each Observer and his/her Associate felt sufficiently safe and comfortable to resume; if either party had concerns, the observed drive could not take place.

But there is a crucial difference between ADIs and Observers when it comes down to the safety in the confines of a car during the pandemic;

1. An ADI has a **dedicated car** they use to train learner drivers. They don’t use that car to take family shopping or down to the beach. And after each lesson, they must follow a rigorous sanitising procedure of their car, ready for their next lesson.
2. An IAM RoadSmart Observer sits in the passenger seat of their Associate’s car. That car is highly likely to have had other people in it and so it would need to have a similarly rigorous sanitising procedure carried out **before** every observed drive; responsibility to ensure that happens



would fall to each Associate; if it is not done rigorously, the Observer is put at risk.

There are also other factors that enter the equation when it comes to Observers in WAM; 90% of our Observers are in the “vulnerable” group either through age or through underlying health conditions (“clinically vulnerable”). Some have resumed visits to ageing parents and young grandchildren (ME!) who they have absolutely no wish to put at risk by putting themselves at **unnecessary** risk in the confines of a third party vehicle in close proximity to another person. Here, even the 1m rule cannot be met, let alone 2m. So masks (and gloves) would need to be worn to reduce the risk of spreading the virus, and it's not fool proof.

Interestingly, current Government “advice” says **“no car-sharing”** outside your bubble. Observing is actually car sharing when you drill right down. I don’t know about you, but I find UK Gov advice confusing and it seems to conflict... even with itself!

So all of this has led to our Committee voting **unanimously** to delay WAM’s resumption of observed drives in order to protect our valuable Observers. **We will review the situation in September.** IAM RoadSmart has been notified and regards our decision as measured and all very sensible. One thing I **can** guarantee is that we will not resume until all Observers and Associates feel it’s safe to do so; and that might only be when a vaccine is available. We’re in unchartered territory and we’re in it together (to coin a phrase).

I’ve been in contact with my counterparts in neighbour Groups here in the South West (Exeter, Plymouth, Cornwall, Weston & Mendip) and they’re doing much the same as WAM. All are very concerned now that the holiday and “staycation” season is ramping up here in the South West, we’ll see a tsunami of tourists descend on us bringing goodness knows what with them; we must exercise caution and vigilance to stay safe. It is no time for complacency.





Our Associate Members

I appreciate that our Associates are keen to get on with their courses and that the decision by the Committee puts a further delay into the process. But resuming training **must be safe** for Observers **and** Associates alike. IAM RoadSmart has extended the Advanced Driver Course by 6 months to accommodate delays due to the pandemic so please don't panic, we'll get you there!

I'm currently working with colleagues on a series of three classroom sessions which are being designed for a physical classroom **and for Skype**. As mentioned recently, **all 3 sessions are mandatory for those Associates** yet to start their Advanced Driver Course. Associates who are part-way through their course will be very welcome to join in the fun if they wish but for them attendance will be voluntary.

If the aforementioned raises questions, please contact Pauline (coordinator@wessexam.uk).

And now for something completely different

The first person to pass what was then the voluntary driving test on March 16 1935 was a

Mr Beene (yes, really!). By June 1935 the test was made compulsory; maybe because of Mr Beene! This film was released by Ford so that the public could see what lay ahead of them. Here's the link. Enjoy the film!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbbERUEsQ4Q

Reconvening members' evenings

Do you miss our member's evening we held on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall? They provided entertainment, informative talks, demonstrations and a great opportunity to meet other members over coffee, tea and biscuits. The Committee is exploring how and when we can resume these meetings, while complying with UK Gov guidelines. There will be some members who may be a bit nervous about getting together physically. So we are considering holding the meetings using Skype too so that if you wish, you can watch us from your home. More news on that as our planning develops.

Enjoy this newsletter.

Best regards to you all,

Andrew





Wessex Advanced Motorists needs a new Chairperson

I am hereby giving you all advanced notification that I will be standing down as Chairman at our AGM in **October 2021**.

By that time, I will have served in the role as Chairman of WAM for 10 years. It will be time for me to move on.

The need to find a new chairperson is a priority for WAM for these reasons;

1. IAM RoadSmart's policy is very clear in that it requires all of its 190 Groups to each have a committee as per the Group Handbook; ***The Committee must consist of a minimum of 3 (three) officers (being a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer), a Vice Chair, (optional) and a minimum of three other duly elected group full members. The total number of the group committee members must not exceed 20 (twenty).***
2. Without the three mandatory officer roles being occupied on a continuous basis, a Group is at high risk of being closed down. We've seen that happen to the Camelot
3. A new chairperson brings new blood, fresh ideas, new thinking and a different style of leadership with them and in so doing can instil new impetus.
4. Ten years is **too** long for any individual to have serve in this role - when you consider there are 120 other members in WAM. I have repeatedly put myself forward for re-election at every AGM, initially because I felt there was more I had to offer - but in more recent years it has been because there was no-one else stepping forward despite my persistent efforts to "pass the baton".

Group (Yeovil) and in more recent years, to the Barnstaple Group. **Please don't let WAM be the next!**





Please be mindful that it is **not** my responsibility to source a new Chairperson. I will however, be on-hand to answer any queries from those expressing an interest in the role.

My contact details are at the end of this notice.

Here is the Chair role profile as specified by IAM RoadSmart.

Chair - mandatory role

Job Summary

- The Chair is part of the group Committee and is a Trustee
- The Chair heads the group Committee
- To ensure the Group is run in accordance with the guidelines set out by The Charities Commission and the IAM RoadSmart Rules for groups

Key Responsibilities

- To be in overall control of the activities of the Group

- To lead the elected Committee Members and support activities
- To encourage and maintain contact with other IAM RoadSmart and IAM RoadSmart Groups
- To provide support for all Committee Members, Members and Associates
- To attend IAM RoadSmart Meetings as appropriate
- To control and maintain a record of Privileged Access of Officers to DTE, Group Website etc.
- To ensure the group engage and embrace IAM RoadSmart standards and strategy.

Key Tasks

- Continue to grow the group
- Chair group committee Meetings and to attend local events where appropriate
- Become a visible presence and key representative of the Group at local events





- To attend IAM RoadSmart Meetings as appropriate
- Encourage and maintain contact with other IAM RoadSmart Groups
- Liaise with IAM RoadSmart on a regular basis

Key Skills

- Must have appropriate level of leadership skills commensurate with the role
- Knowledge and use of the internet
- Email skills

It may look onerous but in practice it is a most enjoyable role made more-so by having a solid, reliable and amiable committee supporting me.

Over to you...

Andrew

Tel: 01278 671659(home)
or 07941 527507 (mobile)
Email: chair@wessexam.uk



PAULINE'S ASPIRATIONS

Dancing Dog - follow the link...

Ceri and I aspire to performing like this! She will probably make a better dancer than me as her timing is usually spot on. She can already do the leg weaving and marching but not quite as slickly as this little collie - I expect it took years of practise. Maybe we can work on it...

THE COMMITTEE



Committee meetings (for committee members ONLY) are held bimonthly at 7:30pm on the first Wednesday of the month at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall. If, as a group member, you need to raise any issue at committee level, then please feel free to contact any committee member to put your views to the next committee meeting.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chairman | Andrew Griffiths | <i>chair@wessexam.uk</i> |
| Vice Chairman/Events Coordinator | Barry Keenan | <i>events@wessexam.uk</i> |
| Secretary/Membership Secretary | David Walton | <i>secretary@wessexam.uk</i> |
| Treasurer | Isobel Jennings | <i>treasurer@wessexam.uk</i> |
| Associate Coordinator | Pauline Wills | <i>coordinator@wessexam.uk</i> |
| Support Officer | Michael Wotton | <i>cmmw@wessexam.uk</i> |
| Chief Observer/Masters Mentor | Andrew Griffiths | <i>chair@wessexam.uk</i> |
| Newsletter Editor/Webmaster | David Walton | <i>ed@wessexam.uk</i> |
| Archivist | Anne Bull | <i>cmab@wessexam.uk</i> |

GROUP OBSERVERS



| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Chief Observer, Masters Mentor & LOA | Andrew Griffiths |
| National Observer & LOA | Barry Keenan |
| National Observer | Delphine West-King |
| Local Observer | Brian Dodd |
| Local Observer | Andrew Hepworth |
| Local Observer | Isobel Jennings |
| Local Observer | Ted Parks |
| Local Observer | Hugh Todd |
| Local Observer | Guy Tucker |
| Local Observer | David Walton |
| Local Observer | Michael Wotton |

Group observers must be fully paid up Wessex Group AND National IAM members at ALL times to carry out your vital observer roles.

Always check that your associate has an up to date membership card before departing on any observed drives. Please try to make and maintain contact with your new associates and listen to any concerns or fears they may have. When associates pass their Advanced Driving Test, PLEASE inform the associate coordinator as soon as possible as we have a duty to keep accurate and up to date records. All new associate members are normally teamed up with a conveniently placed observer. If you have any problems please contact our chief observer, Andrew Griffiths.

The following IAM and WAM members are Driving Standards Agency Approved Driving Instructors:

Nick Tapp 07900 900678 niktapp@hotmail.co.uk

Graham Tuffey 07916 137915 www.passwithgraham.co.uk

Members and/or enquirers must establish their own facts and details when contacting a Driving Instructor. If any other IAM and WAM full member driving instructors wish to be on the above list, contact the newsletter editor. (NB: You MUST remain *full* IAM and WAM members at all times.)



PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS



I wear a mask or face covering in enclosed spaces.

Welcoming my 5th great grandchild to the family.
Delilah Mae Howe was born 26th June, 6½ weeks
early. Mother and baby are both doing very well.

Sunset River Exe Cruise and Landmarks of the Exe Estuary

This river cruise was organised by a member of the Temple Methodist Church for the evening of Tuesday 21st July. We were due to meet at Exmouth Marina at 6:30pm, so to allow for traffic, roadworks etc, we left home at 5:10pm and after a relatively clear run, arrived at the Marina before 6:15pm. It was fortunate that I took my new sports face mask as some of the other passengers did not seem to care about 2 metre distancing.



by Brian Howe





Our boat for the evening was named Tudor Rose and she would take us on our sedate cruise along the Exe Estuary and back. What they say about Policemen getting younger also applies to River Boat Captains. Our Captain didn't look a day over 25 years, but, even so,

he was very knowledgeable about the river, its wrecks and landmarks. He kept his commentaries short and concise, which added to the relaxing atmosphere of the cruise. We sailed alongside the west bank (on our left) past Dawlish Warren, towards the villages of Cockwood and Starcross.



Exmouth
Marina





Close to Starcross railway station there is a red brick tower and building. This was part of another of Isambard Kingdom Brunel's interesting, though ultimately unsuccessful technical innovations, the Atmospheric Railway. The extension of the GWR southward from Exeter towards Plymouth used this system. Instead of using locomotives, the trains were moved with a system of atmospheric (vacuum) traction, with air being extracted from pipes laid between the rails by stationary engines at a series of pumping stations along the line. The section from Exeter to Newton (now Newton Abbot) was completed using this principle and trains ran at about 20mph. 15 inch pipes were used on level sections and 22 inch pipes were intended for the steeper gradients. Unfortunately, the technology required the use of leather flaps to seal the air pipes, the leather had to be kept supple by the use of tallow and tallow is attractive to rats; the result was inevitable and air powered vacuum service lasted less than a year, from 1847 to 10th September 1848. The pumping station at Starcross remains as a striking landmark, and a reminder of the atmospheric railway, which is also commemorated in the name of the village pub.

Further upriver is the Starcross Yacht Club, Powderham, which is reputed to be one of the oldest sailing clubs in the British Isles, having been loosely formed to organise a sailing regatta back in 1772. We were told that this is one of the questions in the Trivial Pursuit game. Originally based in Starcross village, the club relocated to Powderham Point in 1957. More information can be found at www.starcrossyc.org.uk

The next landmark was Powderham Castle, a 600 year old fortified Manor house which is the seat of the Courtenay family, Earls of Devon. It is a Grade I listed building. The park and gardens are Grade II listed in the National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens; known as an exclusive wedding venue and also for its outdoor events. More information at www.powderham.co.uk EX6 8JQ. The Belvedere Tower, a three-sided structure built between 1771 and 1774 for the second Viscount Courtenay, was the crowning glory of a major re-landscaping of the Castle grounds. The three-storey building offered unrivalled views over the estuary, providing a unique vantage point from which to view the busy shipping lanes between Topsham and Exmouth.





*Belvedere Tower,
Powderham Castle*

The Turf Hotel, EX6 8EE, has bright rooms and a yurt in a classic pub with a boat dock and barbecues, plus three full English breakfast. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays, more information from www.turfpub.net [Due to COVID-19 they are unable to offer any accommodation in 2020; hopefully back to normal 2021. Ed]

The Exeter Ship Canal, also known as Exeter Canal, is a canal leading from the River Exe to Exeter Quay in the city of Exeter. It was first constructed in the 1560s predating the “canal mania” period and is one of the oldest artificial waterways in the UK.



Now we cross from following what was the west bank and has now become the south bank of the Exe, over to the north side to Topsham, which was once a busy port and the first port in England to import Carlsberg lager. Topsham was soon followed by the beautiful Countess Wear bridge, dating from 1774. This



bridge lies about 2 miles south-east of Exeter City centre. Historically, an estate known as Weare, part of the Manor of Topsham, was in this area. From the late 13th century, the construction of weirs in the River Exe by the Countess and later the Earls of Devon, damaged the prosperity of Exeter to the benefit

of Topsham, which was downstream of the obstructions, and was owned by the Earls of Devon. The bridges over the river and the adjacent Exeter Ship Canal were for many years a traffic bottleneck, until the completion of the M5 motorway further downstream, in 1977. This also explains why the Exeter Canal was built, to bypass the weirs at Countess Wear, and allow boats up to the Quay at the city of Exeter.

Countess Wear Bridge



This, obviously is where the Tudor rose had to turn and make its way back to Exmouth passing the Lympstone Clock Tower, also known as Peters Tower. The Peters family were successful Liverpool merchants. William Peters, who built this Clock tower in 1885 as a memorial to his wife, lived in a sizable classical house nearby. The Tower can be rented for overnight accommodation.

The final landmark could really be called a watermark, it is the River Exe Cafe, a seafood restaurant on a custom-built barge that floats well offshore in the Exe Estuary. The cafe can only be accessed by boat, either a Puffin Water Taxi from Exmouth Marina, or on your own boat. It is open from 1st April to 30th September this year. More information from www.riverexecafe.com



My overall impression of the cruise was that it was a very relaxing experience and we were incredibly lucky to have a clear evening sky to take sunset photos. The Captain only had time to give us basic facts as we passed by, so I have researched and added further information on the main landmarks etc. Our cruise was run by Stuart Line Cruises, Marina, Pier Head, Exmouth, EX8 1 FE, 01395 222144 Web: www.stuartlinecruises.co.uk

Sunset over the Exe Estuary



COORDINATOR'S REPORT



Since the Summer newsletter, William Cullen and John Ratcliff have joined our group. We welcome them at this extraordinary time when we are still unable to meet safely.

Our group is taking a cautious approach to resuming observed drives. The situation will be reviewed in September and until then no observed drives will take place. This decision was made for the safety of both our Observers and Associates and is consistent with current Government guidelines.

New Associates will soon be invited to attend a series of three classroom sessions which will provide essential groundwork prior to starting practical observed drives. These may be actual or virtual due to the current situation.

There is nothing else to report at the moment. Looking forward to more normal times.



by Pauline Wills



Events Corner



I have three topics that I'd like to discuss with you for this ¼'s Newsletter.

1. The ongoing problems that Covid-19 continues to present to the group.
2. The whereabouts of the Classic Car Show winners' cups.
3. My pending resignation from Events.

Covid-19 and WAM's events

Well! The weather's been nice this last few weeks, hasn't it?

To be honest, that's about all the good news I've got for you from 'Events' this time round. As you may have noticed, Covid-19 continues to be a problem and although we're in one of the (apparently) many 'lockdown easing' stages, we're still not at the point where we can safely restart any form of in-door or outdoor events activities just yet.



By Barry Keenan, Events Co-ordinator





As I've mentioned in previous Newsletters and bulletins, any guest speaker who was scheduled to come and talk to us since March has kindly agreed to postpone their chat until the same time next year. That means that we have a pretty full calendar of events and speakers already lined up for next year which is a real bonus, however there is a catch to that as I'll discuss a little later in these pages.

With regards to easing 'lockdown restrictions' you may have heard various experts, politicians and pundits discussing the "R" number. If you didn't already know, this is the 'Reproduction number' and refers to the number of people an infected individual could pass the virus onto.

In short the higher the 'R' value, the more infectious the virus. For example R3 means one infected person can pass Covid-19 on to three people while R10 means that one infected person can pass it onto 10 people. At the time of writing (22nd July) the 'R' rate in the South West remains somewhere between 0.7 and 1.1.

For the safety of ourselves and our membership, after much discussion and

deliberation the WAM Committee voted unanimously to wait until the 'R' number in this region has dropped to less than 1 and continues to show a steady decline, before we open up our events again.

As you would expect, we will continue to monitor the situation closely and review again at September's Committee meeting. Sadly this means that we have further delayed any planned events (including Member's Evenings; outdoor social activities; one to one Associate training and group classroom sessions) until our next review. I'm really sorry about that, but there's currently no guaranteed safe way of restarting.

Committee Meetings, as you know, are closed to the ordinary membership but if you have any issues that you would like raised, either about our response to Covid-19 or any other matter, then please email David at secretary@wessexam.uk with your thoughts for inclusion on the agenda. Once debated either he or the portfolio holder for that particular area will get back to you with the results.





In the meantime please make sure you check the monthly bulletins for the latest news, snippets and information from the WAM membership. And if you fancy adding *your* contribution to the bulletin, on any subject that you choose, then I can guarantee that David (ed@wessexam.uk) will be more than happy to receive it.

The Classic Car Show

Obviously we didn't run the Car Show this year which was a great shame, but Covid-19 distancing regulations or not, I've taken just shy of 20 phone calls and emails from previous attendees asking for confirmation that this years' show either was, or wasn't, going ahead. Clearly then our little show is becoming something a local 'happening'.

And, talking of the car show. Partly in line with GDPR and partly to try and clear my *personal* computer of all non-Keenan Household stuff, last year I put all of the WAM group business and Events files onto an IAM RoadSmart flash drive. Very corporate!

Unfortunately, after a just one year of service and use, my RoadSmart flash drive developed a glitch. A rather fatal one, to be honest. Don't

ask me how or why, suffice to say that all of my 'Events' files have been corrupted and are effectively destroyed and out of reach. That includes (and I'm almost embarrassed to admit this) the names and contact numbers of last year's cup winners, dammit!

So if any of you out there happen to know; have the contact details of; or know somebody who does know or have the contact details of either:

1. Pete Britton, winner of the 007 Challenge Cup with his 1969 Morris Mini Cooper and/or
2. Wynford Jones, winner of the 'Timpson Cup' with his 1959 Messerschmitt TG500 then please ask them to contact me on 01823 - 25461 or events@wessexam.uk so that I can arrange the return of the cups.

Thank you very much. All help gratefully received.

][

My resignation from 'Events'

Because of my health issues and family commitments, after much soul searching and deliberation, in January of this year I reluctantly





gave notice to the Committee that I would be resigning from post at this year's October AGM.

In March we were hit with the reality of Covid-19 and all that has since entailed.

As you know not only did Covid-19 all but shut us down, it then presented the Committee with interesting technical as well as deeply considered ethical dilemmas about how and when we could effectively and **safely** start up again.

The fact is this pandemic took everybody by surprise and we are all having to work to a new reality. With that awareness in mind I realised that for WAM to continue as successfully as we have over the decades (as both TGAM and as WAM) we would need a full and experienced Committee to drive us forward; now is not the time to resign. Therefore I've withdrawn my notice of resignation for this year's AGM in October and will stay in post until October 2021 by which time, hopefully, the coronavirus will be under control and life will be back to normal. Whatever that is then.

From an Events organisational perspective I'm pleased to announce that we have an almost full calendar of events up to and including January 2022. This is enough for a full three months after I vacate the post.

I like to believe that I've done a decent job with Events and I hope you think so too. The point is, if you would like to see WAM's events carry on or even better, evolve beyond what I could manage, then I urge you to speak to me or any of the Committee about volunteering your time and take over the running of WAM's events. I'm sure you'll make a better fist of it than I did and I can guarantee that you will have the full support of the Committee. For our group to continue to function and grow we need new blood and new ideas. So come along; you know you want to and if you won't do it, who else will?

][

As a bit of light relief, my friend Emrys pointed out this 21st July advert for a watch maker's lathe on eBay. Now, I'm no expert, but I would imagine that £800 is a reasonable price for a second hand lathe... but take a closer look at the photograph.





And just to add insult to injury, the description given for this amazing invisible lathe was:

"Here we have a watchmakers/clockmakers lathe.
The approximate MAX dimensions are inches/cm wide x inches/cm high".

Having given so much information to perspective buyers about this wonderful piece of machinery I'll bet he was absolutely inundated with watchmakers flocking to bid!



][

As always thanks for taking the time to read my scribblings and do, please, give consideration to my requests for help. I hope we'll be able to meet up again shortly but until



Mouse over image to zoom

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Item location: Cheshire, United Kingdom

Posts to: United Kingdom and many other countries | [See details](#)

Delivery: Estimated between Fri. 24 Jul. and Mon. 27 Jul. ⓘ

Payments:

then, here's to your continued happy, safe and enjoyable motoring.

Barry

Events Co-ordinator

01823 – 254621

07776 – 124001

events@wessexam.uk





The Restoration of MGA Twin Cam YXB 807

By Ralph Coulson

This saga begins in the spring of 1969. I had the inspiration(?) to purchase an MGA, preferably a Twin Cam. Twin Cams, at that time were reasonably priced, however, the market place was not over run with them. MG only built about 2,000 examples, some 500 in the coupe form.

Scanning the enthusiast magazines of the period, including Motor Sport, eventually revealed a Twin Cam Coupe at Richardson's of Stains Middlesex. Not too far from my Surrey home at the time. Accompanied by my wife Rene and her brother we made a visit on a clear Saturday morning to reveal Twin Cam YXB 807, over sprayed in 'Burgundy'.

The car was clean but tired, however she started 'on the button' and ran reasonably well. What's more she was cheap. I was 23 at the time and still had a lot to learn!

After a spirited test drive, initially by the salesman; whose name escapes me but he was resplendent in a very grubby brown suit. Testing on the Stains by-pass, said salesman wound the car up to an insane speed and jammed on the brakes, just because I queried the brake efficiency. I drove the car back to Richardson's and it handled surprisingly well. A deal was struck, despite the reservations of my brother in law. After all, I reasoned, my intention was to restore the car during the winter.

We collected the car a week later, the odometer showing 8,650 miles. Couldn't say how many times it had been 'round the clock' but she had certainly seen more than 8,650 miles.

A full service, to ensure reliability during the summer, was completed over the next week or so, replacing vital ignition parts, radiator hoses, thermostat, all oils and filters, brake hoses and front dampers.





As purchased, with Percy the cat (always getting in the way)

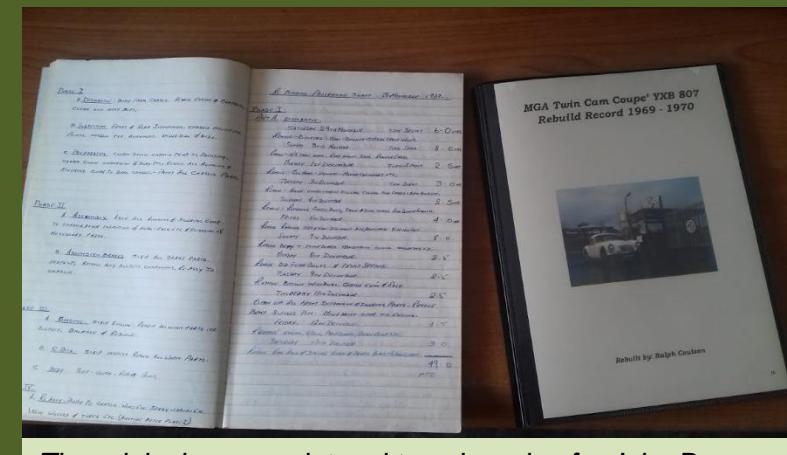
At 10,500 miles I fitted a 'TURUS' oil cooler thermostat along with an oil temperature gauge and ammeter. The propeller shaft was treated to a pair of new Hardy-Spicer universal joints and finally the 'Low Ratio' differential was replaced by the correct 4.1 to 1 ratio. More of that later!

Due to high oil consumption, more than I expected from a Twin Cam, I lifted the cylinder head to reveal the true extent of the engine condition. Deeply pocketed valve seats and worn valves. Pistons and bores were not much better. I carefully de-coked the head and re-fitted it with new camshaft bearings - A full engine re-build was definitely on the agenda now.

We continued to enjoy the car for the remainder of the summer, albeit with heavy oil and fuel consumption. However, steering and brakes were up-to par. My notes at the time indicate the car drove and handled very well.

29th November 1969

I had prepared a detailed plan of action, based on my knowledge and experience of the car. I intended to remove the body from the chassis, clean, check, repair and re-paint the chassis. Attend to all running gear, brakes and steering. Rebuild the engine completely and rebuild the gearbox which was, by now, showing signs of advanced lay-shaft wear.



The original manuscript and typed version for John Burgess



The restoration, of which I kept a detailed log, followed the general plan. The chassis proved to be straight and true. After a thorough clean and de-rust, by hand, followed by several coats of chassis paint, it was re-built with new suspension bushes, road springs, dampers, brake discs and re-built callipers. All Twin Cams were fitted with Dunlop Disc brakes on all four wheels and Dunlop Centre Lock wheels.

New Dunlop SP Sport tyres were fitted to all five wheels. I modified the wheels by fitting wider rims, probably considered sacrilege these days!



Not sure why I look so pleased!

The engine was too far gone for an economic re-build (in those days). Cylinder head heavily worn, cylinder bores and pistons deeply scored and crankshaft in poor condition. This engine had worked very hard during its lifetime, but was still running reliably.

I purchased a replacement Twin Cam engine from Thompsons of Wimbledon for £60:00, those were the days! After a re-bore to +0.010", new Hepolite pistons, crank grind, new valves etc, I re-built it and installed it into the chassis with the re-built gearbox, prop' shaft and back axle. All resplendent in a fresh coat of paint.



Ready to install into the chassis





Attention was then turned to the body shell, stripped to bare metal, new wings and sills. Apart from the wings and sills, it proved to be in reasonable condition.

The body was reunited with the chassis and after a 'bare metal respray' in Old English White' (the original colour) re-trimmed with new carpet, windscreen, new bumpers front and rear, plus a new Mk2 grill. Other chrome parts were re-chromed, including the luggage rack.

Our first major run, after a good 'shake-down' was to Abingdon where we photographed the car outside MG Factory No3 Gate. Now the site of a McDonalds Restaurant!



Nearly finished, just the lights to finalise



At Number 3 Gate



We also attended the MG Car Club 'Beaulieu 71' where the car, numbered 97, achieved a 2nd in the Concours – not bad!



MGCC Beaulieu



Rene on our first long run, somewhere in Kent

After many miles of enjoyment, including holidays to East Anglia, Hampshire and the West Country, including Porlock Hill; we sold the car to Mr P D Norman of Epping, including the old engine. Our son was on his way, so no room for a carry cot!

History

Fast forward to about 2005, whilst attending the annual MG Live! At Silverstone I had a conversation with the Twin Cam registrar and discovered I was still registered as the owner of YXB 807. Obviously subsequent owners had not had the opportunity to update the MG Car Clubs records. I gave my contact details to the registrar. Some years later, after further yearly visits to MG Live! and more conversations with the Twin Cam registrar, I received an email from John Burgess. John was in the process of establishing the history of his MGA Twin Cam – YXB 807.

It appears John Burgess is the 6th owner of the car and has owned it since December 1979, I being the 3rd owner. The car was purchased new from University Motors Piccadilly by Mr Patrick Barry. The car and owner, it transpired, had a very interesting past.



Patrick Barry, was a true MG enthusiast. After owning an MGA 1600 roadster, he purchased YXB 807, had a special low ratio differential fitted, then competed in MGCC events from 1958 to 1962 at Silverstone, Brands Hatch and Goodwood. He said he wasn't very successful but he enjoyed taking part. That, perhaps explains the state of the engine and gearbox!



Patrick Boult competing at Silverstone: No wonder the engine and gearbox were shot!

During World War 2 Patrick saw action in the Royal Navy and was the radio operator on motor launch ML307 which took part in the famous raid on St Nazaire, for which he subsequently received the Légion d'honneur. He celebrated his 100th birthday in 2014 and it was hoped he could be re-united with YXB 807.



Patrick Barry at his 100th birthday celebration, proudly sporting his war medals including the Légion d'honneur

However, it was not to be, Patrick lived in the South of France but the car was, and still is, in no fit state to be reliably driven down through France.

Sadly, Patrick has since passed away. Rene and I were very keen to 'join the party', a great shame:- Opportunity missed!

YXB 807 was on the MG stand at the Earls Court Show and was supplied with many extras. I wish I had known that before I sold it – with a spare twin cam engine!



Footnote

Following the disappointment of missing Patrick Barry's 100th birthday celebration, I remained in touch with John Burgess, he telling me he was working on the car to 'tidy it up' and he sent me a few recent photographs of the car, it didn't look too bad.

Over the next few months Rene and I arranged to meet with John and the car, where I promised to hand over to John a bound type written log of my notes and costs whilst restoring the car, along with my original workshop manual and other interesting artefacts. We arrange to meet at the Bicester Heritage Centre on 3rd June 2019 at 10:30. Rene and I were keen to visit the Bicester (thanks to Ann and Jimmy for their recommendation) and took advantage of the centre's 'Crew' en-suite rooms for a two night stay, conveniently located on the Heritage site. Very interesting, clean and comfortable. John planned to drive over from his home in St Albans in the Twin Cam.

At about 11:15. NO JOHN NO TWIN CAM! Eventually John 'phoned me whilst I was waiting at the Heritage Gatehouse, advising

me that he was at Gaydon – where was I? After some re-direction and repeating the post code for his sat-nav, he duly arrived, in a white MG thing – made in China! Bloody Hell. Apparently YXB 807 wasn't fit for the road! End of story. *But I did tell him I want to see that car before I die.*



John with documentation. Pictured outside the 'Crew rooms' Bicester





It's Andrew on the organ and... er, Andrew on the drums

By Andy Mayes

I was born in a flat in Streatham, South London, and lived there for 11 years. Sometime during this period I recall my mother coming home from shopping, or whatever, to find me with 3 of our dining room chairs, which had padded seats, set at angles around me, next to the radio. (no tapes, C.D's, cassettes, in those days), and with a pair of her large wooden knitting needles in my hands.

To the exclamation "What are you doing?", I replied that I was playing the drums. Every Sunday morning the local sea scouts would march to a band, up and down Streatham High Street, and you could always find me, rain or shine, shadowing the lead drummer. Sometimes being late home for Sunday Dinner.

I guess this is where it all started.

By my early teens the two boys living next door to where I was now living, had guitars, and with one other had formed a skiffle/rock group. I didn't want a guitar and when I asked my Mum "could I have a set of drums?" I was met

with a definite "NO!" After I had put my bottom lip away she followed-up with "when you can read music, I will buy you a drum set". There followed 12 months of piano lessons. Then one day I sat Mum down alongside me at the piano and played the "Blue Danube Waltz" from beginning to end, without fault. I turned to Mum, who had tears in her eyes, and she said "That was beautiful, yes, you can have your drums".

So, at the age of 13yrs I was a (proper) drummer.

Mum died when I was 14yrs, and shortly after, Dad and I moved to Bristol, leaving my drums behind. I joined a youth club where they had a modern jazz group. Their drummer was leaving to go to university, and they auditioned me to replace him. I passed and bought my 2nd kit for £30.

Dad was a keen dancer, and I used to leave the youth club early every Tuesday to meet him at the B.A.C. Filton Dance Club, initially, to get a lift home, but started getting there earlier





and earlier just to watch the drummer, avidly. he and I were talking one day, when he told me of a jazz band in Bristol that was looking for a drummer. I passed their audition, and started playing (for money. YAH!) for the first time. I was 16yrs and Dad had to cart me and drums to all the gigs. At about the same time the drummer at the B.A.C. was forced to stop playing, and offered me all his gigs. I was now (still 16yrs) playing 4-5 nights a week. I still have the full diaries. I did this for 5yrs until after I was married, moved to Taunton with my job and had to stop. I kept my kit, although there didn't seem much work about, and it was too far to travel to Bristol each time.

One night, whilst out for a meal with my brother and his family, the drummer, who was due to play at that hotel, didn't turn up. I sat in, much to my families annoyance. I took my wife back there the following week to make amends, and, again, the drummer didn't turn up. I sat in again, and I was now the drummer for the Tone Valley Jazz Band. The band played for nearly 50yrs on riverboats; steam trains; railway stations; carnival floats; in barns; fields; for the B.B.C.; Children-in-need; not to mention the odd pub or two. The leader of the band died a

few years ago and the Tone Valley Jazz Band ceased playing.

This opened up new horizons for me, and in recent times I have played with many bands including one:- The Royal Air Force Concert Band (32 piece on a good night), which included playing at some prestigious places like The National Arboretum War Memorial; Royal Tattoo at Birmingham arena; and under the nose of Concorde. Oh! by the way, this band doesn't march (thank goodness), but it did mean me learning to read all over again. Ouch!

Which brings me up to today, well March lockdown anyway. I play a Hayman drum kit, which is only my third kit. This is the last British manufactured drum kit, and I am still complimented on it's sound. Not the drummer, I might add. Like our Chairman, my fingers are getting stiff, but I don't have the luxury of headphones to practice. So... we'll wait and see what works, and what doesn't, when the time to restart comes. Trio work, perhaps, which is good for distancing, or a duo with our Chairman?

Andy Mayes

What are ‘Mild Hybrid’, ‘Full Hybrid’, ‘Plug-in Hybrid’ and ‘Pure-electric’ Cars?

By Kieran Ahuja July 2020

The motoring landscape is rapidly changing, and there is now a bootful of terms to describe how different types of vehicle are powered; terms that didn't exist a couple of decades ago. Pure-electric, plug-in hybrid, mild hybrid, full hybrid, extended-range electric - a lot of words that sound like they mean similar things.

However, when you dive under the bonnet there's some key differences. And they're differences that you'll soon have to become familiar with, as the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars in 2035 looms large.

What is an electrified car?

Anything that includes an electric element to the powertrain. These can include anything from cars with petrol or diesel engines that are supplemented with a small electric motor and battery to ones that do away with the internal combustion engine completely. All of the types of vehicle listed below can be considered “electrified”.

What is a pure-electric car?

A pure-electric car is one that combines one or more electric motors with a battery and does not have a petrol or diesel motor on-board. There are a number of different names for the same thing: the Society for Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) favours “Battery Electric Vehicle” (BEV), while some go with the term “fully electric”. Others simply call them “electric cars”, so you can generally assume they mean pure-electric, though it's a slightly vague moniker.

The market for pure-electric vehicles is expanding rapidly, with sales tripling over the last year, despite the coronavirus pandemic causing overall car sales figures to plummet.

When many people think of pure-electric cars, the first name that comes to mind will be Tesla - justifiably, considering the Elon Musk-fronted marque was the pioneer of sexy, long-range, powerful electric motoring more than a decade



ago. It now has four cars on sale, with two more on the way, along with a pure-electric lorry. Tesla recently became the most valuable car company in the world, overtaking the mighty Toyota.

Pure-electric cars are (for now, at least) what the future looks like, with hybrids of all forms (see below) thought of as a stepping stone towards a zero-emission road network. Even smaller sports car companies such as Lotus have announced their intentions to go pure-electric in the foreseeable future.

What is a full (or ‘self-charging’) hybrid?

A full hybrid is a vehicle that can be powered by an electric motor, though in concert with an internal combustion engine. Electric-only power is available only for very short distances, usually up to a mile, due to the battery pack being very small compared with a plug in car.

Although brands like Toyota have marketed their full hybrid cars such as the Prius under the term “self-charging”, they self-charge using

the petrol or (very rarely) diesel engine. Regenerative braking, where kinetic energy from the brakes is converted to electrical energy in the battery, can improve efficiency. Power is fed directly to the wheels by both the engine and electric motor in a “parallel hybrid”, or by the electric motor only in a series hybrid, with the engine effectively used as a generator.

Electric-only power is used in situations like parking, or gentle acceleration, before the internal combustion engine (ICE) fires up to do the heavy-lifting.

Full hybrids have proved particularly fuel efficient in urban and suburban situations, though they don’t tend to get as many miles per gallon as diesel cars on motorways.

What is a plug-in hybrid (PHEV)?

A plug-in hybrid is an evolution of a full hybrid, with a bigger emphasis on electrification. PHEVs have larger batteries than full hybrids, which means they have a much bigger electric-only range - though still much less than pure-electric cars. For example, a Range Rover



Evoque PHEV has an electric-only range of up to 41 miles per charge, which is more than enough to get you to the local shop and back, or maybe even to and from work, but isn't sufficient for long journeys - which is when the internal combustion engine kicks in.

This is convenient for long journeys, as when the car then runs out of petrol or diesel you can simply refill at a petrol station and be on your way again, though mpg can be even worse than a full hybrid on long motorway journeys as PHEVs carry around extra weight in the form of the bigger battery.

They make up for it around town, though, with their greatly increased zero-emission range. Depending on your circumstances, a PHEV could make visits to the petrol station very rare indeed. Running on electric power is both much cheaper and much better for the local air quality, and there are also excellent cost

savings for company car drivers in terms of benefit in kind when compared with petrol, diesel car and full hybrid.

What is an extended-range electric vehicle (E-REV)?

Think of an extended-range electric car as a pure-electric vehicle with an on-board petrol or diesel generator, to allow it to keep going if there are no opportunities to plug in to recharge the battery. Unlike a plug-in hybrid, the wheels of an E-REV are solely driven by the electric motor(s) in series, so the internal combustion engine is disconnected from the drivetrain.

As with PHEVs, the aim of E-REVs is to eliminate "range anxiety", which is oft-quoted as a reason that people are reluctant to transition to pure-electrics. As public charging infrastructure improves, and the range and recharging speed of pure-electric cars improve,



however, the point of both PHEVs and E-REVs diminishes.

There aren't many cars currently in the UK that use the E-REV powertrain, but it was found on the BMW i8 and an early version of the i3, as well as the Vauxhall Ampera and the Chevrolet Volt - all of which have now been discontinued.

What is a mild hybrid car (MHEV)?

A mild hybrid is, unsurprisingly given its name, the least electrified type of hybrid. Its small electric motor is attached directly to the engine or transmission and works in a similar way to a turbocharger, providing a little boost for the engine under acceleration. This can help improve fuel economy and reduce emissions.

The motor may also reclaim energy during deceleration. MHEVs have smaller batteries than a full hybrid, as energy is stored very temporarily before it is deployed again, and a mild hybrid isn't able to run on electric-only power.

As the least electrified of the hybrids, mild hybrids have the smallest impact on a car's emissions. However, it's becoming a popular form of adding extra life to standard petrol and diesel engines, allowing them to meet toughening emissions standards. For motorists, it makes very little difference to the driving experience - MHEVs feel like traditional cars.



Pauline's Lockdown Project

By Pauline Wills

No doubt many of you have had projects during lockdown. Here is a record of mine.

I have always enjoyed pottering in the garden. I would not call myself a gardener and have been lucky to have help when needed. A couple of months ago I had a call from Mary who, sadly, has finally decided to retire – it's the end of an era as she has been helping our family for more than forty years. She has taught me a lot. Left to my own devices I may not do things correctly but nature is wonderful and plants can be remarkably resilient. I have a theory that if you ask three different people the same question about gardening you will get three different answers. Even if the outcome is not as expected it will be interesting.

Well, during the last four months I have certainly appreciated my garden more than

ever before. Although it must be satisfying to have everything under control I believe in having a list of jobs to do. Lockdown has presented an opportunity to work through that list. The problem is that I have also had plenty of time to think ... and that has resulted in lots more jobs being added too.

Back in March I was talking to my neighbour over the fence. Last summer he was kind enough to let me purchase a small part of his orchard and I was delighted about the expansion of my garden. Despite my joy in acquiring the land I was unsure how I was going to integrate it successfully. Before he retired my neighbour was a builder and builders often have waste to dispose of. So, in the corner of his orchard he had built a concrete 'patio'. The trees behind offered a certain amount of shelter but the area also caught





the afternoon sun which made it a pleasant corner in which to relax. But that was the problem – it was in the corner of his garden and not in the corner of mine. I had pondered over this area of concrete for some time and just couldn't make up my mind what to do with it. So, on the spur of the moment (during our conversation over the fence) I asked him if he thought I would be able to break the concrete up. He explained that the hard-core base was substantial but the concrete itself was quite thin. He had laid it in small quantities whenever he had a bucket or two left over from one of his jobs and so he thought I would probably be able to manage it.

That was encouragement enough for me. Luckily I had a skip in the front garden. Don't ask why I had a 6 yard skip in the front garden but it had been there for some time and it now seemed eminently sensible to fill it up. This could be my lockdown project; I was going to be confined to my home for a while and this was an opportunity not to be missed.



Without delay I found the old sledgehammer in the shed – I knew it was there although I don't know where it came from and don't remember using it before. I went to work straight away! Well, the first few swings seemed to give results so my mind was made up. I mentioned my plan to a couple of friends and heeded their warnings. Pacing myself would be important. A couple of wheelbarrows each day and it would be finished in no time.





As I was working I gave more thought to the next phase of my project. Last summer I was invited to a baby shower. That's not something I was familiar with but it was fun and we were all given some wild flower seeds so that we could think of the baby as we watched them grow. This would be an ideal spot for them and the timing was just right. Before lockdown I had bought a few packets of flower seeds too so they could all be mixed together and scattered over my new flowerbed. Good idea!

Well, it was hard work but I was right - it didn't take very long. I discovered that it is much easier to push a full wheelbarrow when there is plenty of air in its tyre and after that I made good progress! Of course I had to watch Ceri carefully while I was wielding the sledgehammer as she has always enjoyed 'helping' in the garden and is still very inquisitive.

I have to admit to having some help with the chunky bits of concrete at the back but I'm happy and satisfied that I cleared the



vast majority myself. I was keen to sow the seeds as soon as possible so the display is not wonderful this year; ideally I should have spent more time preparing the ground. Never mind, it's a huge improvement. I will leave everything to self-seed and look forward to watching the changes year on year.

With a bit of luck I will be able to see baby Connie soon – she is nine months old now and will have grown a lot during lockdown.

An Observer's Hobby... or an Obsession? You decide!

By Andrew Griffiths, WAM Chief Observer

During lockdown, I have kept “light-touch” communications with WAM Observers. 50% of us are on the WAM committee so I see those at our Skype committee meetings.

However, with IAM RoadSmart activities ramping up, I contacted others to see how they were doing and to find out their thoughts on returning to observing.

I had a very interesting - and amusing - phone chat with Ted. Ted is one of our newly qualified Observers and he explained to me that he'd bought an old motorbike to restore to keep him occupied during lockdown. His account of the work he'd done sounded very impressive so I asked him to send me a short description and photo of the machine for our newsletter.

The bike;

“A 1930 two stroke of 174cc, it’s the only two stroke made by BSA prior to the Bantam which actually used a German designed engine which they acquired following the war. Don’t mind having my

name associated with it [the article] as most people who know me have questioned my sanity for many years!”

I then had an email exchange with Ted mainly about the stunning photo (below). You may notice something unusual;

Quote:

Ted; “Hi Andrew, snap of my new ornament. The clock is circa 1680. The bike is little newer being born in 1930”.

Me; “This looks a fantastic machine and with the restoration you've done, it must be Concours condition”.

Ted; “Thank you”.

Me: “I don't think it **sooo** unusual to keep a motorbike in the house Ted... I expect your counsellor has reassured you on that[😊]”.

Ted; “Actually my counsellor said he couldn't help me any more and went off to get some professional help for himself!

Unquote.





A real talking piece in Ted's sitting room



Maybe we'll get to see Ted's bike in our 2021 WAM Classic Car Show (which we'd need to rename WAM Classic Vehicle Show!).

But wait! While we're on the subject, there is another WAM Observer - who trained alongside Ted - who loves his BMW with a passion. This isn't him or his car but he knows who he is! And Ted and I know who you are!



So does anyone else reading this have a similar hobby/obsession they would like to share with us? Please send some narrative and a photo to David Walton.

Andrew



Does Your Car Have BOILS and SAILS?

By Andy Poulton

Unlike normal factory fit extras [such as 4WS, ALB, Pi Ti Turbo etc.] These extras are added by the driver after they have bought the car.

Let me explain.

B.O.I.L.s stands for BRAKE OPERATED INDICATOR LIGHTS. We have all seen the car that is being driven down the road and is approaching a turning off that they wish to take. The driver brakes and gets ready for the turning, then the in-built sensors detect this and send a signal to the On-Board Computer. The signals are activated for the turning they wish to make [left or right] just as they turn the wheel. 'I have turned to the LEFT or RIGHT'

S.A.I.L.s stands for STEERING ACTIVATED INDICATOR LIGHTS. This 'extra' is normally used for lane changes on motorways or multi lane roads. It can also be used for overtaking.

Once again, we have all seen the vehicle being driven on a multi lane road. The driver wishes to change lanes. The driver turns the steering wheel and accelerates. An in-built

sensor sends a signal to the on-board computer. This applies the correct signal 'in good time'! as he completes the lane change.

Similarly, with overtaking the driver accelerates, applies lock and activates the sensors. The on-board computer sets the appropriate signal 'I have just pulled out'!

There is of course one big fault with this new system.

It's PRONE TO ERROR.

We have all seen a vehicle approaching a roundabout, the driver brakes AND turns the wheel at the same time. The system overloads with information and NO turn signals or indicators are set. The vehicle negotiates the roundabout or hazard without any indication AT ALL.

OKAY, OKAY. If you have NOT already guessed THERE IS NO SUCH GIZMO.

This is a wind up, although I sometimes think there is this 'extra' judging by what I see today.



So what is the correct method and guidelines for Giving Information?

HIGHWAY CODE Rule 103 is:

Signals warn and inform other road users, including pedestrians of your intended actions. You should always: -

- give clear signals in plenty of time, having checked it is not misleading to signal at that time
- use them to advise other road users before changing course or direction, stopping or moving off
- cancel them after use
- make sure your signals will not confuse others. If, for instance, you want to stop after a side road, do not signal until you are passing the road. If you signal earlier, it may give the impression that you intend to turn into the road. Your brake lights will warn traffic behind you that you are slowing down
- use an arm signal to emphasise or reinforce your signal if necessary. Remember that signalling does not give you priority.

ROADCRAFT Tells us on page 29:

As part of the SYSTEM OF CAR CONTROL Information, Take Use and Give Information.

Give a signal if it could help other road users, including pedestrians and cyclists. Use indicators... [range of signals]

(Notice the word “ONLY” has been deleted in front of GIVE in the NEW Roadcraft. too many drivers were failing to give signals as they convinced themselves, as there was nothing behind it was not needed or they thought NO ONE was going to benefit.)

Then a whole Chapter 8

The purpose of signals

[Starting again with]

- Give a signal whenever it could benefit other road users

Key Points

- Consider the need to give a signal on the approach to every hazard, and before you change direction or speed.
- Give a signal whenever it could benefit other road users.
 - *[There it is again]*



- Remember that signalling does not give you any special right to carry out the actions you indicate.
- Follow the Highway code – Check your mirrors before you signal or manoeuvre.
 - [Ahh they forgot that in the Highway code though]

The Range of signals

The signals available to you are: -

- Indicators
- Hazard warning lights
- Brake lights
- Headlights
- Position of your vehicle [*Chassis language*]
- Horn signals
- Arm signals
- Courtesy signals
 - AND for the pedants!
- HAND signals
- Reversing lights

Using the Indicators

- If in doubt it is far better to signal than not to signal.
- One signal should not be used to cover more than one manoeuvre.

Lastly there are various other advanced techniques used/taught; all have their place such as:-

One flash for every 10mph before changing lanes on multi lane roads.

Signals are not generally used to leave MINI roundabouts.

What may be okay for 2am on a mini roundabout on Salisbury Plain is not as relevant at 2pm on a Roundabout in Salisbury city.

That is BLACK & WHITE but it is all the grey areas in between you learn from a tutor or experience.

The highway code does not mention the use of signals when joining a motorway. However they are often of benefit if congested to alert other drivers of your intentions or draw attention to your intention to join in a safe gap.

If you ring me to feed back. I will only regale you with all the anecdotal evidence.

The best being the 80-year-old Lady Methodist Church goer who has shown me her new 'Thank you courtesy signal' she has learnt from other drivers. **[UNPRINTABLE UNUSABLE]**





This is an Explanatory guide from The Police Driving school.

WHY?

THE PURPOSE OF SIGNALS IS TO INFORM OTHER ROAD USERS OF YOUR PRESENCE OR INTENTIONS. THINK BEFORE YOU SIGNAL.

INDISCRIMINATE SIGNALLING IS NOT HELPFUL TO ANYONE.

GIVE A SIGNAL WHENEVER IT COULD BENEFIT OTHER ROAD USERS.

SIGNALS SHOULD ALWAYS BE GIVEN

AS PER THE HIGHWAY CODE

MIRROR SIGNAL MANOEUVRE

LEAVES NOTHING TO CHANCE

CHOICE OF ROUTE

NO AMBIGUITY

LEAVES NO DOUBT IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER
YOUR INTENTIONS

Give information as to where you are NOT going!

SETS THE EXAMPLE

AS PER THE SYSTEM

IT'S A SYSTEMATIC WAY OF DEALING WITH AN UNPREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENT

FOR THE CRITICAL MAN

KEY POINTS: -

- Consider the need to give a signal on the approach to every hazard and before you change direction or speed.
- Give a signal whenever it could benefit other road users.
- Remember that signalling does not give you any special right to carry out the actions you indicate.
- Follow the 'Highway Code' - check your mirrors before you signal or manoeuvre.

A FAILURE POINT IS MORE LIKELY TO BE DEMONSTRATED

IF: -

YOU DO NOT SIGNAL WHEN YOU COULD OR SHOULD HAVE DONE

THAN: -

IF YOU SIGNALLED WHEN YOU MIGHT OR NEED NOT HAVE DONE

SIGNALS ARE THE LANGUAGE OF THE ROAD.

SO, DON'T BE DUMB USE THEM

Andy Poulton

IAM RoadSmart Examiner South West

Steering

By Nigel Albright; a follow on to last time's piece on seating position

In the article on seating position and the value of maintaining constant back support, I said that steering technique was one part of the equation, so this conveniently leads to talking about that very subject. It's a topic which over time has undergone a lot of discussion and debate, some of it quite heated. Almost exclusively the focus has been on steering as a stand-alone subject; however, if viewed as a component rather than an entity it can be seen in a different light. But first, to understand how we have come where we are today we need to look at some history, because all is not what it seems.

I think one downside of 'pull-push' is the very sound of the term because it probably facilitates the criticism of being rigid, inflexible and, if you like, pedantic. If anything in driving can't some way or another be related to safety then, yes, it is pedantic and should be thrown out. For reasons explained in the article on

driving position I prefer to refer to it as *symmetrical steering*, which means the same on both sides. This also helps to keep the back and spine straight. The article on driving position is, therefore, a useful lead-in to this one, so I suggest it should be read first.

The original and principal reason behind symmetrical steering was that it kept both hands on the wheel for as much time as possible so that if one slipped the other was always there to back it up, which means it was primarily about safety and the essence of that is still sound today. That method of feeding the steering wheel and keeping the hands in contact with it continued quite happily until we get to the 1994 Edition of Roadcraft. A number of things were coincidental here. Firstly, Her Majesty's Stationery Office was in the process of becoming a government independent and financially self-sufficient organisation under the simplified banner of The Stationery Office.





Under HMSO Roadcraft was not intended as a commercial product per se but, in effect, a government service reflecting what was taught at police driving schools for the benefit of the general public - to inspire a higher general standard of driving and, therefore, improved safety on the roads. Given that for HMSO Roadcraft was the second best seller to the best-selling Highway Code it is understandable that the new Stationery Office might wish to maximise its commercial potential, if nothing else as a good starter for ten as they kicked off. This would certainly have included softening the tone and making Roadcraft more palatable for the general public. It can be argued that the original, 1955, Roadcraft had a somewhat militaristic feel and this went on through the 1960, 1968 and 1974 versions to the first major re-vamp in 1977, but even then it still retained the essential tone of previous editions. Given that the origins of the content was written pre-WW2 then this might be understandable. However, this also enabled critics on the outside to complain that it was regimented and inflexible. What they did not

take into account, and probably didn't know, was that it was 'unpacked' at driving school or, as one Hendon Advanced Wing Instructor once said, 'Flexibility comes later'. So, it wasn't actually rigid and inflexible when properly understood. That Roadcraft needed a dramatic revision in the way it was presented for good commercial consumption was not in doubt. The problem was that under that smoke screen other things sneaked in which at least some police driving schools were not happy about and which, one can reason, diluted some of the essence of the original Roadcraft.

The second, and related, point is that up to the 1977 version all the content of Roadcraft had been purely the product of the police driving schools and principally amendments evolved from the periodic Police Driving Schools Conferences. This means the content merely reflected the best in what was taught for safe road driving and nothing else. Such was the reputation of the British police system of driving that some sixty international police forces sent their officers to Hendon to learn what can best be described as the Cottenham





System. In a broad sense Roadcraft chugged merrily along under the HMSO banner until we get to the lead up to the 1994 edition. Now that it was about to become commercial there were more cooks in the kitchen of the Roadcraft Working Party, amongst which were an author, researchers and, of course, those representing the commercial interest of the new Stationery Office and all that starts to put a different tone on things.

The third point of coincidence, and it might seem a coincidence, was the appearance of one Sir John Whitmore. A contemporary of Jim Clark on the Saloon Car Circuit in the early 1960s, Whitmore retired from racing in 1966 and later, after studying at the Esalen Institute, entered the coaching and mentoring industry. What he saw in Roadcraft was a complete anathema to his coaching ideas. Basically, Whitmore publicly waved a copy of the 1960 Roadcraft and shouted regimentation and inflexibility, essentially right in the face of the Roadcraft Working Party. In his rantings Whitmore, with his background as a racing driver, conveniently overlooked the incredible safety standard which the police driving

schools had achieved in road driving and did not even display the humility of examining the situation from their point of view. Whitmore's main shout, and one which easily gained public sympathy, was about steering and that a 'natural way' would be much better than the rather formalised pull-push approach. My information is that Whitmore went to Hendon to demonstrate his 'natural' steering technique, what became rotational steering, and was taken on the skid pan where he promptly cocked it up. Enough said. I spoke with some members of that RWP after the publication of the 1994 Roadcraft. What emerged was that the RWP (1) was concerned about potential bad press emanating from Whitmore if they did not incorporate at least something of his ideas and that this could seriously impact Roadcraft sales and (2) it could be accused of not being open minded at a time when the police were becoming generally more sensitive that they were not taking notice of external criticism. Even in the late 90s Whitmore still held considerable respect within the motoring world for his fame as a racing driver and this was easily linked with the general public's erroneous assumption that a good track driver





automatically makes an equally good road driver. His book, Superdriver, written in 1988, was aimed at road drivers and it has some good pointers on the mental side however, it takes all its references purely from racing and/or track drivers so on the physical side of road driving it misses important elements. The general impression in the RWP seems to have been that Whitmore was largely a self-serving egotist who, more than anything else, was using the situation to generate public attention on himself and perhaps simultaneously promote his sports training business. But there were possibly other elements in play here. Whitmore may, in a sense, have been hand in glove with a certain Inspector Peter Amey, known for The Amey Report. They also lived not far from each other. The Amey Report blasted certain aspects of police driving as dangerous. Although a police officer, Amey was considered more of an academic than anything else and academics, by their nature, generally impress the world by writing papers. This again seems to have conveniently overlooked the incredible safety standards emanating from the driving schools. So there

were possibly multiple external pressures being felt by the RWP in the context of how well the new Roadcraft might sell. In the circumstances the RWP decided to incorporate Whitmore's ideas on steering more as a damage limitation exercise than anything else. The introduction of *information gathering* may also have come from Whitmore¹ although, unfortunately, it was mixed in with System which confused more than helped. The 2007 Roadcraft changed this to have Information Gathering running parallel with System, which is quite different.

In the light of previous editions being accused of being rigid and inflexible the 1994 version also made great play about 'flexibility' but, unfortunately, in the untrained understanding of the general public it quickly got out of hand. The police driving schools (not the force driving schools as they largely are now) respectively reviewed the changes in the new Roadcraft to decide what they might incorporate into their training. Devizes, for one, threw out just about all the changes, presumably seeing at least some as an appeasement to the general public





to help generate sales and I suspect most, if not all, of the other driving schools might have done similarly. Nevertheless, the cat was out of the bag and considering Roadcraft had the strap-line, The Police Driver's Handbook, to the unknowing it was still the Bible and the content was obviously either condoned or approved by the RWP.

There are those who believe that Whitmore acted with total sincerity but, unfortunately, it seems he was unaware of exactly how the methods used at driving schools added up to such a superb safety standard. And he was arguably unempathetic about how any changes in Roadcraft which might have been influenced by him could undermine the integrity of their work. These important, some possibly almost subliminal, elements were keys which Whitmore, coming from a racing background did not even seek to understand. I am not sure that I understand it completely but, there was something in the mix of the dedication and way police driving schools went about their work which added up to their incredible standard and, most unfortunately, it has generally not been the same since their demise.

Rotational steering, therefore, came into Roadcraft by the back door and not because it had any credence or provenance in its own right. In one sense the flood gate was now open but, now comes a dilemma. Even at that time most of the general public were using the indifferent technique of hand-over-hand steering when the DSA, as it was then, and the advanced driving organisations were sticking to 'pull-push' steering. So, the question becomes is the flow in the reverse direction going to overwhelm you? In other words what is the use of sticking to a technique which no body generally uses? And from learners upwards do you go with the flow? A pivotal point in my mind is that most drivers, if spot tested today, would almost certainly fail their standard driving test which means they are actually below a basic standard of competence. And it is also very easy to show why the average driver really is like the next crash waiting to happen; their threat perception is low and they are highly vulnerable, particularly to front to rear end shunts which accounts for some 30% of crashes. Apparently less than 2% of drivers take any further interest in their driving over and above



the standard driving test. So, the point is don't be deluded into thinking that going with the flow and conceding to the expectations of the general public is going to be consistent with maintaining a safety standard, because it obviously isn't.

In the overall scheme of things the advanced world takes its cues from the ethos of the original police driving schools and we know that principally what we do to reduce vulnerability and improve safety is generally not what the average driver does, in fact often the reverse. However, the DSA, ,in its infinite wisdom and as the government agency for setting and maintaining a basic driving standard in the UK, subsequently decided that it was no use trying to keep swimming upstream and now symmetrical steering is not mandatory for the standard driving test, the big let out being so long as a person has control over the vehicle. Do not be confused into thinking that 'having control' is the same as safely managing a vehicle. And since symmetrical steering is no longer mandatory for the standard driving test it also means that ADIs (The Government Approved Driving

Instructors – and the only professional cadre of driving instructors in the country) do not actually have to know about it. Unfortunately, the advanced driving organisations have, to a greater or lesser degree, followed this precedence.

In the article on driving position I illustrated how that is interlocked with steering but, the reverse is also true, which really means the two are symbiotic; whilst a sound driving position is essential for symmetrical steering it is not for rotational steering also evidenced by observing learners in ADI vehicles and just how many have bad driving positions. Pupils are often so close to the wheel that they could only use the top half of it and, for the same reason, they would have to physically turn their head to use the rear view mirror. Considering one should use the mirror on average every 5-10 seconds and often less than that then potentially such drivers are going to end up with severe neck ache, if indeed they are using the mirror as frequently as they should be. Such pupils either haven't learnt, or been taught, an optimum driving position with the multiple advantages of the head being



sufficiently far back so that there is the narrowest angle between the sight-line and the rear-view mirror, which means only the eyes have to move to view it. With a good driving position there is proper and constant support to the back and lumbar region which also prevents *posterior pelvic rotation*. A symmetrical steering technique ensures the spine always stays straight and the head position does not move, therefore also ensuring the eyes are precisely and constantly aligned with the central mirror. An important point about rotational steering is that with an arm across the steering wheel, and with a serious explosive device sitting right in the middle of it, a driver is highly vulnerable to serious injury if the airbag deploys. Unfortunately, the DVSA has further succumbed to the expectations of the general public with some of the changes to the standard driving test last November so, to my mind their strap line, 'Safe Driving for Life' has a rather hollow ring to it.

There are arguments that symmetrical steering is not fast enough for some situations. There are answers to that. The first is that in normal road driving if you need excessively fast steering then almost certainly you missed something along the way. The second is that if you are practising extreme vehicle handling, such as either at the MIRA engineering, test and development facility or Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground then you might need something faster, particularly if you are pushing a mid-engined rear-wheel drive which tend to break away more suddenly. The third option is if you are working in the security and close protection sector where, in the latter, you can be driving almost bumper to bumper and you might have to be super-fast on occasions.

However, I have to say that I have used symmetrical steering on advanced skid control courses I have run which included manoeuvres such as reverse flicks (J-Turns to the Americans) and have never had a problem





with it. I also knew a police traffic man who used to do car rallies and he found it worked perfectly well for him. And I never saw John Lyon, who was a former HPC Course Manager, yet regularly raced Alfa Romeo GTV (and possibly Porches at some time), get all crossed up either on a skid pan or in his road driving. Indeed, Derek and Dennis on the Hendon (police driving school) skid pan always had rock steady driving positions but, were very fast and fluid with the hands when they needed to be - and they were also involved in anti-hijack techniques. This means that with practice, symmetrical steering can be executed much faster than most people realise and maybe part of the key is that most can't be bothered, but why should laziness undermine the soundness and integrity of a method?

In summary we have, in the red corner, a technique which provides the highest level of safety and protection from injury and which is symbiotic with the driving position. And in the blue corner there is something which is really none of those things. So, the choice is? Well, clearly it is a no brainer.

¹ p25. Superdriver, (1988)
by Sir John Whitmore, Published by Fernhurst Books Ltd for the RAC.

Nigel Albright

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nda@ndaa.co.uk



Cycle lane road signs and markings

Tips from IAM RoadSmart

Do you know your solid white line cycle lane from your broken white line cycle lane?

New powers have been granted to local councils to enforce cycle lanes – but do you know your road markings? Ignorance of the law is no defence, so with new bicycle facilities popping up all over our towns and cities at the moment, as cycling is encouraged to ease pressure on public transport during the Coronavirus pandemic, it is now more important than ever to know where and when you can park.

Cars or motorcycles illegally parked on mandatory cycle lanes can force cyclists to deviate from their path and put them at risk of conflict with passing vehicles. From today (22 June 2020) councils can use CCTV vans to record offences. There will always be a right of appeal if signage is unclear or mistakes have been made, but that can be a time-consuming hassle with no guarantee of success.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart's Director of Policy and Research, therefore has these top tips to help brush up your knowledge and ensure you know the rules of the road around cycle lanes and where you are allowed to park:

Dust off your Highway Code and Know Your Traffic Signs knowledge. You can view both online to make sure you're familiar with road signs and markings and what they mean.

Rule 140 of the Highway Code is the main one for cycle lane advice. It states: "You must not drive or park in a cycle lane marked by a solid white line during its times of operation. Do not drive or park in a cycle lane marked by a broken white line unless it is unavoidable. You must not park in any cycle lane whilst waiting restrictions apply."

When it comes to a cycle lane marked with broken white lines, use common sense in relation to the term 'unavoidable'. While you should not normally cross them, there may be



occasions when the confines of space or the nature of traffic dictate it as unavoidable.

It is your responsibility as a driver to check signage on street lights or poles to find out exactly what the parking restrictions are and the hours of operation of the cycle lane. These may have changed since you last visited your town centre. Even if a cycle lane looks temporary, if it has a solid white line it will be mandatory and the parking and stopping advice will apply.

You can ‘pick up and set down passengers’ but that means you must never leave your vehicle unattended or stay too long. Loading information will be on plates or on kerb markings. If in doubt park or load somewhere else.

With the introduction of pop-up cycle lanes and other initiatives to promote walking and cycling and keep public transport use to a minimum, check before you head out on the roads. Your local roads may be familiar to you, but they may have changed since you last ventured out on them.

Neil added: “Watch out for more cyclists than before on our roads. They have no airbags, crumple zones or seatbelts to protect them. Treat them the way you would want to be treated. It is important to give people the space - at least 1.5m - they need to use the road. At this time you should also expect a wider range of ages and abilities as more people try it out for the first time to avoid public transport.”





**Closing date for the winter 2020 edition
of the Wessex Advanced Motorists e-
Newsletter is 20th October.**

**All contributions would be very
welcome.**

**All items should be sent to
ed@wessexam.uk**