

Theatre Royal, Bath



Advance

**Newsletter of
Bath and District Advanced Motorists**

“Making Bath and District a safer place to drive”

www.badam.org

Registered Charity No 1050592

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| <i>[Raffle Tickets are available at Group indoor meetings from Jayne MacBride]</i> | | |

Bath and District Group of Advanced Motorists

(Registered Charity No. 1050592)

NOVEMBER 2017—
JANUARY 2018

Advance

Issue 169

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CHRISTMAS PARTY



Our annual Christmas quiz and buffet will be held at St. John's Church Hall on Tuesday, 12th December. This year the quiz will be provided by Ray Robbetts who will also be asking the questions, but we need your help once more in providing the buffet.

Lists will be available at the November Group meeting showing what food and soft drink items would be welcome. If you are able to contribute, please put your name against the item(s) you will be able to bring along. If you can't be at the November meeting but would still like to supply items for the buffet, please contact Sue Phillips (Tel: 01225 849058 or e-mail minutes@badam.org) by Friday 8th December. Thanks very much!



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the latest edition of *Advance*. This time we have to report a number of changes on the committee. The first news is that Clive Merchant has resigned as Chief Observer because of personal commitments and we would like to thank him very much for all the work he has done as Chief Observer over the last two and a half years. He has done a great deal to support our team of Observers with quarterly meetings and numerous runs with Observers and their Associates, and he has also had to deal with the large amount of administration involved when the IAM became IAM Roadsmart. He will continue as a National Observer and on the committee and we are very grateful for all he has done, and will continue to do, for the group. Until a new Chief Observer is appointed the Chief Observer's duties will be shared out between the other Observers.

Next, we can report some good news which is that Eddie Ruskin has agreed to take on the role of Events Organiser and he has already organised some interesting speakers and is working,

with Don Escott, on outdoor events. We are also very pleased to welcome Jayne McBride to the committee.

You will have found, inside this copy of *Advance*, a letter and a form about the increase in fees which was agreed at the last AGM. Please make sure that you send the top half of the form to the Membership Secretary, Alison Long, by 1st December and, if paying by Standing Order, that you arrange for the new payment in January.

Last year we held a successful recruitment event in the Shires shopping centre in Trowbridge and we shall be holding another one in January or February 2018. Details will be posted on the website and please come along if you can.

Finally, details of our Christmas meeting are on page 3. The Christmas party, with a quiz and lots of good things to eat, is always an enjoyable occasion so please come to join us then.

Clare Hogg
Sue Phillips

The next edition of *Advance* will be published in February 2018. Please submit motoring-related articles and / or digital photographs to the Temporary Editors (*who reserve the right to edit them*) by Friday 5th January at the latest. Names of authors and their home addresses should be disclosed to the Temporary Editors who will withhold them from publication on request.

GROUP NEWS

Dave Gosling, Chairman, opened the July meeting by welcoming the Open Forum panel of Andy Poulton and Alistair Andrews, chaired by Clive Merchant.

The first question for the panel, which was answered by Alistair, concerned when it is safe and legitimate to be on the wrong side of the road. This happens in overtaking, of course, but you must be back on the correct side of the road well before any closed bend (where you can't see round the corner) so that you are not in the path of a vehicle coming the other way. Sometimes it is legitimate to 'straightline' a road if the bends are open and you have a clear view of both sides of the road. This is not recommended on the Advanced test but can be done on the Masters test. The motto is: Don't know, don't go.

The next question for Alistair was about correct signalling on and off roundabouts. At a normal roundabout if turning left, signal left. If going straight on, don't signal on the approach but signal left when you reach the little triangle dividing the road before your exit. Signalling too soon could confuse a driver waiting to enter the roundabout at that road into thinking you are leaving at the earlier exit. If turning right, signal right on the approach and left at the triangle before your exit. You may not always need to give a signal but you should always consider giving one.

There was then a discussion about other aspects of how to approach a

roundabout including 'straightlining', which is appropriate only if there are no lane markings and you are not in the way of other traffic. If there are lane lines on the roundabout try to stay within them. The question arose of what to do if the lane you are in on the approach is a left lane only and you want to go straight on. Signal right to indicate that you want to go into the right hand lane and move into that lane if it is safe. If you are unable to do so, take the first exit and find a place to turn round if necessary. Similarly, be aware that other drivers may make mistakes and allow for these. If you are unable to get off a roundabout at the correct exit because of other traffic, you can go all the way round and try again.

With mini-roundabouts you should always make your best effort to go round the centre marking. Some of them are badly placed and it is difficult, but you should try. When approaching a mini-roundabout try to be the last person there because if everybody else has stopped, giving way to somebody else, you can arrive and keep going.

Andy Poulton then took over to discuss a range of subjects. He warned of the things which can break and fall off cars if you hit a pothole, such as suspension top springs, and he also talked about Small Car Syndrome. This is apparent in the different way you are treated by other vehicles if you are driving a small car rather than a big one. When driving

a baby Suzuki he found other cars overtaking and cutting in in front of him. He also warned that dashboard cameras are not allowed on test.

The next question which Alistair tackled was 'Is there a formula for congestion?' He explained that what can often happen on a motorway is one lorry overtaking another, and this can take several miles, and all the other vehicles moving into the third lane thus reducing three lanes to one which causes congestion. The problem is not leaving enough space and if one person brakes, all brake. He went on to talk about the distance which must be allowed between vehicles at different speeds. The distance between vehicles can be less at lower speeds and therefore more cars can fit on to the road and this keeps the traffic flowing better. This is why managed motorways, which can slow the traffic down, are better at controlling congestion.

Andy returned to give us some interesting facts about motorways including that there is no M7, that the longest motorway with a single number is the M6, that the official name of spaghetti junction is the Gravelly Hill interchange and that there is one roundabout on the whole motorway network which is at the M4 and M49 interchange. He gave some clarification of motorway signage. Distances are given in miles and the countdown marker posts are 300, 200 and 100 yards before an exit but the marker posts by the motorway are 100 metres apart. The blue signs with letters and numbers give

the side of the carriageway you are on (A for away from the start of the motorway and B for the opposite side) with different letters for entry and exit sliproads. These identify where you are on the motorway if you call the emergency services.

The next question asked if the speed and method of approach to hazards differed for hybrid, electric, automatic and manual cars. Alistair said that with automatic cars there was not much engine braking and keeping rolling in an electric car with stop/start technology used too much power so it is better to stop. It is important to know the technology of your car and explain it on test. Read the handbook!

The last question was about when it is legitimate to overtake a cyclist if there is a solid white line in the road. If the cyclist (or a horse or a road maintenance vehicle) is doing ten mph or less then you can, but otherwise no. You should signal when overtaking a cyclist as the vehicle behind may not be able to see them. You are more likely to fail your test for not signalling enough than for signalling too much.

The September meeting was opened by Alison Long, our Membership Secretary, who explained that the Committee had decided to take turns to chair the meetings. She welcomed the Associates present and then introduced Clive Merchant, Chief Observer, to give the Associates' presentation.

Clive's talk concerned IPSGA, the driving technique, the System, that allows us to make progress in a

methodical way. He asked what IPSGA means and was correctly answered by one of the Associates: Information, Position, Speed, Gear and Acceleration.

In talking about the Information phase, he introduced the acronym TUG: Take, Use and Give information. He then went through the other aspects of the System, emphasising the use of mirrors throughout.

Andy Poulton then spoke for a few minutes and mentioned an event later in September at which Reg Local would be introducing his videos. He is an ex-police officer who produces videos about driving under the pseudonym Reg Local which are uploaded to the web and can be viewed for free and Andy recommended them.

Alison then introduced the speaker, Susan Date, a long standing member of the Group who has been driving since 1960, and has contributed several amusing articles for *Advance*.

Susan learnt to drive on a 1932 Rolls Royce when she worked for the Osiris Repertory Company. The Company was founded in 1927 by Nancy Hewins and consisted of up to seven women, three Belgian Griffons and two Rolls Royces, based in Willesley.

The Company took theatre to schools and audiences all over the country, specialising in Shakespeare, and was the subject of a play by Imogen Stubbs called *We Happy Few*. Osiris travelled only in Rolls Royces, as Nancy said they were the only cars suitable. The first car, Mr Bumble, was

bought in 1934 when petrol cost one shilling and sixpence a gallon. All the cars were named after characters in the plays they were performing in, such as Great Aunt Maude which was a 1922 Silver Cloud that cost £50. The Rolls Royces, and two caravans, carried all the equipment needed for the plays such as scenery, costumes etc, as well as the actors and their possessions and supplies.

Susan gave an entertaining and interesting talk about the difficulties of operating the company through the war years, with petrol on ration, headlights covered and no signposts and remarked that the police were always very friendly and helpful.

Susan joined Osiris in 1959/60 and the Company was wound down in the 1970s. She had on display some photographs and a book about Osiris published soon after the war, with a map showing all the places to which they had travelled up until then. This, very impressively, covered from Cornwall to the north of Scotland and in later years they also travelled all around Ireland.

Alison thanked Susan for her amusing and informative presentation and presented her with a plant as a token of our thanks.

Alistair Andrews concluded the meeting by talking about the new Observers' Training course to which all are welcome at any stage of the course. The final two sessions are on 6th November and 4th December at 7.00pm in St John's Church hall.

TROWBRIDGE COUNTRY FAYRE—Saturday 2nd September

On Saturday, 2nd September, BADAM once again set up its display stand at the Trowbridge Country Fayre. Clive Merchant, Don Escott, Ray Robbetts and Pat Hemmens were present all day with Don, once again, allowing his motorhome to be used as a base. During the day they met a number of visitors to the Fayre, discussing with them the advantages of becoming an advanced driver.

Not surprisingly, nearly all the people who showed an interest were from the Trowbridge area, which will probably result in them joining the Melksham group rather than BADAM. However, the advanced driving message was



Ray Robbetts, Clive Merchant and Don Escott in the sunshine at Trowbridge.

still passed on, so hopefully some of those spoken to will take up the training being offered with the prospect of becoming safer drivers.

INTER-GROUP QUIZ—20th SEPTEMBER

On Wednesday, 20th September, a team from BADAM went to Hatch Beauchamp, where the Wessex Group of Advanced Motorists (formerly Taunton) hold their meetings, to try to win back the trophy which they lost last year to Weston & Mendip



Andrew Griffiths, Chairman of Wessex group, presents the trophy to Ray Robbetts, Val Bearne and Jayne McBride.

group. The team consisted of Val Bearne, Jayne McBride and Ray Robbetts. The other teams taking part in the quiz were from Bristol, Weston & Mendip and Wessex Groups and the audience were also divided into groups so that they could enjoy the quiz too.

The contest was a very close one between Weston & Mendip and BADAM with the lead changing hands between the two teams with never more than two points separating them. Leading into the final round BADAM and Weston & Mendip were tying and at the close BADAM won by one point with Bristol coming third. It was a very well-deserved victory and we now proudly hold the trophy for the next year.

RECENT AWARD CEREMONIES



Eric Sambell OBE received his FIRST test certificate from Chairman, Dave Gosling, in the presence of his Observer, Lindsay Flower

Dave Gosling presented Dennis Sinanan with his FIRST test certificate at the September meeting



Also at the September meeting Ben Rushgrove received his FIRST test certificate from Dave Gosling with his Observer, Thomas Flynn, present

We Welcome New Associates

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Ruth Faber | [<i>Observer:</i> Robin Harris] |
| Suzanne Logan | [<i>Observer:</i> Roland Hindmarsh] |
| Anita Mills | [<i>Observer:</i> Lindsay Flower] |
| Richard Ryder | [<i>Observer:</i> Thomas Flynn] |
| Penny Waheed | [<i>Observer:</i> Clive Merchant] |

We Also Congratulate

IAM Test Pass

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Haris Ali | observed by Roland Hindmarsh |
| Ben Rushgrove* | observed by Thomas Flynn |
| Dennis Sinanin* | observed by Frank Gould |
| Freddie Williams* | observed by Lindsay Flower |

[*FIRST pass]

IAM Masters Pass

Lindsay Flower

Mentored by Alistair Andrews

IAM RoadSmart Fellows

Roland Hindmarsh

Peter Huntington

Helen Schofield

ACHIEVING A F1RST TEST PASS

You may have noticed that several of our Associates have achieved F1RST test passes recently and this is a great tribute both to the Associates and their Observers. For those not aware of the F1RST system, a candidate must be scored 1 in almost all of the categories on the Examiner's score sheet.

This is no mean feat and motivation can be a great spur. A case in point is that of Ben Rushgrove. Ben, who is a medal-winning Paralympian with

cerebral palsy, wants to be a paramedic. When he applied to the ambulance service he was told his driving was not up to standard so he set about remedying this by taking his Advanced driving test. He worked so hard, practising every day, that he not only passed but achieved a F1RST. His Observer, Thomas Flynn, said 'If I were ever to end up in the back of an ambulance one day it would certainly reassure me to know that Ben was driving'.

IAM ROADSMART FELLOW MEMBERSHIP

IAM RoadSmart has the Fellow membership scheme which recognises and rewards your commitment to keeping your advanced skills up to date by providing an enhanced membership tier and additional insurance benefits and recognition. Our research clearly shows that advanced driving and riding skills deteriorate over time, and that three years is a pivotal timeframe in which to refresh and renew those skills.

IAM RoadSmart together with our insurance partners, IAM Surety, are keen to recognise and reward those members who choose to keep their advanced skills current. Fellow membership costs £49 per year as the membership fee which includes the cost of your retest. Those members who need to take the entry test will pay £39 when booking it.

What are the benefits of becoming a Fellow?

- A dedicated membership tier with an online Register of Fellow members
- Enhanced insurance recognition that includes removal of any upper age restrictions plus free breakdown cover and 24-hour legal helpline
- Exclusive Fellow membership badge and certificate
- Automatic three yearly retest
- The confidence of knowing that your advanced skills are sharp, current and in line with the IAM RoadSmart standard.

You will see on the previous page that we already have three Fellows in BADAM, Helen Schofield, our President, Roland Hindmarsh and Peter Huntington. If there are any more Fellows amongst our members, please make sure you let us know so that we can congratulate you in *Advance*.

GEOFF THOMPSON

Geoff Thompson was one of our Vice Presidents until earlier this year, having served in this role for five years. He has stepped down because he felt he could no longer give BADAM as much attention as he felt he should as Vice President and we were very sorry to lose him from this position.

Geoff was a Senior Observer for BADAM for several years and joined the committee in 1999. He became Vice Chairman and, on occasions when the then Chairman was unable to attend meetings, stood in for him,

always calmly even when it was at short notice. He stopped general observing as his work frequently took him away from home, but he continued doing pre-test checks and Observer talks. He retired from the committee in 2005, when it was reorganised following the departure of the motorcyclists to form WABAM, and in 2012, after he had retired from work, was recommended to become Vice President. We are very grateful to Geoff for all that he has done for the group and wish him well for the future.

IAM PRESS RELEASE

Eyesight and driving

Over time our eyesight deteriorates and previously strong vision can become poor. If eyesight problems are left unaddressed they can often lead to poor reaction times to unexpected hazards or the behaviour of other road users. This advice comes from IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards, Richard Gladman.

Get regular checks. Eyesight can deteriorate over time without you noticing. If you are having to move closer to the television to read the titles clearly or have noticed even a slight deterioration with your eyes, we recommend a visit to the optician for a check-up; after all we should do this on a regular basis (every two years) anyway and it's free for the over 60s.

Take a break; eyes get tired too. If

you are travelling for long periods of time you should take a break every two hours or every 100 miles, whichever is sooner. This will refresh you and your eyes keeping you alert.

Driving at night can be the most problematic area as our eyes age. No matter how eagle-eyed we may think we are, it is a scientific fact that as we get older our eyes become less sensitive to light. Avoiding night time driving is a wise precaution if you are starting to struggle to see clearly after dusk.

Keep a pair of sunglasses in the car in all seasons; low sun on a wet road will make you wish you hadn't packed them away after the summer.

Know the law. You must be able to read (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) a car number plate made after 1 September 2001 from 20 metres. To find out more informa-

tion on this, visit the government's driving eyesight rules page at: <https://www.gov.uk/driving-eyesight-rules>. Use this to test yourself. If you struggle to read it get checked out straight away.

Stay hydrated. Water is very good at keeping you hydrated and is also good for your eyes, with the added bonus of helping you maintain concentration while driving.

Richard said: "Deteriorating eyesight

can often be a sign of other health problems so a check-up is a good idea. If you do have eye correction prescribed for driving, make sure you use it; not having your glasses is a poor excuse when you have had an accident and it may invalidate your insurance cover. As a little aside, how often do you clean your glasses? Even a pristine windscreen will seem dirty if the lenses are covered in fingerprints."

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A LIFETIME MAKES

[This article continues John Dismore's account of how motoring has changed over the course of his lifetime.]

Initially braking required a lot of effort as the brakes were directly connected to the foot pedal that needed some considerable pressure exerted. Skill was required when braking, particularly in wet or icy conditions. With modern cars fitted with Automatic Braking System (ABS) a computer detects that fine point at which the wheels will lock and induce a skid, momentarily releasing the brake to avoid it. Before that invention, it was you who had to assess this point and take the appropriate action.

The invention of the hydraulic servo system in the 1920s that, in simple terms, automatically provided a high pressure on the brakes for a lower pressure on the pedal, and the introduction of disc brakes, firstly on front wheels only and then on all wheels, greatly improved braking power and eliminated to a large extent the fade that was a characteristic of drum brakes.

One might think that speed limits were not necessary because the cars at that

time were not capable of going very fast but even in the '30s people used to boast about doing 100mph down Purley Way, a good straight stretch that went past what was then London's airport at Croydon in Surrey. It was not until 1935 that the 30 miles per hour limit was introduced. Should we have been suspected of exceeding this limit we would have been chased by a Police Car but not one deafening us with 'blues and twos' but with the clanking of a bell, more like a fire engine.

At that time the motoring organisations, such as the Automobile Association and the Royal Automobile Club, patrolled all the major roads with uniformed patrolmen driving motor cycles with box sidecars who could help their organisations' members who needed assistance. Breakdowns were not uncommon: dead batteries; punctures; running out of petrol (no diesel then). Cars were by no means as reliable then as they are in the 21st century. It is said that if a passing patrolman failed to salute you on meeting your car displaying its membership badge you should be aware that there was a

speed trap ahead.

Now, you can have buzzers to warn you if you are over the speed limit, buzzers to identify speed enforcement cameras, cameras to record what is in front and cameras that do the same behind and even buzzers to tell you how close you are when reversing.

Initially, cars were not fitted with heaters, hence the need to wrap up warm with luxurious car rugs, often of fur, for the passengers. Indeed, there was not much point in having a heater when you were forever opening the window to give hand signals and often, in foggy weather, had the hinged windscreen open for better visibility.

The situation improved with the general introduction of the trafficator. Although invented many years earlier they were not generally specified. They comprised a small illuminated pointer that was raised at the side of the car when a switch was operated by the driver. They were not the ideal solution as one indicating a left turn could sometimes be obscured by the car body. Furthermore, they could be unreliable. They either

got stuck in the down position when they should have been up or vice versa, in either case requiring the driver (or passenger) to open the window to unstick the arm, manually. So, you still had to wrap up warm! These indicators were later replaced by the simple flashing lights that are so familiar today. One has to wonder why they went to the trouble and expense of designing and making those complicated little arms.

The introduction of heaters in the 1920s was a vast improvement and went a long way to the achievement of the comfortable cocoon cars are today and it brought with it an incredibly useful device – the demister. Once cars became enclosed the problem of getting rid of the driver's and passenger's breath condensing on screens arose. The solution was to open the windows or keep wiping them, until demisters arrived. Now, of course, the glass can be heated and even the seats in some cars.

[to be continued]

Data Protection Act, 1988. We wish to remind members that the Group holds, on computer files, details of members' names, addresses and IAM membership status. The above Act enables any person whose name is recorded in such a way to request, in writing, its removal from that file. However, any such deletion would seriously affect the smooth organisation of the Group. Note, we do not share this data with any other organisation.

Please see the back page for information about the way in which we use photographs taken at group meetings in *Advance* and at publicity events. If you do not wish your photograph to be used, please follow the advice given there.

Forthcoming BADAM Events – 2016-2017

NOTE NEW VENUE FOR OUR MEETINGS

[All indoor evening events will take place at St. John's Church Hall, St. John's Road, Bathwick, Bath, BA2 6PT, commencing at 19.30, refreshments at 19.00.]

Updates on all future events will be posted on the BADAM website.

Tuesday, 14th November. The Associates' Session will follow a talk by Ken Fryer of WABAM. Ken's talks are always interesting and informative and this time his title is 'A Motorcycle potpourri'.

Tuesday, 12th December. Christmas evening – buffet and quiz. Please see page 3 of this issue for more details, including about how you can help by contributing to the provision of refreshments. As always, this should be a fun-packed event and all will be very welcome.

Please note there will be no separate Associates' Session on this occasion.

Tuesday, 9th January. The Associates' Session will follow a talk by Shaun Cronin, IAM RoadSmart Regional Service Delivery Team Manager (Southern). We look forward to the opportunity to hear what Shaun has to say about IAM RoadSmart and to ask him questions.

Tuesday, 13th February. The Associates' Session will follow a talk by Mary Monroe about horses on the road and why they react as they do to traffic. This is a very relevant subject in a rural area like much of that covered by BADAM.

Tuesday, 13th March. Group Annual General Meeting. The speaker will be Eddie Ruskin talking about his 'End to End' drive from Lands End to John O'Groats in one day in June 2017. Further details of the AGM will be in the February 2018 edition of *Advance*, issue 170.

Tuesday, 10th April. The Associates' Session will follow a talk on a motoring related theme. Further details will be announced in issue 170 of *Advance*, due in February, and on the website.

Tuesday, 8th May. The Associates' Session will follow a talk on a motoring related theme. Further details will be announced in issue 170 of *Advance*, due in February, and on the website.

Tuesday, 12th June. The Associates' Session will follow a talk by Terry Moore who is a coroner. This will surely bring home to us the impact of what can sometimes go wrong on the roads.

It is a requirement of their training programme that, whenever an 'Associates' Session' is scheduled (see above), all our Associates, together with their Observers, should attend each of these essential and informative sessions.

PLEASE NOTE

The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the Committee of the Bath & District Group of Advanced Motorists, nor by the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

Due acknowledgement is made whenever material is taken from other sources.

BADAM keeps names and addresses of members on computer to assist in Group administration. This information will not be passed outside the IAM.

BADAM may from time to time publish photographs taken at group events in *Advance* and on the website or display them at publicity events.

If you have any concerns or wish to opt out of having your photograph taken or published by BADAM, please write to the Secretary (details on page 2) and request an acknowledgement in writing.