

**Queen Square, Bath**



# Advance

**Newsletter of  
Bath and District Advanced Motorists**

**“Making Bath and District a safer place to drive”**

[www.badam.org](http://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)

FEBRUARY—APRIL 2018

**Advance**

Issue 170

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## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The AGM of the Bath & District Group of Advanced Motorists will be held on Tuesday 13th March 2018 at St. John's Church Hall, St. John's Road, Bathwick, Bath, BA2 6PT beginning at 19.30.

Nominations for the vacant positions on the Committee (see page 8-10), which must be proposed, seconded and bear the signature of the nominee signifying his or her consent to the nomination, plus items for the Agenda, need to be sent to the Group Secretary to reach her by Friday 2nd March **at the latest**. Note that the new committee, to serve for the year 2018-19, plus any approved changes to the Supplementary Items to the Group's Rules of Affiliation, will not be effective until Tuesday 20th March 2018.

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to our latest edition of *Advance*. On page 8 onwards you will see details of the AGM which will be held on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> March. You will note that Dave Gosling is retiring as Chairman and Alison Long as Membership Secretary after many years in their respective roles so we are seeking nominations for a new Chairman and a new Membership Secretary. We are very grateful to them both for all the work they have done during their years in office – thank you Dave and Alison.

You will note that there are also vacancies for a Chief Observer and a Newsletter Editor. If helping in either of these roles is something which you think you could do to help the group, please contact a member of the committee.

On page 11 you will see an article written by Thomas Flynn advertising a Follow-on training course, available for any member to join, to encourage all members to keep up the driving standards they achieved when passing their Advanced test. Please read this

article carefully and see if you think you would benefit from joining the course. The first session will be held on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> May.

On page 14 there is an advertisement from Mendip Community Transport appealing for volunteer drivers to help the community by driving patients to hospital appointments. This is a very worthwhile way to help people and one advantage is that you can accept or refuse requests for help depending on your availability at the time. It is necessary to live in the Mendip or Sedgemoor areas (or very close) but Bath Community Transport run a similar scheme so if you live elsewhere and would like to do something similar then you could apply to them.

This time last year we appealed for photographs for the front page of *Advance* but received no response so we are appealing again. Surely somebody out there takes photos!

*Clare Hogg*

*Sue Phillips*

**The next edition of *Advance* will be published in May 2018. Please submit motoring-related articles and / or digital photographs to the Temporary Editors (*who reserve the right to edit them*) by Friday 6th April 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

**Our October meeting was chaired by Peter Huntington** who introduced the speaker, Dr Sidney Alford, OBE, who is a world-renowned explosives expert and prolific inventor and a former member of BADAM. Dr Alford was speaking about 'blowing up cars and other dangerous containers'. He brought an impressive array of equipment with him which he used throughout his talk to illustrate what he was saying as well as having some dramatic pictures to show us. His talk was fascinating and, in spite of being a subject which one might not expect to lead to humour, was very entertaining.



Dr Alford's interest in explosives began during the Second World War when he started collecting fragments of bombs which had been dropped over London. He worked in various branches of chemistry but retained his interest in explosives and during the troubles in Northern Ireland he realised that the existing bomb disposal methods were not as efficient as they could be. He worked in his kitchen and, when banished from the kitchen by his wife, his garage, on developing

better methods, by adding water to the existing charges used, which he then tested in his garden. Eventually he was given proper facilities to develop his invention on MOD land as his garden was not regarded as a very safe place to test explosives.

He showed us some of the different charges used in bomb disposal and how he had improved them by filling their cones with water. His pictures of the difference between the original charges and those he had invented with the added water showed how very much more effective they were, not only in enhancing their effect but in minimising effects on the surrounding area. He also invented a magnesium device and we saw a picture of a bomb being exploded near a tree and afterwards the leaves were still on the tree. The devices could open a bomb without exploding it, thus making the whole process of bomb disposal much safer.

Throughout his life he worked also on demolishing buildings and after the Didcot power station fire his company were involved in removing the unstable remains. Because of the instability of the structure they were not allowed within 50 metres of the building and so had to use remote control vehicles to put the explosives in place. They practised and practised until they knew they could demolish the building safely.

He invented several different bomb disposal devices which were used in Ireland, Kuwait and elsewhere. There

were the The Exit, the Van Trepan, the Boot Banger, and the Modular Large Vehicle Disruptor (MLVD) among others. Pictures of the Boot Banger, which was deployed under the boots of cars which were suspected of containing bombs, being tested showed the dummy bombs being blown out of the boot and the windows of the car still intact. On one occasion this was used in Kuwait with the driver still in the driving seat (as he was unable to get out) and he survived.

Another device was the Window Breaker which was put in place by remote control on the outside of the window of a car which was suspected of being booby trapped. The device was activated and it caused crazing of the window so that a probe with a camera could be inserted, making it possible to see if there were booby traps in the car.

The MLVD was a version of the Boot Banger which had been made smaller and then several modules could be joined together to make any size required. Dr Alford showed us dramatic pictures of lorries in America having their sides blown out by these devices.

As it is not known what cars and lorries actually have attached to them in the way of explosives, the devices are put in place using a remotely controlled frame.

Dave Gosling thanked Dr Alford for his very interesting talk and presented him with a token of our appreciation.

Clive Merchant then presented the Associates' talk on the subject of Rules for Braking. Brake firmly only

when travelling in a straight line and brake in plenty of time. Vary the brake pressure according to the conditions of the road surface. It may be necessary to brake on a bend if descending a steep winding hill.

He then showed some clips from one of Chris Gilbert's Ultimate Driving Craft DVDs which showed how to time your braking on the approach to hazards, and also a very clear explanation of how to use Limit Point Analysis when approaching a bend.

**Roland Hindmarsh opened the November** meeting and introduced the speaker, Ken Fryer of WABAM.

Ken explained that he originally joined BAM (Bath Advanced Motorists) in 1997 and moved to WABAM after BAM split into two parts, one for motorists (BADAM) and one for riders. He became WABAM's first Chief Observer and is currently a National Observer while he is also involved with Free-wheelers Emergency Voluntary Service. WABAM has been operating for 12 years, but Ken said that the number of motorcycles on the roads has been decreasing for some 20 years. For example, there are roughly two million car tests each year and only about 200,000 motorcycle tests. Automated vehicles will make another enormous change as motorbikes will not be allowed on the roads alongside automated vehicles.

Ken spoke about the proposed changes to motorcycle training. He explained the Compulsory Basic Training course that riders undertake and introduced the Kickstart Motorcycle Training with which he is

involved. Motorcycle training is divided into five parts:

1. Introduction and the importance of suitable equipment and clothing;
2. How motorcycles work, being familiar with the controls and basic machine checks;
3. On site riding, keeping the machine under control, braking, right and left hand turns;
4. Public Highway preparation, including information on correct speeds, correct positioning and rear observation, road surfaces, weather conditions, hazard perception etc.;
5. Practical On Road Riding, for at least two hours, meeting a variety of traffic situations and demonstrate an ability to handle each one competently and safely.

After completing this training, riders are entitled to ride a machine of up to 125cc for two years (up to 50cc for 16 year olds) displaying L plates. Ken remarked that he had made no mention of the Highway Code but he suggests that all riders should do their Highway Code theory test before taking any further training.

All riders have to do the CBT and then undertake further training to acquire a full licence. The training varies according to age and machine size. Riders are not able to progress to larger machines until they are aged 19 and a full licence for large machines of 595cc cannot be completed until the rider is over 24 years old.

Ken mentioned Rule 159 of the Highway Code (always check blind

spots before moving off), remarking that this could be a life saver. He illustrated this rule with pictures of an incident in which he was involved. The result was that his motorcycle was written off, he suffered a broken collar bone from which he took two years to recover, and attended a ride course, the preferred option of the Metropolitan Police, run by the AA.

Ken touched on Freewheelers, Riding for Life charity. This is one of a group of Blood Bike charities and delivers a service to the NHS and the wider community covering the Somerset, Bristol, Bath, West Wiltshire and Gloucestershire area.

Roland thanked Ken for his interesting talk and presented him with a token of appreciation.

After the break and the raffle draw, our Chairman Dave Gosling presented Haris Ali with his certificate.

Roland then introduced Alistair Andrews to give the Associates talk.

Alistair asked Associates for the traffic light sequence. Red, red/amber, green, amber, red. When the light is red, drivers must not cross the white line. When red/amber is showing, drivers must not cross the white line (although they can get ready if they want). When the green light is showing, drivers must not cross the white line unless their way is clear – drivers must be able to escape. If a car is hit in the square, even if his light is showing green, he is partially to blame and could be awarded 6-8 penalty points and a fine of up to £750. Always ensure it is safe to

move and use your eyes like slow windscreen wipers – proceed with caution. When approaching a “stale” green light, slow down! The amber light displays for 2.7 seconds before changing to red. Alistair said 0.7 seconds is thinking time, 2 seconds is stopping time. Ideally, advanced drivers don’t want to stop, but invite the car behind you to stop before you do. Remember ‘tarmac and tyres’. Drivers are vulnerable to moving vehicles so leave a ‘ghost’ car space before the car in front.

**The December meeting was opened by Don Escott**, our Vice Chairman who explained the programme for the evening. He asked that people arrange themselves in teams of five and then introduced Ray Robbetts, Quiz Master.

Ray explained that the quiz comprised seven rounds with a variety of subjects. Jokers could be played for any round but he had to be informed before the start of each round.

Ray had put a great deal of effort into the quiz and the subjects were sometimes challenging but always fun. There was plenty of competitive banter as the answers were scrutinised and results displayed.

During the interval everyone enjoyed the feast of delicious dishes which had been provided. The raffle was drawn and the second half of the

evening got underway.

There was a close finish with two teams tying for third place. After a tie break question the top three places were decided. In first place



The Whizkids team: Roger Backway, Roland Hindmarsh, Gabrielle Chambers, David Chambers and Jenny Chambers with Ray Robbetts.

were the Whizkids, comprised of Gabrielle Chambers, David Chambers and their daughter Jenny, Roland Hindmarsh and Roger Backway, second were the Gyrotors and third were Brainless.

Prizes were awarded to the three winning teams by Ray Robbetts. Don Escott thanked Ray for an entertaining evening and presented him with a token of appreciation. Don wished everyone a Happy Christmas and safe driving.

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## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING—13th March 2018**

As announced on page 3, this will take place at St. John’s Church Hall, St. John’s Road, Bathwick, Bath, BA2 6PT on Tuesday 13th

March 2018, beginning at 19.30.

Nominations for the vacancies on the Committee (Group Chairman,

Group Secretary, Group Treasurer, Chief Observer, Membership Secretary, Newsletter Editor and Committee members), which must be proposed, seconded and bear the signature of the nominee signifying his or her consent to the nomination, plus items for the Agenda, must be sent to the Group Secretary to reach her by Friday 2nd March **at the latest**.

Note that the election of the new committee, to serve for the year 2018-19, plus any proposed changes to the Supplementary Items to the Group's Rules of Affiliation, will be effective from Tuesday 20th March 2018.

Anyone intending to stand for election to the Group's committee must be aware that all the committee members act as Trustees for the charity which is the Bath & District Group of Advanced Motorists and are thus liable to follow the legal requirements of HM Charity Commissioners.

Under the terms of the Rules of Affiliation for the Bath & District Group of Advanced Motorists, the 'Officers' of the Group (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) serve for only one year. Two of the present incumbents have indicated their willingness to stand for election at the 2018 Annual General Meeting, if nominated, but Dave Gosling is standing down as Chairman and so a nominee is required for this position:

**Nominee required**  
***Group Chairman***  
**Lindsay Flower**  
***Group Secretary***

**Clare Hogg**  
***Group Treasurer***

Alison Long has announced her intention of retiring from the post of Membership Secretary at the AGM and so a nomination is required for this position.

**Nominee required**  
***Membership Secretary***

During 2017-18 one member was co-opted onto the committee and her appointment needs to be ratified at the AGM:

**Jayne McBride**  
***Committee member***

The following member was elected in 2015 for a term of three years and is therefore now required to seek re-election for a further period of three years.

**Thomas Flynn**  
***Committee Member***

The following four members were elected in 2016 for a term of three years and are not required to seek re-election until the 2019 AGM; they are therefore entitled to remain in office for the year 2018-19

**Don Escott**  
***Vice Chairman***  
**Sue Phillips**  
***Minutes Secretary***

**Julian Adams**  
***Web Co-ordinator***

**Clive Merchant**  
***Committee Member***

The following five members were elected in 2017 for a term of three years and are not required to seek

re-election until the 2020 AGM; they are therefore entitled to remain in office for the year 2018-19.

**David Sibley**

***Associates Co-ordinator***

**Eddie Ruskin**

***Events Organiser***

**Roland Hindmarsh**

***Committee Member***

**Peter Huntington**

***Committee Member***

**David Moreman**

***Committee Member***

If any fresh vacancy arises during the year 2018-19, then the new committee will consider the co-option of a Group member under the Rules of Affiliation, but any such appointment will then be valid only until the 2019 AGM.

### ***We Welcome New Associates***

**Andrew Dunn**

[Observer: Eddie Ruskin ]

**Jon Reeves**

[Observer: Alistair Andrews]

**Rosemary Tandy**

[Observer: Lindsay Flower]

**Oliver Tatar**

[Observer: Val Czerny]

**Penny Walker**

[Observer: Peter Huntington]

**Geoffrey Wilson**

[Observer: Ray Robbetts]

### **We Also Congratulate**

#### ***IAM Test Pass***

**Ruth Faber**

observed by Robin Harris

**Suzanne Logan\***

observed by Roland Hindmarsh

**Jon Reeves**

observed by Alistair Andrews

**Rob Reeves\***

observed by David Moreman

**Oliver Tatar\***

observed by Val Czerny

[\*FIRST pass]

#### ***IMI National Observer***

**Lindsay Flower**

#### ***IAM RoadSmart Fellow***

**Clive Merchant**

## FOLLOW-ON TRAINING by Thomas Flynn

We ran a course in the autumn for people who wanted to further their skills. We initially approached some people who had recently passed the Advanced test and who had shown an interest in observing. None of them felt that they were A1 Observer material at the beginning but they were persuaded to come along and to find out more.

Driving and observing are very different skills. Helping people find their way through the challenges faced by an Associate goes beyond knowing how to rev-match a gear change. By doing the follow-on training you might discover that you're much better at getting people through the test than you thought. How are you going to know until you try?

We've changed the message we're giving Associates slightly with the aim of persuading more people to put themselves forward for follow-on training. Passing your test is only half-way through the course. That doesn't mean that we want everyone to go on to become an Observer — it's not practical and not everyone enjoys this aspect of Advanced driving. Rather it's a recognition that advanced driving skills are 'perishable' and for some people, these skills don't have a very long shelf life. I've been explaining to my Associates that, even after you've passed your test, these 'perishable' skills need more time to become habits. The follow-on training is designed to help you strengthen and consolidate your hard-won skills. Additionally, you can think of it as a bridge between the Advanced course and the Masters or Observer courses. It can be what you

want it to be.

My observer was Ian Lassman. I knew when I became an Observer that I was never going to be as good as Ian so my strategy was to get people as good as I could by myself and then try to get them a lesson with one of the higher-ups. This worked quite well because my Associates came back with a list of what I hadn't taught them very well so it helped me improve as an Observer.

The first follow-on course was run by Alistair Andrews (our Group Mentor) and Ray Robbetts (Local Observer Assessor) in St John's Church Hall and they will also be running this follow-on course.

When you took your Advanced test you were able to find a timetable with your Observer which fitted into both your lives. We're never going to ask more of you than that.

You might be someone hell-bent on becoming a Master, or you might just want to keep going so that your skills don't wane. Whatever your current situation we'd like to give you the opportunity to further your skills. You can reserve your place by emailing me at [committee1@badam.org](mailto:committee1@badam.org) and I can also give you more information about becoming an Observer if you would like to understand the process. All we can ask of you is to come along to find out more.

Our next course will begin with Theory Training at St John's Church Hall, Bathwick, BA2 6PT on Monday 14th May 2018 starting at 7pm sharp. There is no charge and tea/coffee/biscuits are free.

## NOVEMBER AWARD CEREMONY



Haris Ali was presented with his test certificate by Chairman, Dave Gosling, in the presence of his Observer, Roland Hindmarsh at the November meeting.

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## WHAT A DIFFERENCE A LIFETIME MAKES

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

Punctures were a normal hazard as tyres comprised two parts, a relatively thin inner tube that was inflated inside the outer tube that had the tread that was in contact with the road – just like a bicycle but on a larger scale. In a similar manner, the car's accessories supplied by the manufacturer included a pump with which to blow up your tyres together with a jack and a wheel brace with which to unscrew the wheel nuts. Tubeless tyres were a great improvement although they did not entirely eliminate punctures.

The control of traffic flow was managed by policemen who directed traffic at major road junctions by a series of hand signals and it was important that you made yourself aware of the meanings of these signals and also of the signals with which you made the constable aware of your intentions. It was not until 1 April 1934 that you

were required to have passed a test of this knowledge.

It was a clever chap who invented the dipping rear view mirror. It was such a simple idea to tilt the mirror so that the beams of a following car did not shine in the driver's eyes. It replaced a quaint little device I remember fitted in one car. A roller blind was fitted over the rear window and it was raised or lowered by a cord leading to a position, through the roof lining, by the driver's head. A ring on the end of the cord was hooked on a knob to cover the window and unhooked to release the blind.

Dipping lights to avoid dazzling the drivers' of on-coming vehicles was a much more complicated piece of equipment. Each headlamp was fitted with an electro-magnet that moved the reflector when the driver pressed a switch, usually a foot operated one located near the clutch pedal. I think both were directed down and to the nearside. Now, of course, there are two pairs of lights, one for main beam

and one for dipped.

Running out of fuel is really inexcusable but it frequently happens. Now there are warning lights and signals and 24-hour opening garages throughout most of the country. A useful device I came across in a pre-war Rover was a duplicate pipe from the petrol tank, one about one and a half gallons from the bottom and the other at the top. When the driver ran out of fuel using the top feed, he opened a little trap-door located under his seat, pressed a plunger and had another one and a half gallons to get him to a garage.

Frequently cars carried a reserve can of petrol fitted to the running board. All the early cars were fitted with running boards, the purpose of which was to assist passengers getting in or out of the cars, which were generally rather higher off the road. I think their use by cops, bodyguards and gangsters was coincidental.

For those who require entertainment, the news or up to date traffic information, there was the radio. Of course, with the earliest cars, there were no radios because broadcasting did not exist until 1922 and, even then, it was not widespread. Over the years in-car entertainment systems have become more sophisticated and have developed from the simple domestic radio bolted under the dashboard to the small built in sets that produce ear-shattering levels of sound through multiple speakers that broadcast to the world whether the world wants to hear it or not. It can also provide you with invaluable

information about road conditions, weather, etc. as well as the entertainment of your choice.

Allied to this, of course must be the mobile telephone. When the first were introduced they consisted of a standard (at that time) handset attached to an enormous battery pack. One has to wonder to what extent this ungainly piece of equipment was carried for one-upmanship or for actual need of communication. They were few and far between and unlikely to have been much of a hazard to other road users. It was the advent of the cell phone network and the miniaturisation into the slim smart phones of today that has made their use universal and such a menace when used by drivers on the road. Despite the laws and penalties there are many people who just cannot get by without talking on the phone. Safe driving requires total concentration and it stands to reason that if part of the brain is concerned with a telephone call there cannot be total concentration on the driving. There are some who would say that the same applies to in-car entertainment but that, at present, is not illegal and has some benefit.

Most of us are familiar with satnav and most will have experienced the consequences of blindly following the urbane speaker's instruction when he has spoken earlier than you expected and you have gone down the wrong turning and not the one he meant. Or, of course, it could be a woman telling you in accusative tones, that she was 're-calculating'. Back in the

1930s, the AA, and probably other motoring organisations, had their own ingenious system for their members' navigation. It maintained an enormous library of strips of paper down which were printed the instructions for driving between the principal towns of a country. On receiving a request from a member for a route from A to B they merely extracted from their library the strips covering the towns that were on the route from A to B. The driver started at the beginning and followed the instruction down each sheet until he arrived at the destination. There were no pictures and you had to work out your ETA yourself.

One thing that has gone full circle is fuel. For many years, the only fuel for domestic cars and lorries was petrol, initially just petrol and then over the years with various additives so we had different types of petrol, leaded or unleaded. Then came the introduction of the diesel engine hailed as the best thing since sliced bread with improving performance year by year and previously unheard of figures for consumption. Now the diesel is the outcast of the motoring world with talk of its prohibition from town centres, incentives for scrapping vehicles, higher city charges, et al. So, back to petrol. Or is it electricity? Or both?

**Are you looking for something to help your community? If so, then join us at MENDIP COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**

**We operate from**

***FROME, GLASTONBURY, SHEPTON MALLET, STREET, WELLS, AXBRIDGE, CHEDDAR, BRIDGWATER and BURNHAM On SEA***

**and currently are looking to recruit VOLUNTEER CAR DRIVERS**

**to support our Hospital Car Service in both MENDIP & SEDGEMOOR AREAS**

**FOR AN APPLICATION FORM OR MORE DETAILS PLEASE RING JULIE HOTCHKISS on 01749 880613**

**Mendip Community Transport is an equal opportunities employer.**

## Forthcoming BADAM Events – 2018

*[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; doors open for refreshments at 19.00.]*

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

**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 are on pages 3 and 8 to 10 of this issue.

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

**Tuesday, 10th April.** There will be a talk on an aspect of advanced driving by a member of our National Observer team which will be for all members but which will be especially relevant for Associates and which will replace the normal Associates' Session.

**Tuesday, 8th May.** There will be another talk on an aspect of advanced driving by a member of our National Observer team which will be for all members but which will be especially relevant for Associates and which will replace the normal Associates' Session.

**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.

**Tuesday, 10th July.** The Associates' Session will follow an 'In House' meeting. This will take the form of an Open Forum with an expert panel. Please come prepared with questions for the panel, or submit them to a committee member beforehand.

**Tuesday, 7th August.** There will be no indoor meeting. If an outdoor meeting is organised, details will be in the next issue of *Advance*, 171, and on the website.

**Tuesday, 11th September.** The Associates' Session will follow a talk by David Gallagher who is our Young Driver Ambassador. He will be talking about his role in the IAM and his achievements in getting the next generation of advanced drivers started.

***It is a requirement of their training programme that, whenever an 'Associates' Session' is scheduled, or a meeting is of special relevance to Associates (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.