



# Mid Wales Matters



## The Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

Web site: [mwam.powys.org.uk](http://mwam.powys.org.uk)

Volume 4, Issue 4

Registered Charity Number 1109484

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### **Chairman's Comment**

Every now and again you read or hear something that makes you stop and think.

Recently a member of the Tame Valley Vintage and Classic Car Club died in a tragic accident at the wheel of his MGB sports car. The official report into the accident concluded that it had occurred "due to the risks involved with older tyres".

Now, like older people, there's nothing wrong with older tyres as long as they're well looked after and treated with respect! Quite rightly the report was criticised for blaming just the age of the tyre. Had the driver checked the air pressure, the tread, the condition of the tyre walls? Had he driven at an appropriate speed? We shall never know, but there is a lesson to be learned here.

The condition of our tyres is of paramount importance, and yet all too often it is simply taken for granted, even when a car has covered several thousand miles. We should all be particularly vigilant in this area of car maintenance. Our lives depend on it.

Francis Torrens



### **Editor's Spot**

Whenever I spot a motorhome chugging along the road in front of me I let out a groan the volume of which varies in direct proportion to the size of the offending vehicle and the road I happen to be driving along at the time. Usually it's one of those huge American vans on the A470 between Llandrindod and Newtown - no chance of overtaking for the next 20 miles!

As I trundle along behind, I muse. I picture Wilf at the wheel with his cardigan, flat cap and pipe. Beside him sits Edna in apron and curlers, knitting gloves for the grandchildren. Between them Chutney, the dog, lies snoring. Why have they swapped their nice comfortable house for this confined metal box on wheels? How do they park at Tesco?

But these thoughts belong to the past.....

Neighbours of mine have just bought a motor caravan. Josh and Cassie are nothing like Wilf and Edna – they're in their thirties, quite trendy, with two small boys – and I'm sure Cassie has never knitted a glove in her life. They think their "Romahome" (fortunately for the local landscape rather more petite than a Winnebago) is absolutely wonderful and get away in it as often as possible; for the kids every outing is an adventure. Josh is forever adding refinements, though now that a retractable satellite dish has been fitted there can't be much more scope for improvement.

Well, I can't deny them their pleasure so I've modified my views and mentally placed motor caravans in the same category as tractors, livestock transporters and milk lorries – they get in the way sometimes but they've every right to be there – especially in Powys.

## Stop Press

1. The cost of Skill for Life is under review and is likely to rise considerably. If you know of anybody who is thinking of doing the course, please tell them. It can be bought at the current price and used at any time in the future. Are you stuck for a birthday or Christmas present? Skill for Life could be the answer!
2. The IAM has launched IAM Surety which aims to give members the insurance deal they deserve as advanced and therefore safer drivers. They have appointed Adelaide Insurance Services to administer IAM Surety. Adelaide already has a very successful track record in working with the IAM to provide car insurance for members in Northern Ireland, and more recently, motorcycle insurance for members throughout the UK. If the feedback from those who have already used these schemes is anything to go by, IAM Surety really is going to mean a better deal for IAM members. As a result of their experience Adelaide are advertising the new scheme with the promise that it will cut the cost of car insurance for 9 out of 10 IAM Members. If you would like further details, a quotation or you have any queries, please contact Adelaide Insurance Services on the IAM Surety Tel. line: 0845 603 1355

## New Motorcycle Observer

We congratulate Mike Smith from Penrhyn Coch, Aberystwyth who has successfully completed his motorcycle observer qualification with our group. Mike trained as a motorcycle associate with Sean Miles to become an IAM member in 2006. He continued his active participation with the group by undertaking the qualified observer training programme. He trained with Sean and was accredited by a senior observer from Telford & Wrekin motorcycle group. Mike will be joining Sean and training new motorcycle associates and other trainee observers next spring.

## Chief Observer Appointed

We are pleased to announce that Ron Collins from Llandrindod Wells has been appointed as the Chief Observer for our group. Members will be aware that this post has been vacant for some while. Ron is a Senior Observer and will be taking on the responsibilities of observer training, accreditation and organisation. This is a very important function as observers are the life blood of any group and without their dedication and expertise the group would be unable to carry out its primary role of preparing people to IAM Membership standards. Ron will be joining our committee and we wish him every success with his new role.

## IAM Group Achievement Award

The group has now used the balance of the £1 000 from the 2006 IAM Group Achievement award. In addition to the colour laser printer, reported in the last newsletter, the group has purchased a Personal Video System. This system is the brainchild of Keith Blanchard, one of our Observers and an ADI who runs his own Driving School. He has developed this for use with his learner drivers in conjunction with one of our members Adam Cusack an IT Specialist. The system comprises a Personal Video Recorder & Player and a small Bullet Camera & Mount as pictured below. This operates like a video camera but it is less intrusive in use and has the capacity to record for up to 15 hours. We intend to use this for Associate on-road guidance and Observer training sessions. This facility will enable the immediate replay of any issues required during a de-briefing session. Any aspect of on-road guidance including exterior road view and interior driver interactions is recordable. Recorded images and sound can be copied to prepare examples of good (and bad!) practice. The system is easily moved from vehicle to vehicle and can be used on a motorcycle with different mountings. It has cost just over £600 which in addition to the £400 already spent on the Laser printer makes up the award amount. We will have to re-allocate the £176 spent on the spare projector lamp to our other group funding.

Video Recorder & Player

Bullet Camera & Mount



## IAM Mobile Display Unit



MWAM attended The Prestigious Motor Show, Newtown, Powys on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2007. This event took place in the grounds of The Park Offices in Newtown starting at 10am and ran until 4pm. The IAM provided one of their Mobile Display Units, picture here with Chris Mapp, David Leppard and Sean Miles waiting for visitors. Martin Backhouse, Ron Collins, Geoff Smith, Mike Smith and Jonathan Andrews joined them and operated in groups of three on the stand during the day. So they could be easily identified they wore Black shirts with the IAM logo that were specially purchased for these volunteers. Many people visited the stand and learned more about the IAM and its advanced driving and riding courses available. Leaflets and forms were distributed and several applications for both DriveCheck and Skill for Life were received as a direct result of our presence at this event. Our thanks to those who took part and to other members who visited the stand.

## New Members Presentation

The group has now changed its procedures and IAM Pass Certificates for successful associates are sent to the group rather than the individual. We now invite all our new members to attend the next group meeting when they are personally presented with their Certificates. The second group to receive its certificates is pictured below being congratulated by Francis Torrens, Group Chairman, at the new associates introduction meeting held at the Bracken Trust on 1 August 07


Peter Brown

Ray Garner

Barry Carrington



## New Members

Congratulations and a warm welcome to the following associates who were successful in their IAM Advanced Driving or Riding Test 

Name	Location	Observer	Date
Benjie Talbott	Llandrindod Wells	Geoff Smith	Aug 07
Heidi Brick	Llandrindod Wells	Ian Carter	Sept 07

## Situations Vacant

**Associate Co-ordinator** To organise the allocation of associates to observers.

## Associate Course Dates



Denotes includes Motorcycle Course

Course	Start Date	Day	Times		Location
08/1	23/01/2008	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
08/2	26/03/2008	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
08/3	28/05/2008	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
08/4	30/07/2008	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
08/5	01/10/2008	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells

## Observer Training Dates

Date	Day	Times		Location
04/11/2007	Sunday	10:00 AM	12:00PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
08/12/2007	Saturday	2:00 PM	4:00 PM	Newtown, Morrisons Car Park

Please note that all the above-published dates and venues may be subject to change due to circumstances beyond the committee's control. For the latest information, visit our web site: [mwam.powys.org.uk](http://mwam.powys.org.uk) or contact the group secretary.

**Please contact Humphrey Morgan (01597 822082) who will be co-ordinating observer training if you require any further details.**

## Your Committee

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Mid Wales Advanced Motorists (MWAM) publish this Newsletter to provide a means of communication within the group to Members and Associates. The opinions are those of the Editor and individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the view of MWAM or the Institute of Advanced Motorists to which it is affiliated.