

Mid Wales Matters



The Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

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Chairman's Comment



I'm busy writing my annual report for the AGM at present, so I'm a bit stuck for something to say. People who know me will doubtless find this surprising! Anyway, on the premise that a picture is worth a thousand words, you might like to look at this one.

For some time I had been pondering how I could publicise MWAM as I went about my daily business and made the occasional visit to a vintage car show. Several ideas came to mind – logos sign-written on the car doors, a pennant attached to the aerial, a flashing neon sign on the roof or even a loudspeaker through which I could harangue the inhabitants of Newtown and mid Wales in general. All rejected. They would have damaged my image as a responsible representative of the people and also cast doubt on the integrity of MWAM!

So, as you can see above, I settled on a more restrained campaign. Initially I wanted to incorporate an IAM logo into the number plate, but the DVLA wouldn't allow it. Plan B was to approach Mike Williams Signs of Newtown who produced the modest statement which now adorns my old Rover. You could have one with your own wording for just £8 and display it in your rear window!

Frank Torrens

Editor's Spot

Any words of wisdom from me have been squeezed out of this edition. All I'd like to say is that, in future, the Newsletter will appear at the beginning of February, May, August and November. Up to now it has been published shortly after somebody spotted that a long time had passed since the last one!

Annual General Meeting

You are cordially invited by the group committee to the 4th Annual General Meeting of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists which is being held at 2:00pm on Saturday 8th March 2008 at the Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells. This is to enable the trustees of the group to present their annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2007 for approval by the members and also to conduct an election.

This is your opportunity to find out how we have spent your money and to question the committee on its activities. We are nothing without our members and we need support and guidance on what we should be doing for the group's and your benefit. If you don't like what we are doing, come along and say so; if you do, please come and let us know. Your continued support is appreciated and we would encourage as many members as possible to become involved in the running of the group. We would welcome new committee members who are able to give their time and energies to the future success of the group. We also need additional observers who will be trained to assist new associates. If you feel that you cannot play an active role, please continue your financial support by renewing your membership of MWAM. A formal notice for the AGM and nomination forms has been sent to members who do not have computer access and copies are available for download from our website for those who have this facility. If you have not received these or you would like a printed copy, please contact the secretary.

Geoff Smith

The Sensible Thing to Do

How long between "bottle" and "throttle"?

Figures about the drink drive prosecutions over Christmas are due out shortly and are expected to show that the problem is still a significant one on our roads. Results from the festive crackdown are sure to re-ignite the debate about whether the drink drive limit in the UK (35mg alcohol/100ml breath) is too high. A staggering fifty percent of Britain's 32 million motorists have owned up to driving after having a drink, according to one survey last year. The advice from the IAM is clear: if you're going to drive, don't drink. And if you're going to drink, don't drive. It's as simple as that. "Just one" is often followed by another, especially if people are buying rounds of drinks. A generous round-buyer may get you a large wine or a double measure of spirits without you realising it. A well-meaning gesture, but it could put you over the limit. And it's not just a "festive thing" - the DfT advertising campaign regularly targets summer drink drivers. Your ability to drive can be affected by even a modest amount of alcohol at any time of year. Even if you are actually within the limit, alcohol still affects your judgement.

Why not volunteer to be the (non-drinking) designated driver for the night?

You'll save money and you'll be popular with everyone else you're giving a lift home to. You may think that after a long sleep and a large mug of coffee you'll be all right to get behind the wheel, bright and early the next morning. That may not be the case: there could be sufficient alcohol still be in your system and it could be many more hours before you're within the legal limit.

Remember to leave at least twelve hours between the "bottle" and the "throttle".

Our Youngest Member



Jerad Gilbert from Llandrindod Wells, aged 17, has just completed his IAM Skill for Life (SfL) course with Ron Collins our Chief Observer (pictured with Jerad). Jerad had his first driving lesson on 16th July 07 and passed his L-Test on the 10th September 07. Two weeks later Jerad undertook the Pass Plus course with Paul Wilson from New Radnor and enrolled in SfL on 3rd October 07. On Sunday 27th January 08 Jerad passed the IAM advanced driving test with IAM examiner Sean Westlake. Jerad is not 18 until February 07 and becomes our youngest member aged 17 years 339 days. Jerad is a pupil of Bedstone College, Bucknell studying for his A Levels. He intends to take a degree in criminology and his aim is to join the police force. Jerad was taught to drive by his father, Peter, who is also a member of the IAM and is currently training to become a car observer with our group. Jerad and Peter would like to express sincere thanks to Ron Collins and MWAM whose help and guidance throughout has made Jerad's achievement possible.

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 at which they are presented with their certificates. The last 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 23 January 08. Both are motorcycle members.

Andrew Billingsley




Wayne Spooner






Situations Vacant

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




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
Mark Savage 	Llandrindod Wells	Sean Miles	Oct 07
Wayne Spooner 	Llanidloes	Sean Miles	Oct 07
John Scott	Crickhowell	Roger Wingfield	Dec 07
Andrew Billingsley 	Dolau	Sean Miles	Jan 08
Jerad Gilbert	Llandrindod Wells	Ron Collins	Jan 08

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
17/02/2008	Sunday	2:00 PM	4:00 PM	Crossgates, Knill's Car Park
15/03/2008	Saturday	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
20/04/2008	Sunday	2:00 PM	4:00 PM	Newtown, Morrisons Car Park
12/05/2008	Monday	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	Builth Wells, Co-operative Car Park
10/06/2008	Tuesday	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	Crossgates, Knill's Car Park
09/07/2008	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
07/08/2008	Thursday	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	Newtown, Morrisons Car Park
07/09/2008	Sunday	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Builth Wells, Co-operative Car Park
04/10/2008	Saturday	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Crossgates, Knill's Car Park
02/11/2008	Sunday	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
06/12/2008	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 or contact the group secretary.

Please contact our Chief observer Ron Collins (01597 823417) 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.