



# Mid Wales Matters



## The Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

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

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### Chairman's Comment



In the last edition of the Newsletter I bemoaned the fact that I was a few pounds short of being a rich man. Alas, this is still the case, but my fascination with beautiful old cars will never go away, and I couldn't resist sharing some news from the auction rooms with you.

At a recent annual auction in Pebble Beach California a 71 year old 1937 Bugatti Roadster (pictured) was sold for \$7.92 million or £4.2 million. The car painted green with fawn headlights (of all things) was the star of the show. It just goes to show that there is always money available to buy the very best items despite hardships and the credit crunch.

At Bonhams, a 1961 Ferrari 250GT Berlinetta sold for £472,667 to an Italian buyer. But if this is too costly, at Coys you could perhaps have gone for an Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Volante 2003 for a mere £90,000 or even a Jaguar XK120 with just 2,500k on the clock for a mere £72,000.

If only!! Still one can always dream.....

In a slightly lighter vein, 70 year old James Jones of Ohio bought a new Chevrolet for \$16,000 and paid half the sum in coin. He said 'paper money burns but it is hard to damage coin'. It took the staff almost 2 hours to count the coins and he paid the balance with a banker's cheque.

Francis Torrens

## Editor's Spot

The two articles which are printed below concerning driving tests and examiners set me thinking about the time I was learning to drive back in 1959. My father refused to let me get at the controls of his Ford Consul until I'd had "proper lessons" and even then he was somewhat sparing with his favours until he began to realise that I had the makings of a decent pupil.

I passed the test six months later which was surprising because an incident, potentially more serious than the one caused by Miss Kelly (see following article), occurred about half way through.

I was going along a road with cars parked both sides, and in front of me a man was walking round his vehicle to get in. I had plenty of time to give him space but I must have misjudged the situation because, as I drove past, he suddenly flattened himself against the door. On I went and finally reached the end of the test, certain that I'd blown it.

The examiner shuffled his papers. "Very good," he said. "You're a competent driver, although you did make that chap in Manor Road jump a bit sharpish. I think I'll pass you." And that was it – my luck was in! I drove my father home, and the same afternoon he allowed me to zoom off to Henley Regatta with four mates as passengers. If he was worried, he didn't show it.

Move on a generation and my son is learning to drive. He had to get by on "proper lessons" alone because the family car was on contract hire, and the insurance policy strictly excluded use by learners. My own contribution to his eventual success was limited to after hours sessions in Sainsbury's car park where we practised reversing and three point turns. Occasionally he would slip in a racing start just to break the monotony. In all, I got off pretty lightly.

He passed at the second attempt and got a company car almost immediately. His first assignment took him from Coventry down the M1 to Harley Street. If my wife and I were worried, we didn't show it.

A neighbour of ours is teaching his three teenage offspring to drive at the moment. He's even bought an old banger for the purpose, which is still relatively undamaged. Being of an extremely serene disposition he's coping well. If he's worried, he really doesn't show it!

## What do you think?

On an extremely wet day you drive through a puddle and drench an old lady standing at a bus stop. What should you do? Consider your answer and read on.....

Last month an ITV news bulletin reported that a certain Miss Kelly had accidentally splashed a pedestrian while she was taking her driving test for the third time. The examiner was adamant that the incident was technically a crash, and that she should have stopped and exchanged details with the victim.

Now there's nothing in the Highway Code that specifically forbids the splashing of pedestrians, so there's no legal reason why you shouldn't go out in a downpour and do it for fun. However, rule 144 states that you must not "drive without reasonable consideration for other road users." Rule 147 says that drivers must "be careful of and considerate towards all types of road user."

Unfortunately for Miss Kelly, the examiner stuck to the letter of the law and failed her. She's probably applied for test no.4 already in the hope that she gets a sunny day for it.

So, would you have taken the same view the examiner or a more lenient one?

## Wishful thinking.....

In March, 1937 the following article appeared in The Times:

It was announced yesterday by Mr A.T.V. Robinson, deputy secretary to the Ministry of Transport, that the date for the introduction of driving tests for new motor drivers had been postponed. He was extremely concerned about the qualifications of some of the applicants for posts as tester and spoke of the bad signals that they gave. Many did not know the basic signals as laid down in the Highway Code and one, when asked what the Highway Code was, replied that it was a little booklet published by a newspaper. Ignorance regarding traffic lights was also amazing, and only 6 out of 120 candidates examined knew properly what the sequences meant.

Mr Hoare-Belisha said he was sure that an effective system of tests would lead to a great reduction in road accidents. He looked forward to a time when every driver on the road would be a man of skilled prowess, just as every engine driver was

## Christmas Meal

The group has arranged for a social evening and dinner prior to Christmas for all group associates and members including their partners. This will be held at The Unicorn, Caersws on Thursday evening 11<sup>th</sup> December 08. We are limited to a maximum of 36 guests in their function room and the cost will be either £12.50 or £16.50 per person for a 2 or 3 course meal respectively. Places will be reserved in order of receipt and on payment of the either the full amount or a deposit of £5 per person. Please contact Mandy Giordano, our Treasurer, who can take your bookings, payments and also advise on the available menu. Mandy's contact details are on the last page of the newsletter.

## Chief Observer

Ron Collins has resigned from his position as group Chief Observer with effect from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2008. Ron has held this post since September 07 and was a founder member of our group since October 2003. He has made a valuable contribution to the group during this period as both a member of our committee and as Chief Observer whilst also preparing twelve associates who have passed their advanced driving test. Ron has decided that he no longer wishes to continue as an observer with the group so we thank him sincerely for all his efforts and the commitment he has shown during his membership.

## New Members' Presentations

Marged Phillips from Tregaron and Mike Hilton from Aberystwyth are pictured below receiving their certificates and being congratulated by Peter Gilbert, Group Vice Chairman, at the new associates introduction meeting held at the Bracken Trust on 1<sup>st</sup> October 08.



Marged Phillips

Mike Hilton

Unfortunately Susan Davies from Newtown and Ed Martin from Rhayader were unable to attend this meeting to be presented with their certificates.

## 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
Mike Hilton 🏍️	Bow Street	Mike Smith/ Sean Miles	Aug 08
Marged Phillips 🚗	Tregaron	Ress Thomas	Sept 08
Ed Martin 🚗	Rhayader	Geoff Smith	Sept 08
Susan Davies 🚗	Newtown	Keith Blanchard	Sept 08

## Associate Course Dates



Denotes Car Course



Denotes Motorcycle Course

Course	Start Date	Day	Times		Location
09/1	21/01/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
09/2	25/03/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
09/3	27/05/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
09/4	29/07/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
09/5	30/09/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells

## Observer Training Dates

Date	Day	Times		Location
08/11/2008	Sunday	2:00 PM	4:00 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](http://mwam.powys.org.uk) or contact the group secretary.

**Please contact our Acting Chief Observer Geoff Smith 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.