



Mid Wales Matters



The Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

Web site: mwam.powys.org.uk

Volume 6, Issue 1

Registered Charity Number 1109484



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Chairman's Comment

Those of you who went to the Transport Show at last year's Victorian Festival in Llandrindod will remember the glorious weather and the large crowds who attended the event. Together with other members I helped to man the IAM Mobile Display Unit. To begin with there was little interest in what we had to offer, but things brightened up a little after lunch, especially when the Chairman's Royal Household Rover P5B saloon and a silver/grey Porsche 954 appeared opposite the MDU.

Unfortunately the equivalent event in Newtown didn't enjoy sunny conditions – quite the opposite, in fact! Attendance was correspondingly poor, and those who did come along had to dash for cover at regular intervals.

Interest in the MDU was disappointing and, of course, the weather was partly to blame. However, we've used the Unit a few times now and results have been disappointing as far as recruiting new associates is concerned. It's one thing handing out leaflets and trying to interest people in the MWAM; getting them to sign up for training is rather more difficult! It is unfortunate that for the first time we have had to cancel a scheduled course on 21st January 09 because we had no new associates.

Please take every opportunity to mention and recommend the MWAM to friends, relatives – even folk in the supermarket queue! Our members are our best ambassadors.

Francis Torrens

Editor's Spot

Many of you will have read a newspaper article about the sign in English and Welsh which was erected near an Asda store in Swansea. The English version read: "No entry for heavy goods vehicles. Residential site only": the Welsh version - "I am out of the office at the moment. Please leave any work to be translated." The error was eventually spotted and corrected at some expense to the Council Tax payer.

This tit-bit was brought to my attention by an MWAM member, accompanied by a comment that it proved that nobody read the Welsh on road signs. I have to tell him that he's wrong - I do!

I was born in North Wales and spoke only Welsh until I was 4 years old. At that point we moved to the London suburbs, and within a couple of months I was a cockney. However, I still retain a lot of the language which I knew in my infancy and I do learn a bit more from reading road signs. I suspect that a lot of Newsletter readers, too, have subconsciously picked up a few phrases of Welsh on their travels.

Here's a little test. What's the Welsh for "Slow", "No Parking"? Not too tricky, those. Now more difficult - what do these signs mean? - "Pan welwch olau coch sefwch yma", "Gwyneb dros dro"? I may be wrong, but I reckon you scored at least 2/4, the extra observant of you even more!

Here are the answers - "araf", "dim parcio", "when the light shows red, stop here", "temporary surface".

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I won't go into the arguments for and against bilingual signs. Because I'm half Welsh I quite like them, but justifying them on the grounds of necessity and expense is another matter.

On a completely different topic, it was great to receive the letter from one of our readers which is published below. If you have views on any subject, whether mentioned in the Newsletter or not, please drop me a line or send an email. Why not get your name into print, and at the same time make my job easier!

Reader's letter

The last Newsletter featured a story about a lady who failed her test because she didn't report the splashing of a pedestrian as an accident.....

Back in the late 70s or early 80s I was walking between two buildings in Fleet, Hampshire where I then worked. It was winter and had snowed quite hard. Snow swept from forecourts and the pavement had been piled in the gutter, an action that had blocked most drains.

A lady, on her way to the super market car park, drove through a large puddle and the spray soaked me. A moment later a police panda car with two occupants travelling in the opposite direction stopped and the occupants enquired if I would like to make a complaint against the driver. They promptly executed a U turn, to return a moment later with a very embarrassed lady. They quoted due care and attention to other road users which included pedestrians. As I was rapidly turning into a block of ice I settled for payment of the cleaning bill - it did more for me than a court fine.

Today? I wonder.....

Roger Thomas

Annual General Meeting

You are cordially invited by the group committee to the 5th Annual General Meeting of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists which is being held at 2:00pm on Saturday 7th March 2009 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 2008 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

Ultimate Driving Craft DVD

The group has purchased copies of Ultimate Driving Craft DVD for loan to associates during their Skill for Life Course. This has been produced by Chris Gilbert a former Police Sergeant Advanced Driving Instructor/Examiner from the Metropolitan Police Driving School Hendon. It concentrates on developing commentary driving from scratch and contains excellent examples of in car video on how this can be achieved. The group has a small number of these available to members who may wish to brush up their commentary driving skills. This normally retails for £19.95 + Potage and Packing but can be purchased from MWAM for £18 inclusive. Please contact our secretary Geoff Smith if you would like to purchase a copy. In the event of excess demand these will be sold on a first come first served basis.

Vacancies

Chief Observer	To organise the training of observers.
Young Driver Network Contact	To represent the group.

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
David Brook 🚗	Knighton	Paul Wilson	Nov 08
Bob Hawthorne 🚗	Newtown	Vic Orehawa	Dec 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	CANCELLED
🚗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

New Qualified Observer

We are pleased to announce that we have a new car observer joining our group. Dr John Scott lives in Crickhowell and trained with MWAM to become an IAM Member. John has also undertaken his Qualified Observer Training with our group and was mentored by our observer Roger Wingfield. John completed his qualification when he passed the written qualification paper at our last observers meeting held at the Bracken Trust in November 08. John was presented with his Qualified Observer Certificate by our chairman Francis Torrens and is pictured below being congratulated on his achievement.



Francis Torrens & John Scott

Senior Observer

We offer our congratulations to Paul Wilson who has passed the IAM Senior Observer Qualification. Paul is a founder member of our group and as a Qualified Car Observer has helped several associates to become full IAM Members.

Observer Training

Following the resignation of our Chief Observer the future of Observer Training was discussed at a meeting of observer held in November 08. It was agreed that we divide our region into initially two areas. This would enable area observer meetings to be organised independently to reduce travelling time and costs and also encourage attendance. Humphrey Morgan will take on the role of the Southern Area Observer Co-ordinator and David Leppard will perform this role for the Northern Area. These co-ordinators will arrange for local driving meetings with observers in their area. It was also agreed that we would continue with 'static' meetings every 4 months and these would be held at the Bracken Trust. Both Car and Motorcycle Observers would be invited together with our IAM Examiners and IAM Staff Examiner if available. The position of Chief Observer will need to be filled and until this appointment can be made Geoff Smith will act in this role.

Static Observer Training Dates

Date	Day	Times	Location
14/03/2009	Saturday	10:00 AM 12:00 PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
08/07/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM 9:00 PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
01/11/2009	Sunday	2:00PM 14:00PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells

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 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.