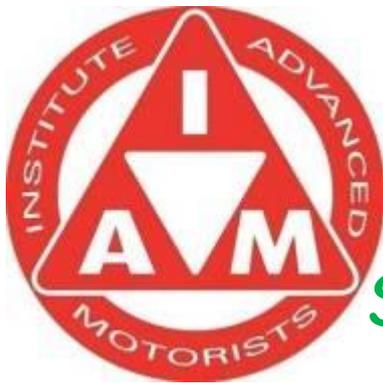


Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists



September / October 2014
Newsletter



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

As some of you may be aware, there have been changes recently regarding Observer status and qualification procedure, the latest of which has been the introduction of a Local Observer Qualification. This will be covered later in the training note.

The reasons why all these changes have come about are to do with providing a consistent standard across the country, certified by a recognised awarding body (IMI - Institute of Motor Insurers), enables observers to become qualified and to give credibility to external organisations. Ultimately the IMI Quality Assured Award is a recognised external qualification delivered by the IAM. Whether we like it or not (and some of you may know that I've voiced my opinions to Chiswick), these new procedures and qualifications are with us now and will stay with us, so I'd encourage ALL existing observers to embrace the changes and move forward with them for the benefit of the Group.

Now for your brain teaser. These are NOT trick questions!!

1. Name the one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends?
2. What famous North American landmark is constantly moving backward?
3. Of all vegetables, only two can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted every year. What are the only two perennial vegetables?
4. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
5. In some stores, you can buy pear brandy, with a real pear inside the bottle. The pear is whole and ripe, and the bottle is genuine; it hasn't been cut in any way. How did the pear get inside the bottle?
6. Only three words in standard English begin with the letters 'dw' and they are all common words. Name two of them.
7. There are 14 punctuation marks in English grammar. Can you name at least half of them?
8. Name the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form except fresh.
9. Name 6 or more things that you can wear on your feet beginning with the letter 'S.'

As always, the answers will appear later in the newsletter.

Keep safe,

Andrew Bloomer



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS AND CONGRATULATIONS

Welcome to new members: Nicholas White and Christopher Cooper to the car section, and Andrew Bennett, Phillip Rose, Neill Brettell, Sean Lawson, Toby Williams and Joel Tobias to the motorcycle section. Good luck, and should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask and we will endeavour to resolve them.



Congratulations to Alec Walker on passing the car test and to Steven Austin on passing the motorcycle test.

When you pass the test and receive your membership information from IAM Chiswick, please let me know so that your membership record can be updated with your IAM membership number.

A special note for our email members: please keep your mailbox cleansed as newsletters sometimes bounce back. If you are thinking of changing your email address, please remember to let Peter Fawcett or myself know.



Ian Bell

I am pleased to welcome Sean Laws, Phil Rose, Alan Savage, Andy Bennett, Neill Brettell and Toby Williams to the group. Sean rides a Honda CBR 600F and has joined under the Jack Bellis scheme. Toby rides a Kawasaki Street Triple, Neill rides a BMW 1200GS, Phil rides a Yamaha XJ 600, Alan rides a Suzuki 800 Intruder and Andy rides a BMW 800 GT. Neil has joined under the Blue Knights scheme.

I am pleased to announce that Steve Austin and Lee Westhead have passed there advanced motorcycle test. Lee was awarded a First. Well done to both of you!

Gordon Blackshaw

GROUP MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

Yes folks, it's the time of year again! Attached to last month's newsletter is the group membership renewal form - it is the sheet on the back, or attached separately to the email.

Please remember that this is the group membership, which is separate from your IAM membership, which is paid annually from your test date direct to IAM HQ. If you check your newsletter label, it will have printed your group expiry date.

If you are resigning from the IAM nationally but would still like to keep in touch with the Warrington group, you can apply to receive the group's newsletter only. This costs five pounds.

ADVANCE NOTICE OF VOTING TOPIC FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Enquiries have been made concerning finding a replacement site for our Sunday morning group meetings to take place. A sub-committee was formed to investigate the new site and make observations to full committee.

Reason for change

There are two main reasons for considering this change and they are mainly to do with the group's caravan and our members comfort.

As we all know the group caravan is old and certainly looking scruffy. Despite some member's best efforts to keep the outside clean but due to the fact that all it does through the week is sit at the farm then this becomes a losing battle. Plenty of members have voiced their opinions that the caravan is no longer fit for purpose and when it comes to publicity days then their points have merit. However, for our normal Sunday morning meet then it still accommodates us well. Please consider the amount of paraphernalia that gets transported in the caravan each week whilst offering a semblance of comfort to those conducting the group's business.

However, our major issue is not only with the perceived state of the caravan but with the lack of volunteers we now have on the towing rota. In fact, for the last five months we have been solely relying on Chris Rogers to ferry the unit to and fro and this is putting great strain on his good nature. Indeed, if anything untoward was to happen to Chris (heaven forbid) or if he sold his vehicle then the group would be without the unit completely.

The second consideration is to our members comfort and whilst the last few months of sunny weather have been most welcome it must be borne in mind that there are no toilet facilities currently where we are and when the sun doesn't shine then members have to stand huddled like Emperor Penguins in the wind and rain.

Proposed Venue

The new venue is proposed to be the Blue Zone of the third floor of the Golden Square Multi Story Car Park. There is a glass and steel structure that basically contains the lifts to the shops on the floors below and there is a wide expanse of space where tables could be set up for those conducting the Group's business. The structure has double doors at both ends with a view to the car park out of a substantial glass side and the lift doors on the other. There is also piped music from a tannoy system in the car park and it can also be heard within the structure. The venue is accessed via the entrance on Midland Way and up the spiral elevation. Follow signs to the third floor and as the view opens up the Blue Zone structure is in front of you.

Pro's

- Toilet facilities on site
- Protection for all from inclement weather
- At busy times we will have a higher profile
- Space on the top floor to practice (ie steering)
- Can put up IAM roundels so easy to spot once on top floor
- Would enable us to dispose of the caravan
- No longer need a towing rota
- Will save the group £250 per annum in towing expenses
- Numerous members available to talk with potential new associates

Con's

- Have to tote equipment currently stored in the caravan around
- Need robust communicate to ensure coordinators and paperwork are available each week
- We will be 'in the way' as the Christmas period approaches
- Difficult to direct new members too (so new process needs to be defined)
- Entrance is convoluted and quite tight.
- We may lose some long standing members who do not wish to negotiate the car park structure.
- Cannot leave anything in place so what goes up must come down
- Can be windy on the top floor and the structure could be a wind tunnel when both doors are opened simultaneously
- At busy times getting out of the car park exit could be an issue
- Structure maybe noisy at times (children etc) or we may disturb the shoppers

Considerations

We do have an alternative choice. Although the situation with the group's caravan and our shortage of members available to tow is an important element we could still utilise the car park near Aldi with no caravan at all and people would have to transport the equipment and documents that may possibly be needed on any given Sunday.

It has already been suggested that new associates could be directed to the ground floor section (using the Leigh Street entrance) and come up in the lift. Once they have completed their drive then the Observer can bring them back via the Midland Way entrance. Anybody who is not comfortable driving in car parks would receive valuable advice on what to do and so it should give the nervous driver some confidence. Any damage to vehicles, either driving or parked in the structure, would not be covered under the group's insurance (no different to now).

Your committee consider this proposal to be important to all members and wish to ensure democratic process is followed. The matter will be presented and voted on at the forthcoming AGM on Wednesday 15th October 2014. Only full members of the Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists will be allowed to vote and so please ensure your membership renewal is up to date prior to the meeting commencement.

**FORMER PRESIDENT ALAN DOMVILLE CONTINUES HIS
REMINISCENCES AS A MOTORING WRITER.....**

Planes booked, hotel booked and everything completed in advance at the office so that I could attend the launch of a new Opel car in northern Germany. Enter my Editor in Chief bearing a worried look. "Alan, we have a problem. The Editor at our Wilmslow paper is unwell, the staff are too inexperienced to cope and because of holidays we have no-one to look after their edition for next week. Can you come to the rescue?"

I pointed out that to pull out of the Opel trip would involve the company in huge expense and so we worked out a grand plan. I would go to Wilmslow the following Monday and get the paper underway and leave Manchester Airport for Germany that afternoon. I would be back in Wilmslow on Thursday morning to check all of the copy, add the headlines and send it off to head office for printing, all at high speed. There would be no shortage of stories because the town council were meeting on the Tuesday evening. All this, I should explain, was happening before the invention of the mobile phone, stories were created on typewriters and the production process was known as "heavy metal."



Monday went like a dream - the staff were great and we were able to plan everything that would be required during the following two days. The car launch was extra special - the Opel Manta was pretty terrific! - and after the driving we retired to our hotel in Timmendorferstrand, where, from the roof terrace 30 floors up, we were able to look across at what was then the mysterious German (not so) Democratic Republic.

On Wednesday, it all went horribly wrong. The French air traffic controllers had announced one of their frequent lightning strikes and planes could not use their air space. Flights all around Europe - including that for our homeward trip - were cancelled. The London-based journalists were all quite happy to stay on another day but one or two of us - and especially me - were anxious to get home somehow.

Opel discovered that the only plane leaving Germany that evening was a flight for holidaymakers going to Luton - and the company for whom I was so anxious to save money booked us on. The experience in the air that night was pretty disturbing with so many planes criss-crossing the sky avoiding routes over France; at one point I can only describe an incident as a "near miss." We arrived in Luton near midnight and booked a hire car to take three of us back to the north, arriving at around 4am. After a welcome bath and 40 winks I was back in the office at Wilmslow at 7.30am to discover that the Mayor had collapsed and died during the council meeting and naturally the business in hand was postponed.

Within the three hours to deadline we managed to put together both the story of the Mayor's demise, plus tributes, and a whole host of re-writes to fill the edition. It transpired that the holiday Opel had bought was a fortnights' stay in England with trips to London, Stratford and Scotland. It must have cost them a fortune.

CHAIRMANS CORNER: SOLUTION



1. The one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends: boxing.
2. North American landmark constantly moving backward: Niagara Falls (the rim is worn down about two and a half feet each year because of the millions of gallons of water that rush over it every minute).
3. Only two vegetables that can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons: asparagus and rhubarb.
4. The fruit with its seeds on the outside: strawberry.
5. How did the pear get inside the brandy bottle? It grew inside the bottle. The bottles are placed over pear buds when they are small, and are wired in place on the tree. The bottle is left in place for the entire growing season. When the pears are ripe, they are snipped off at the stems.
6. Three English words beginning with dw: dwarf, dwell and dwindle.
7. Fourteen punctuation marks in English grammar: full stop, comma, colon, semicolon, dash, hyphen, apostrophe, question mark, exclamation mark, quotation mark, brackets, parenthesis, braces, and ellipses.
8. The only vegetable or fruit never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form but fresh: lettuce.
9. Six or more things you can wear on your feet beginning with 'S': shoes, socks, sandals, sneakers, slippers, skis, skates, snowshoes, stockings, stilts.

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Contributions to November / December's newsletter are more than welcome. Please send them to: newsletter@warram.org.uk or pass them to any committee member. The deadline for November / December's newsletter is Sunday 19th October 2014.



QR CODE

The group has set up a QR code - simply scan the image with a smartphone and it will take you to our website.



GIGGLES: SCOTTISH DATING

A Scotsman and his wife walked past a swanky new restaurant. "Did you smell that food?" she asked. "Incredible!" Being a 'kind-hearted Scotsman' he thought "What the heck, I'll treat her!" So, they walked past it again.



GORDON BLACKSHAW IN THE WARRINGTON GUARDIAN

Riding on a high for a year to remember

AN Appleton motorcyclist has achieved his goal to be among the best civilian motorcycle riders in the country.

Gordon Blackshaw, of Hatfield Gardens, passed the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) prestigious masters riding test.



Gordon Blackshaw

And he even gained a distinction making him one of only 19 out of the IAM's 15,000 riders to hold the top score.

Speaking about his qualification Gordon said: "This has been a magic year for me, having personally won the IAM's very high profile Lord Strathcarron Award last year and being congratulated by the Duke of Kent, getting married earlier this year, and now to achieve this is just the best, the icing on the top of the cake. How can I better this?"

Published 19th June 2014 page 35



WARRINGTON GROUP



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For further info contact:

Gordon Blackshaw

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Home: 01925-860967

E-mail: gordonblackshaw@hotmail.com

www.warram.org.uk

Registered Charity : 1048554

* Contribution of £40 is required towards the Observers fuel costs as he / she will be using their own machines for your observed rides.

TRAINING NOTE: CHANGES FOR OBSERVERS

This training note is about the new changes made by IAM headquarters to the Observer Qualifications. Previously the observer has either been an observer who has followed a local group training scheme, or a senior observer who also has passed an assessment by a staff examiner by the IAM.

National Observer: IMI Awards

In 2013 the IAM changed the Senior Observer to the National Observer which is an IMI Awards Quality Assured Award. This was described in a training note in a previous newsletter.

Local Observer: IMI Awards

Now in July 2014, the IAM has produced its training qualification for the first level of observer. Any associate who wants to train to become a Local Observer now also will follow an accredited scheme and gain an IMI award at the successful end of their training.

- The training to become a Local Observer is all done within the group by National Observers.
- The training scheme is a continual assessment of each training run undertaken by the trainee observer.
- The trainee observer has to achieve the standard set out in the IMI Awards IAM Local Observer training scheme by the end of the training period.
- It is a structured scheme to enable each observer to reach the same national standard.
- There is a final assessment to confirm the trainee observer has reached this standard by a group National Observer.

IAM headquarters now want all current observers to hold one of these two IMI Awards. Our group already has two National Observers.

As our current observers reach the point where they would have renewed their observer or senior observer status they are going to undertake either the National Observer or Local Observer IMI Award.

The IAM suggests the standard achieved by the observer will be maintained by the Local Observer keeping a portfolio of their observer activity and undertaking a yearly assessment, and by the National Observer undertaking a re-examination by a staff examiner very five years.



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WARRINGTON**

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Doors 6pm
Event Start 7pm

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MID-WEEK OBSERVED RUNS

Don't forget - mid week observed runs can be organised on request. For more information, or to organise a mid-week run, please contact Roy Nelson (contact details on the second page of this newsletter).

FACEBOOK

You can find us on Facebook - just look up Warrington Advanced Motorists. There is also a national IAM Facebook group: Institute of Advanced Motorists.



NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

To help minimise our costs, why not have the newsletter sent to you by email? It's easy to set up - just send an email to:
 peter.fawcett@warram.org.uk



Please include your name and address in the email to help with the administration side of things. No more waiting for the postman - do it today!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sundays at 10:15: 7 th , 14 th , 21 st , 28 th September 5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th October	Observed Runs (car) Refresher Runs (car)	Near the ALDI car park, Crossfield Street, Warrington, WA1 1UP
On arrangement with your observer	Observed Runs (bikes)	On arrangement with your observer
Sundays 28 th September and 26 th October 10:00 (weather permitting)	End of month run (bikes)	Poplar 2000, Lymm
Every Thursday at 19:00 (weather permitting)	Chippy Run (bikes)	Let's Eat Cafe and Tall Trees filling station layby (off A49 in Lower Whitley)
Wednesday 5 th November at 20:00	Committee Meeting	St Johns Church Hall, Stockton Heath
Sunday 26 th October	Newsletter deadline	

Further details of all of these events can be found on our website:
 www.warram.org.uk or by asking any committee member.

FINISHED READING? PASS IT ON....



Personal recommendations from members are one of the main ways we recruit new associates, so please feel free to pass on this newsletter.