



# Borders Observer

www.bordersiam.org.uk

March 2004

## Office Bearers

### Raymond Black

Chairman

Tel: 01890 882677

Raymond@bordersiam.org.uk

### Peter Sandison

Vice-Chairman

Tel: 01896 758634

Peter@bordersiam.org.uk

### Mike Dall

Secretary

Tel: 01578 750379

Mike@bordersiam.org.uk

### Marjorie McKendrick

Treasurer

Tel: 01896 752540

## Committee

### Bob McKendrick

Membership

Tel: 01896 752540

Bob@frechelen.fsnet.co.uk

### Morag Sterrick

Events

Tel: 01896 848921

### Mary Davison

Publicity

Tel: 01890 820556

### Glen Guthrie

Motorcycles

Tel: 01896 757012

Glen@bordersiam.org.uk

### Kevin Hamilton

Newsletter Editor

Tel: 01506 412386

iam@kevham.co.uk

### John Brown

Tel: 01890 771683

### Ian Sinclair

Tel: 01835 863861

### Charlie Dodds

Tel: 01835 822171

Charlie@bordersiam.org.uk

## Visit to RNLI Berwick Lifeboat Station

Members of the Borders Group of Advanced Motorists who turned out on a wintry evening to visit the RNLI Berwick were made very welcome by members of the Lifeboat Station. A detailed and comprehensive insight was given into the working of the Station. We were shown both boats used by the volunteer crews and told what each boat is capable of doing. The equipment that each boat carries was fully explained. Each member of the crew has their own survival suit costing £300 plus. At the end of the evening we were given light refreshments which rounded off a fascinating insight into the work of the RNLI.



A few facts and figures:- The station was first established in 1835 by a local association at the request of the Coastguard. There was no lifeboat at the station between 1852-1855. A D-class lifeboat was sent to the station in April 1967. This was replaced by an Atlantic 21 in 1976. In 1993 the Atlantic 21 lifeboat withdrawn and replaced by a Mersey class lifeboat on the 5<sup>th</sup> February, establishing an all-weather lifeboat station. Two years later a D class inshore lifeboat was sent to Berwick-upon-Tweed to complement the all-weather lifeboat.

*Raymond Black*

## Crash Investigation

Our January meeting was a very interesting and informative PowerPoint presentation on Crash Investigation, given by PC Robbie Noble of the Lothian & Borders Police traffic division. PC Noble explained that he had been trained as a specialist in crash investigation techniques in addition to his normal traffic duties. He is required to investigate serious and fatal crashes when a more detailed report is required to establish the cause of the crash.

Robbie explained the method used is basically physics and in particular Newton's Laws. By taking detailed observations, photographs and measurements from the crash scene he is able to calculate and establish the movements, directions, speeds, positions and conditions of vehi-

cles and pedestrians before and after the crash, and together with details of road surfaces, fixed objects, weather etc. he is able to submit a detailed report to the Procurator Fiscal.

The presentation included police photographs taken at crash scenes together with details of the investigation findings, and personal experiences from his duties. Some tips and advice were thrown in on how not to achieve the same results as the drivers in the crash scenes!

A lively, and one of the longest, questions and discussion period followed, and this insight of police work was greatly enjoyed and appreciated by all present.

Peter gave the vote of thanks to Robbie for his time, and a very illuminating and professional presentation.

*Bob McKendrick*

## Events Programme

5 April 2005 - Galashiels Police Station Visit

3 May 2005 - AGM and talk on Police Driver Training

## IAM President

Many members will have read reports in the press regarding the IAM President's recent driving conviction. The IAM rules on membership are quite clear and are applied without exception. As a result the Duke of Gloucester has lost his current IAM membership. However, unlike membership of the

IAM Council of Trustees, the President role is an honorary position which does not necessarily require current IAM membership. It is this second (constitutional) matter which the IAM Council had to consider in responding to the Duke of Gloucester's offered resignation. On 24th January, the IAM announced that it had accepted the Duke of Gloucester's resignation as IAM President. The future of the IAM Presidency is due to be considered by the IAM Council on 8th March.

## From the Chairman

Hello to everyone and I hope you all take the time to read the latest edition of the Borders Observer Newsletter.

On Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup> January another successful introduction to Advanced Driving was given to ten new members. The venue was the village hall Cornhill on Tweed. The day was theory based covering the main elements to get everyone off to a good start so when they take to the road for the practical sessions more should be achieved and enjoyable for all concerned.

The motorcycle training season runs from early March until November. Already there are new members waiting to start. The motorcycle training sessions are based in our "home" town of Galashiels. The venue being the car park at the large Matallan store in the Wilderhaugh area at 0930hrs every Sunday. A few of the recently successful motorcycle members are under going further training to become Observers.

The Borders Group committee would like to emphasise to all new members that it would be to their benefit to attend the monthly meetings.

The Events programme up to the AGM is in place, and most of next year's monthly meetings are secured. One of the forthcoming meetings will be a visit from the DSA, which will be a first for the Borders Group.

Our committee meeting was postponed due to the bad weather recently. There are a few interesting activities, which need to be discussed before being released to the members. Please keep an eye on the Group website and if asked to help or participate in coming events please give it some consideration.

To all those members that are undertaking Advanced Driving/Riding prepare well and you will help maintain the high standard that the Institute of Advanced Motorists sets and which the Borders Group is proud to promote. Those that have recently passed the Advance Driving/Riding Test congratulations. I am sure you will have gained much from this experience.

*Raymond Black  
Chairman.*

### Welcome

To the following new members of the Borders Group:

**Andrew Johnston**  
**Derek McGovern**  
**Ken Robson**  
**Leahn Theedam Parry**  
**Andrew Sinclair**

### Contributions

If you have any comments on the newsletter or if you feel like contributing, please contact the newsletter editor, Kevin Hamilton on 01506 412386 or e-mail: [iam@kevham.co.uk](mailto:iam@kevham.co.uk)

### Congratulations

**Grant Morrison**  
**Richard Young**

who passed their Advanced Driving Test recently.

**Well done !**

## ACCIDENTS WILL HAPPEN

### *.. but fewer, if you drive in the Scottish Borders*

The Borders Group making a difference? It turns out we are among the safest drivers in Britain.

If you want to steer well clear of trouble on the road, there's no better place to call home than Galashiels and the Borders. According to research by an insurance company, only 3.9 per cent of motorists living in that area were involved in an accident last year for which they were to blame.

Admiral Insurance Services looked at the insurance claims of a million British motorists before compiling a list of the 10 best and 10 worst areas to drive across the country. Drivers in Galashiels and the Borders came out tops, followed by those in Belfast and Northern Ireland, then Lancaster.

Four more Scottish regions - Dumfries, Perth, Inverness and the Eastern Highlands, and Aberdeen - made the top 10 of places with the lowest frequency of accidents.

Places in and around London dominated the list of the 10 worst areas, with motorists in Harrow having the worst record of all. Nearly 10 per cent of drivers there had caused an accident in the last year.

Jane Stone, managing director of Admiral Insurance Services, said: 'Our figures show the percentage of drivers within each postcode area of the UK who had an accident that was their fault last year. The difference between the best and worst area is quite astonishing. Motorists in Harrow were almost two and a half times more likely to have caused an accident than those in Galashiels.'

She added: 'Our research goes some way to explaining why where you live has such a big effect on insurance premiums.'

*Contributed by Bob McKendrick*

### TOP TEN SAFEST AREAS

- 1 - Galashiels and Scottish Borders
- 2 - Belfast and Northern Ireland
- 3 - Lancaster
- 4 - Blackpool
- 5 - Dumfries and Galloway
- 6 - Perth
- 7 - Worcester
- 8 - Inverness & Eastern Highlands
- 9 - Aberdeen
- 10 - Lincoln

### TOP TEN RISKIEST AREAS

- 1 - Harrow
- 2 - Uxbridge
- 3 - North West London
- 4 - Croydon
- 5 - Sutton
- 6 - North London
- 7 - Ilford
- 8 - Enfield
- 9 - Twickenham
- 10 - St Albans

## IAM Seeks Road Safety Champion

The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) has started the 2005 search for the individual who at some point has made a significant contribution to saving the lives of young drivers and riders. The Dominic Fox Award seeks to acknowledge and celebrate outstanding road safety work that has benefited, directly or indirectly, young road users.

Statistics show that younger drivers and riders are consistently the UK's most vulnerable road users. One in three crashes involves young men under the age of 20. And 18 year old drivers have twice as many crashes as 50 year olds doing the same mileage.

"Of all our awards, the Fox Award is the most prestigious. Once again, our ideal candidate is likely to be a bit of a 'champion' - somebody with a

history in road safety, and whose contribution may have already been recognised," said IAM Chief Executive Christopher Bullock.

The Dominic Fox Award is named after the IAM's youngest Council member, who died unexpectedly in 2000, at just 32.

"This is the fourth year of the award. Dominic Fox brought a fresh eye to the promotion of safer driving for younger drivers and motorcyclists," said Mr Bullock. The winner will receive a trophy and a monetary award.

The 2004 winner was Sam Geddis, from Northern Ireland, who spearheaded the "Roadwise" scheme for younger drivers.

Nomination forms for this year's award can be downloaded from the IAM website at [www.iam.org.uk](http://www.iam.org.uk).

The deadline for nominations is 31 July 2005.

*IAM News*

## Black boxes for cars

Black box data recorders could be installed in new cars as standard if a Europe-wide study gives them backing. Police forces across the continent are looking at whether the aircraft-style technology could improve road safety. The European Commission will use their research to decide if the devices could help in accident investigations. They are able to record information, including speed and the rate of braking in cars, in the vital seconds leading up to a crash. It is hoped accident investigators would be able to use the black box information to get a detailed picture of the circumstances surrounding a collision.

Some UK police forces including the Metropolitan Police in London already use the technology in their own cars. They say it has helped to reduce the number of accidents they have.



The European Commission asked senior police officers across Europe to work on the study looking at the feasibility of installing the devices all new vehicles. If it is a success, legislation could be passed by ministers in Brussels.

*Source: BBC NEWS*

## Competition Winner

Last month's competition winner was Bill Allison who was the only person to correctly answer all seven questions. The correct answers were:

Q1 - A, Q2 - C, Q3 - A, Q4 - A,  
Q5 - B, Q6 - C, Q7 - B

## So are you in the mood for a drive?

MACHINES which respond to their owners' emotions may seem like science fiction fantasy.

But, while the 'living' androids portrayed in the blockbuster film *I, Robot* may never be built, one Lothians firm has developed an "emotion sensor" which could help cars of the future make better drivers out of us.

The computer software - which could soon be used in Toyota cars - can take steps to tackle potential road rage and drowsiness. The system works by monitoring the driver's speech for signs of certain types of behaviour and taking appropriate action.

If it detects drowsiness, for instance, through signs such as quiet, flat speech, it can trigger an alarm or bring up another suitable prompt to rouse the driver. Alternatively, if the voice shows signs of stress, it can take steps to calm the driver down, by over-riding the car's air-conditioning or playing soothing music.

The company behind the technology, Affective Media, has created a system it believes is as good as humans at detecting emotion. Staff at the Broxburn-based firm are now working with Edinburgh University, Heriot-Watt University and Toyota to create an emotionally-sensitive car.

The technology would be added to a car which already has voice-activated controls, such as a navigation system or CD player.

Vehicles using it could hit the road within two years. Affective Media chief executive Christian Jones said prototypes were being fitted to trial vehicles and claimed the system could be a life-saver.

"Studies show unhappy or angry drivers are more prone to accidents than drivers who are relaxed," he said.

"Our technology will work with any voice recognition software. In the future, more cars will have

voice-activated controls. This technology will sample the voice to tell if a person is angry or frustrated and will then act accordingly.

"Creating emotionally responsive machines is an area a lot of different companies have their eye on. As well as Toyota, a number of other car makers have expressed an interest and I would expect to see it introduced in cars within a couple of years."

The in-car system is just one of the applications the company is exploring. Call-centre operators are also working with Affective Media on a system to monitor the emotions of callers and Mr Jones says a system that is 100 per cent accurate could be used to help emergency services screen bogus callers. At the moment, however, the most practical development of the software is with the car companies.

A spokesman for the AA said that, while the organisation had some reservations, any technology which improved safety on the road was to be welcomed.

"I think the important question will be how it works, and if it does work then it will be a tremendous benefit," he said.

"One concern would be that drivers become so relaxed with this technology that they feel they can push themselves beyond their limits. Would they drive for ten hours because they had this technology watching over them, where before they would have split the journey into two five-hour trips?"

Alun Parry, spokesman for Toyota, said the company planned to test emotion-detecting technology in its experimental "Pod" cars.

"We want a car to respond to the emotion of the driver and, as well as the voice technology, the Pod will monitor the driver's pulse and could act to slow the car if it senses that the driver is being erratic or going too fast," he said.

*Source: The Scotsman, 17 Jan 2005*

## No insurance – A victimless crime?

One third (30%) of all young drivers have driven without insurance and 13% think it is acceptable to drive without insurance because 'it doesn't harm anyone', according to the RAC Foundation and Max Power revealing the results of a new survey today (24).

Alarminglly the Max Power survey also found that three-quarters (77%) of people know someone who has driven without insurance and 4% think it is ok to drive without insurance because premiums are too high.

The RAC Foundation and Max Power today aim to dispel the popular myth that driving without insurance is a victimless crime. People who drive without insurance are:

- q **six times more likely to drive a non road-worthy vehicle**
- q **up to nine times more likely to be involved in an accident**
- q **more likely to be involved in a hit and run collision**
- q **three times more likely to have been convicted of driving without due care and attention**
- q **ten times more likely to have been convicted of drink driving.**

The RAC Foundation and Max Power have compiled a dossier on uninsured drivers:

- q **One in ten drivers have been involved in an accident with an uninsured driver.**
- q **The Motor Insurance Bureau paid out £500 million to the victims of uninsured motorists last year. This is paid out of the premiums of honest motorists.**
- q **Approximately 5% of all motorists now drive uninsured which adds £30 to £60 to the premiums of other motorists.**
- q **Approximately 16% of uninsured drivers get convicted each year.**
- q **46% of Max Power readers believe driving without insurance is irresponsible and selfish with a further 37% saying uninsured drivers should be locked up.**

The RAC Foundation would like to see more competition in the insurance business with more

effort from some companies to attract young drivers. A number of companies refuse to insure young drivers despite the fact that these drivers will become their future customers.

A police crackdown on uninsured drivers would also help to solve the problem. Technology will have a role to play and as databases are improved there will be an important role for Automatic Number Plate Recognition Cameras (ANPR) to help the police target uninsured drivers. It would also help to have more traffic police on the roads as a visual deterrent.

The police are also going to be given the power to seize and, in appropriate cases, destroy vehicles that are being driven uninsured. Forty-Five percent of Max Power readers support this measure.

Edmund King, Executive Director of the RAC Foundation said:

"Uninsured drivers now account for five per cent of motorists. These drivers cause more accidents and are more likely to be involved in other serious crimes than insured drivers. A higher profile police presence on our roads might help to deter some of the opportunist uninsured who take a calculated risk that they are unlikely to be stopped.

"Sentences also need to act as a deterrent. Many drivers estimate that if they get stopped they might be fined £200, which is often a fraction of their insurance premium. If offenders cannot afford to pay fines, then other appropriate punishments such as community service should be demanded.

"There is also a worry that the problem may be exacerbated as many young drivers believe that they are being priced out of the insurance market. We would like to see more initiatives, such as Max Driver and Pass Plus, with more generous discounts offered to young drivers who participate in extra driver training. Pay as you drive schemes may also help some lower mileage drivers on low incomes."

John Sootheran, editor-in-chief of Max Power said:

"These statistics are frightening, but don't really surprise me. Typically, young drivers can pay anything from £800 to £2000 a year for motor insurance – and even more if they have a modified car – so, while the fines are just a few hundred pounds, there's no real incentive to pay a huge insurance premium."

*Source: RAC Foundation*

## Competition Time

This month's quiz is based on the police drivers' handbook, Roadcraft - so all you need to do to get the answers correct is dig out your copy and thumb through it. Yet again, Raymond has agreed to provide a small (still unspecified!) prize for the winning entry. Answers on a postcard or by e-mail to be received by **31 March** to Raymond Black, 8 Station Cottages, Cornhill-on-Tweed, TD12 4SB e-mail: raymond@bordersiam.org.uk.

### Q1 Roadcraft defines acceleration sense as:-

- The ability to vary vehicle speed in response to changing road and traffic conditions by accurate use of the accelerator.
- The ability to drive the vehicle through changing traffic conditions without making use of the brakes.
- A technique of driving which ensures minimum use of the brakes.

### Q2 A moving vehicle is at its most stable when:-

- The weight is evenly distributed.
- The weight is all at the back end.
- The weight is all at the front end.
- The engine is just pulling without increasing road speed.
- Power is being increased.
- Power is being decreased.
- It is travelling in a straight line.
- It is travelling around a left-hand bend.
- It is travelling around a right-hand bend.

According to Roadcraft, which is the correct combination?

- 1, 5 and 7
- 2, 4 and 9
- 1, 4 and 7

### Q3 Roadcraft discusses the effects of speed on a vehicle's stability in bends. Which of the following statements is correct?

- Decreasing road speed on bends increases vehicle stability.
- Maintaining road speed on bends reduces vehicle stability.
- Increasing road speed on bends reduces vehicle stability.

### Q4 Thinking Distance may be defined as:-

- The distance a vehicle travels in the time between first observing the need for action and bringing the vehicle to a standstill.

- The distance a vehicle travels in the time between first observing the need for action and acting.
- The time that passes between first observing the need for action and taking that action.

### Q5 Roadcraft describes a number of road surfaces which may be particularly hazardous. Which of the following is a surface mentioned?

- A newly-laid tarmacadam surface.
- Dry cobbled roads.
- Any surface following a rain shower after a long dry spell.

### Q6 What is a skid almost always the result of:-

- A poor road surface.
- A driver's actions.
- Poor weather conditions.

### Q7 The purpose of an anti-lock braking system is to:-

- Increase the grip of the tyres on the road during harsh or emergency braking.
- Retain steering potential during harsh or emergency braking.
- Prevent skidding during harsh or emergency braking.

### Q8 There are four guidelines for steering given in the Roadcraft Manual. Which of the following is not one of those rules?

- Do not remove either hand from the wheel for unnecessarily long periods when gear changing.
- On slippery roads steer as delicately as possible or you may skid.
- Do not place your elbows on the window frame or arm rests because this reduces control.

### Q9 From Roadcraft:- Signals give.....?

- An instruction to other road users that a manoeuvre is about to be carried out.
- A right to carry out a manoeuvre.
- Information to other road users of your presence or intentions.

### Q10 Roadcraft gives examples of circumstances where use of the horn might be beneficial. Which of the following is NOT mentioned?

- To attract the attention of another road user who is not obviously vulnerable.
- To inform the driver/s in front of your presence before you overtake.
- When you approach a hazard where the view is very limited.

