



Borders Observer

www.bordersiam.org.uk

Issue 17 Feb 2006

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

Jean Gall

Events Co-ordinator
Gallkest@aol.com

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

Charlie Dodds

Tel: 01835 822171
Charlie@bordersiam.org.uk

SEAT of learning (or Earlston!)

We gathered on a cold and dark November evening at Rutherfords of Earlston, where we received by contrast a very warm welcome. This turned out to be a tour to appeal to all-comers, from the rural romantic to the digital dreamer, as was witnessed by the record turn-out, including some friends of members. After a brief introductory talk, members were taken on a wide-ranging tour of the "estate", which started in the showroom for All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), with a selection of Quads (for all ages!) and Mules (inanimate!). For those of us from a non-agricultural background, it was a real eye-opener! More eye-opening was to come when we passed through the agricultural repair workshop, with tractors of

various shapes, sizes and vintages in varying states of repair. Then it was on to the Parts Department, where some of us were even persuaded to pull out our wallets to purchase some items from the array of automobile assortment on offer! We finally ended up in the state-of-the-art Showroom, where we not only saw some of the current range of cars on display, but were introduced to two of the key IT tools of their trade, "e-GoodManners", a customer management system, and the Experian motor database, which was able to pull out more details of our own vehicles than we probably knew ourselves! The "icing on the cake" was the excellent cold buffet provided for us, including a cake decorated with a



mini SEAT. Our warm thanks go out to the many members of staff who turned out in force to welcome us: on the evidence we saw they are clearly dedicated to the products they sell and to providing an excellent level of customer service!

Peter Sandison

Events Programme

Check the Borders Group website at www.bordersiam.org.uk for latest information on events.

Tuesday March 7th: "A Day in the Life of a Road Safety Officer"; Guest Speaker - Fiona Moore, Road Safety Officer, Lothian & Borders Police. Room A17, Heriot-Watt University, Scottish Borders Campus, Netherdale, 7.30pm.

Friday April 21st: Visit to Alexander Dennis Ltd. (@12.45) and Falkirk Wheel (p.m.); Date now confirmed for Friday April 21st. Would any member wishing to come please confirm their intention with Peter Sandison, as numbers for the tour of the bus factory are strictly limited. Some members gave their names at previous meetings before the final date was confirmed - could they please re-confirm! Contact details: Peter Sandison - 01896-758634 or Peter@bordersiam.org.uk..

Tuesday May 2nd: Annual General Meeting with guest speaker (to be announced). Room A17, Heriot-Watt University, Scottish Borders Campus,

The newsletter of the Borders Group of Advanced Motorists



Ken Robson (left) and Paul Prentice (right) with their certificates for passing the advanced motorcycle test.

Pictures: Glen Guthrie

Congratulations !

To the following members who recently passed their Advanced Test:

Glen Guthrie (Car)

Welcome !

To the following new members of the Borders Group:

Graham Fry (Car)

Tyrone Guthrie (Motorcycle)

John Gillies (Motorcycle)

Edna Dickinson (Car)

Hal McGee (Motorcycle)

Chairman's Welcome

I will begin by wishing all members a Happy and Prosperous New Year. This year being a special one to mark the 50th year of the IAM. There will be national and local activities for all members if they wish to be involved. The Borders Group will be working harder than ever this year and the committee would like to see as many members as possible participating in the work of the IAM as well as having some enjoyment out of it all. Keep up to date with what is going on by dipping into the IAM national web site as well as our own at www.bordersiam.org.uk

*Raymond Black
Chairman*

IAM 50
FIFTY YEARS OF
DRIVING ROAD SAFETY

Comments and Contributions

It's been a few months since the last issue - the holiday season combined with changing jobs and a computer crash led to a few delays in getting the newsletter together. However, the result is that we have a bumper 10-page special edition. I hope that you find the articles thought provoking and interesting.

As usual, if you have any comments or suggestions, please contact me on **01506 412386** or e-mail: iam@kevham.co.uk.

Your articles and contributions would be gratefully received - after all, it is YOUR newsletter.

The copy deadline for the next issue is Friday 14 April.

*Kevin Hamilton
Editor*

ECO-COP - policing the Borders' environment

Those members who turned up at our first ever meeting at Heriot-Watt University's Galashiels Campus were treated to a fascinating and colourful presentation by Allan Virtue of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Allan, who is Manager of the Borders Environmental Protection and Improvement Team, and who is based in SEPA's Galashiels Office, gave us an overview of the wide range of activities covered by SEPA. In the course of the evening we all became acquainted with many new words and concepts, such as "Abstractions", "Impoundments" and "SUDS" (see below for definitions!), as well as many fascinating new facts.

He explained that SEPA's role is "to provide an efficient and integrated environmental protection system for Scotland that will both improve the environment and contribute to the goal of sustainable development." SEPA's environmental goals are: to achieve good water, air and land quality; to help minimise, recover, and manage waste effectively; to protect, inform and engage communities; and to promote economic well-being.

He then concentrated on those areas of SEPA's activities that relate to the internal combustion engine. These include: oversight of the regulations that govern the recycling of the vapours released during delivery of fuel to a filling station back into the delivering tanker; granting of "End-of-life" vehicle licences regulating the

storage and depolluting of scrap vehicles and the recovery and recycling of oil, tyres, and other components; and consulting on river diversion for new roads and on the development of "SUDS" [see below!] to treat road runoff.

and deliver such an excellent presentation and for leading a lively discussion after refreshments.

Definitions

An "abstraction" is the removal of water from the natural environment.



Allan's clear and comprehensive presentation was accompanied by excellent photographs - many of them shot locally - and anecdotes, some of which illustrated the occasional cloak-and-dagger nature of the job, such as the detection of miscreants involved in the fly-tipping of hazardous substances.

The Vice-Chairman thanked Mr. Virtue for taking the time to prepare

An "impoundment" is any dam, weir or other structure which can raise the water level above its natural level.

"SUDS" is the acronym for "Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems", which are structures built to manage surface water runoff.!

Peter Sandison

Advice for Older Drivers

Older drivers have more experience. They're also likely to be more tolerant and confident too, which can mean they're safer on the road than other age groups.

But your sight, hearing, and judgement may not be as sharp as they were. And driving is more complex and demanding than it used to be, with more traffic on the roads.

You need to take even greater care, and adjust your driving habits to compensate for any deterioration in your eyesight or judgement. A

simple adaptation to your car may help if you have mobility problems.

Medical conditions

You must notify the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) of the onset or worsening of a medical condition that could affect your ability to drive safely, including heart problems, epilepsy and diabetes.

If you are on prescribed medication, ask your doctor if it could affect your driving.

Your eyesight

It's illegal to drive if you can't read a number plate from 20.5m (67 feet)

away. Have your eyes tested regularly, as changes in your eyesight can happen slowly and without you realising it.

Refresh your skills

Even experienced drivers can slip into bad habits, so it's a good idea to refresh your knowledge from time to time and keep up-to-date with changes in the law.

Renewing your licence

You must renew your licence when you reach the age of 70, and every three years afterwards. But there's no legal cut-off age when you should stop driving - it's really up to you. It won't be an easy decision to make but don't wait for an accident to convince you it's time to stop.

Source: DfT Think!

2005 - Year of the Bike.....

I am delighted to report that the Motorcycle Section had a very successful 2005 season. No less than six of our Associates have passed their Advanced Riding tests and are now Full Members. Of them, Nigel, Graham, Ken and Alec have also expressed their interest in commencing training to become Observers themselves.

This dovetails nicely with our intention to design an Observer Training Programme through which, this coming season, we hope to further develop our Observer candidates' skills up to and through the IAM Qualified Observer test.

Colin, Mark and Mike have already completed and passed this initial qualification in order to start the ball rolling and may now progress towards the Senior Observer Qualification in the future, should they wish individually, to undertake this next step on the IAM ladder.

Our Observers have attended two end-of-season "de-brief" sessions with the IAM test Examiners. The first was held at the Police HQ at Fettes Avenue and the second was held locally with "our own" Examiner, Bob Crawley. The purpose of both sessions was to discuss our current "performance" with the Examiners and to get a good understanding of what ex-

actly the individual Examiners were looking for in their "ideal" candidate.

For us, the Observers, this was a very useful exercise and we will be able to introduce these additional elements into our Associate Training next season. This process will become a regular part of our Motorcycle Group's strategy in the future, as it allows us to mould our Associate input around the developments occurring in the way the Police are making changes to their own training programmes. These de-briefing sessions allow this natural filtering-down of information into our training plans, keeping us fully up to date and allowing us to pass this knowledge on to directly benefit our Associates.

Back in May, several of us went up to Plockton on the EDAM annual touring pilgrimage to Wester Ross. Several more of our number spent an enjoyable couple of weekends away in first of all Yorkshire and then the Lake District on two other great biking tours, organised by White Rose Tours and Bike-Ecosse tours respectively. For 2006 there is talk of us venturing abroad, possibly with a trip to Germany selected from our favourite Bike-Ecosse tour itinerary. This tour is a bit more expensive than each of the

other previously mentioned ones, but it does promise a bit of adventure, some serious long-distance riding and plenty of fun and excitement.

We too are planning to create a regular set of group Sunday runs throughout 2006 to add to our Associates' riding experience and interest. These should help to create an even greater sense of "club" membership for our new batch of Associates and the trips will of course be open to all existing members as well. Group rides are great fun and really are part of the whole motorcycling experience as they help introduce members to one another and through this can create additional learning experiences.

We are certainly looking forward to an equally busy training season in 2006. There have already been several serious enquirers for our IAM course and there are always IAM recruits generated by the annual Scottish Motorcycle Show in March.

We are all set with our dedicated team of Observers in place, four Trainee Observers waiting in the wings plus I've got my new bike and I can't wait to get some serious mileage under its wheels. Let's Rock and roll on 2006!!

*Mike Dall
Motorcycle Observer*



.....and first Bike run of 2006 !

Ken Robson, Graeme Pogson and I were the only brave souls to meet up at Matalan for the first run of the year. The weather was a bit dull and dreich but no more or less than one might expect for a February morning. Ken had brought along his latest acquisition, a Triumph 955i Sprint ST, hoping to get some more miles on it and to familiarise himself with it, having only basically ridden it home from Two Wheels. Graeme really only wanted to complete the task of making his bike utterly filthy so that he had a reasonable excuse to wash it properly. My excuse was that I wanted a decent run on my bike because it was a Sunday.

We planned to ride down to Keilder, perhaps to the Castle if it was open, for a satisfying breakfast.

Setting off in light traffic, we headed for the A68 to Jedburgh. Not having had a decent ride so far this year, we all took it nice and easy. Getting the feel for the bikes after a few weeks off takes a little time. The last time we all rode, the roads were mostly clean surfaced due to the rainfall during the late autumn. Today however, things were different. The most noticeable feature of the road surface is the coating of salty slime that accumulates during these winter weeks with their frosty mornings and associated grit-spreading. This slippery gunk builds up over time and becomes a quite visible brown slick in the centre line of each side of the carriageway. This centre

carriageway strip certainly focuses the attention. Tyre adhesion is a vital function of motorcycle performance and the wise motorcyclist treads warily on dubious surfaces. Taking up cornering positions for the best view in plenty of time needs extra consideration in these conditions and I was pleased to see my colleagues adding this into their riding plans.

South of Jedburgh we headed westwards for Bonchester Bridge and the non-primary or "B" road we were now following gave us the next set of hazardous surface conditions to consider. Mud and of course our old favourite, herbivorous excrement. It is remarkable that there is always an ample dollop of the stuff exactly on line for that perfect entry position for each corner. Perhaps of course our equine and bovine cousins also use "limit-points" in their cornering technique and therefore choose similar lines to our own!

As we climbed up out of the valley we became shrouded in fog. This was a real shame because there are usually some spectacular views to be experienced up here above the tree line. We continued down into the next valley, carefully negotiating the corkscrew turns that take you down to the valley floor. I took extreme care here because on my last ride over this road, I was one of three of us who executed superb skid control in ballet-like harmony, as we each in turn experienced

our rear wheels locking momentarily over-banding which seals the edges of the road repairs (on this road, they constitute virtually the whole road surface).

Shortly after this, we seemed to make a destination change as if by ESP and headed on towards Newcastleton. Graeme turned back as his morning pass was beginning to run out, so Ken and I headed to the Copthorn Kitchen for a heat at the blazing fire and a sturdy plate of breakfast.

After eating our fill and having been introduced by the patron to her other customer whom she described as a "grumpy old *****", we took our leave and headed for Canonbie and the A7 northwards. As usual, this beautiful, flowing piece of road offered us the chance of a bit of pace and plenty of cornering practice for us to enjoy.

Ken and I said our goodbyes at Selkirk and we went our separate ways. I hadn't had quite enough and to add further mileage, headed for home via St. Boswells.

That was a great day to start my riding season and I'm looking forward to the next one. Our Advanced Rider training courses commence in mid-March and I expect that our Observer team is gradually awakening from their hibernation and will turn out over the next few Sundays to shake off their winter cobwebs too.

Mike Dall

The decline of driving standards?

As someone that is on the roads most days of the year I am very pleased that I bothered to learn and put into practice what the Roadcraft manual advocates.

Not a day goes by but I see poor driving standards and it seems to me to be getting worse.

Many drivers are aggressive, very impatient and driving much faster than the national speed limits for the type of vehicle and road they are on. Many motorists ignore motoring law and they appear to get away with it.

For example, the law covering the use of mobile phones when

driving is a farce; parking within 10 meters of a junction is very common - causing real problems for other road users turning into or out of the junction.

Why bother to paint double yellow lines on any road surface? Often you cannot see the yellow lines for vehicles straddling them, near-side wheels on the pavement off-side wheels on the road surface.

When it comes to solid double white lines, more and more divers are prepared to gamble with their own and other peoples lives, as they overtake sometimes as many as three vehicles at a time. What

these drivers are playing at I am not sure, but one thing I am sure of is where I have witnessed this, I slow down on approaching these hot spots because I never know if I am going to meet someone coming over the blind crest on my side of the road or they are in a hidden dip.

As Advanced Motorists, we can use the system of car control to help us to avoid hazards caused by irresponsible road users. Remember - careful observation and planning are at the heart of the system and can give us that vital extra 'time to react'.

Raymond Black

Road Signs Quiz

This month, we have a selection of road signs for you to identify (all sign images are ©Crown Copyright). Some are very common, some very unusual. If you want to demonstrate your knowledge and win a small, worthless prize, send you answers on a postcard to Kevin Hamilton, 89 Ballantyne Place, Livingston, EH54 6TH or e-mail iam@kevham.co.uk by 31 March. Answers will appear in the next issue.

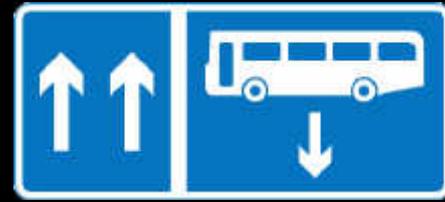
Of course, all of the answers are available in the Highway Code which is available online at: www.highwaycode.gov.uk. There is a new version of the Highway Code due soon and a consultation exercise is currently underway - see the DSA website at www.dsa.gov.uk/highwaycode



Sign 1



Sign 2



Sign 3



Sign 4



Sign 5



Sign 6



Sign 7



Sign 8



Sign 9

November Answers

Ok, some of you may have spotted the deliberate mistake in last month's quiz - question 5 was the same as question 4! This was entirely my error but there was no prize for spotting it so it doesn't really matter. The correct answers were:

Q1 - B, Q2 - B, Q3 - B, Q4 & Q5 - C, Q6 - B, Q7 - B, Q8 - C, Q9 - C, Q10 - A

*Kevin Hamilton
Editor*

Quiz Ideas

We're always looking to improve the newsletter so if you have any ideas for new quizzes or if you don't like the quiz, let us know. Even if you like things the way they are, it would be nice to hear from you. Just drop me a line at iam@kevham.co.uk or contact any of the committee members listed on the front page. We'd be delighted to hear from you.

Honour for Chief Examiner



Bryan Lunn, Chief Examiner at the IAM has been awarded an MBE in Her Majesty's New Year's Honours for services to road safety and the IAM.

Bryan, 61, has been Chief Examiner at the IAM for 10 years.

For many years, Bryan lived in Barkingside, East London and recently moved to Suffolk. He said: "The honour is a delight, and totally unexpected. My family asked me to accept it and I am happy to do so. I am sure that the honour reflects well on the work of the IAM, where it has been a pleasure to work for the last ten years."

Born in Redhill, Surrey, Bryan was educated in East Africa and joined the Metropolitan Police as a cadet in 1962. He spent much of his 40-year career in the Met's Traffic Division. His final post before joining the IAM was as the Commandant of the Metropolitan Police Driving School in Hendon.

During his time with the IAM, Bryan assessed the driving of a wide variety of candidates including celebrity Julian Clarey and former Daily Telegraph editor Lord Deedes.

Bryan is married with two grown up children. His hobbies include astronomy and cinema going.

Bryan retired from the IAM on 31 December 2005 and is succeeded as IAM Chief Examiner by Peter Rodger.

Source: IAM Press Office

Mansell takes the wheel at IAM

F1 Racing legend Nigel Mansell is to be the new President of the IAM.

Mansell passed his Advanced Driving Test last August, 19 years after scoring his first Formula One victory at Brands Hatch. As IAM President, Mansell brings a lifetime of driving experience to the IAM.

"I believe driving expertise isn't just for the race track," said Mr Mansell.

"My grandfather always told me that it is no good lying on a hospital bed saying 'But I had the right of way'. That is why drivers can

gain so much from preparing for their IAM test.

"I am honoured to take the Presidency of such a well regarded organisation and I hope that in this, its 50th Anniversary Year, we can inform and educate more drivers and riders than ever before," he said.

Welcoming the appointment, IAM Chairman John Maxwell said:

"I am delighted that Nigel has accepted the invitation to be our new President. He is a well respected public figure, with immense driving experience. As well as his legendary track record, Nigel has consistently campaigned

for safety on the road and I know that drivers of all ages will regard him as a leading proponent of safety, both on and off the track."

With 31 Grand Prix wins, Nigel Mansell already has his place in the Formula One Hall of Fame. He has joined racing drivers John Surtees, the late Graham Hill, Sir Stirling Moss and motorcyclist Geoff Duke who have all passed their IAM test.

The first IAM President was Lord Sempill and the most recent was HRH The Duke of Gloucester, who held the position for 32 years.

Source: IAM Press Office

Think Once, Think Twice, Think Bike

Ask most drivers if they feel safe in their car, and the answer is invariably yes. We are surrounded by metal, with all the latest technology built in to safeguard us if the worst happens. Add the heater on icy days and our favourite CD and that sense of complacency is complete. Has that "safe" vehicle lulled us into a false sense of security? We should really drive as though that airbag was a metal spike, pointing out of the wheel at our chest. Then we would have a sense of vulnerability - which is how most motorcyclists feel, with good reason.

The first three-year review of the Government's casualty reduction targets (in 2003) confirmed that motorcyclists continue to be disproportionately represented in casualty sta-

tistics. In fact, at that time biker casualty figures were the only ones going in the wrong direction. Despite a welcome drop in overall casualties in 2004 (compared to 2003) bikers - who represent just one per cent of road users - still accounted for 17% of fatalities. With 585 bikers killed and 6,063 seriously injured in 2004, there is no room for complacency - and bringing the figures down is a top priority for the DfT's THINK! campaign.

But the most recent figures show that 73 per cent of all crashes involving a two-wheeled motor vehicle also involved a car. The most common cause of motorcycle crashes is a 'right of way violation'. Data gathered by police investigators shows the majority of these incidents occur at

T-junctions and it is usually the motorist - rather than the biker - who is at fault. There is a phrase used to sum these up: "Sorry Mate, I didn't See You". These SMIDSY crashes happen despite the fact the motorcyclist should be in clear view.

Always take a second look at junctions before you pull out. Be aware of the so-called "A" posts on your vehicle. They divide the windscreen from the side window and can conceal an oncoming bike, although they are only narrow.

That bike may or may not have its headlight on. But it is not as big as, or the same shape as, a bus or a car, and so it is very easy to miss it at first glance.

As the old slogan used to put it: Think Once, Think Twice, Think Bike.

Source: IAM Press Office

National Road Deaths Fall

Figures released in January in "Road Accidents Scotland 2004" confirm that 306 people were killed in 2004, an eight per cent decrease on 2003, and the second lowest figure for 50 years.

The 2004 figures also show that the Scottish Executive has reached its target of halving the number of children killed and seriously injured on the roads by 2010.

Transport Minister Tavish Scott said:

"This devolved government is committed to making Scotland's roads safer for all who use them and I welcome the fact that these figures show a reduction in the number of people killed and injured on our roads.

"However, we must not be complacent. We must continue to promote safe driving through effective education, safety improvements on our roads and tougher enforcement.

"The Scottish Safety Camera Programme's hard-hitting road safety campaign, new investments in road improvements at accident black spots and our substantial funding to local authorities to introduce 20 mph zones and safer routes to schools are all part of that three-pronged approach.

"Combined with our support for Road Safety Scotland, and cycling and walking projects such as the development of the National Cycle

Network we are committed to preventing even more needless deaths and injuries on our roads."

Provisional figures for Road Accidents Scotland 2004 were published in June 2005. Today's final figures include a more detailed breakdown of the figures, including a comparison with England and Wales and about 30 other countries. The publication can be found at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/transtat/ras>

On March 1, 2000, the UK Government, the Scottish Executive and the National Assembly for Wales announced a new road safety strategy and casualty reduction targets for 2010. The new targets, which were given in the document Tomorrow's roads - safer for everyone, are based on the annual average casualty levels over the period 1994 to 1998, and are for:

- a 40 per cent reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents;
- a 50 per cent reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured; and
- a 10 per cent reduction in the slight casualty rate, expressed as the number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kilometres.

Sources: *Scottish Executive*

AA Calls For Better Roads

There's more to road safety than just blaming drivers, says AA Motoring Trust

The AA Motoring Trust believes that road safety now needs a greater shift of emphasis on to better highway engineering. While most crashes stem from driver error, national safety strategies across Europe show that safer design and layout of the road itself would do most to reduce the rate of death and serious injury. This is particularly true in countries where messages about better driver behaviour and safer vehicles are generally understood and accepted.

According to EuroRAP research, 65 per cent of people in Britain believe that investing in safer driver behaviour would produce the greatest return in reduced casualties. This compares with 20 per cent who see safer road design as the way forward and 15 per cent who prefer safer cars.

In reality, scientific research shows that road engineering measures, like safety barriers, improved junctions and speed management measures have the potential to reduce road casualties in Sweden by 59 per cent, in Holland by 50 per cent and the UK by 44 per cent. In Britain, a further 35 per cent reduction could be achieved by safer vehicles, 16 per cent by safer driver behaviour and 5 per cent through other measures like child safety projects.

Along major roads between towns and cities, for example, 80 per cent of fatal crashes result from just four types of collision: head-on, junction, running off the road, and pedestrian and cyclist incidents. The 18,957 accidents over three years on major roads in rural areas account for a fifth of fatal and serious road casualties in the UK. In Sweden, safety barriers down the middle of notoriously bad single-lane roads have

Borders Road Casualties Rise

Road Accidents Scotland also includes figures for individual local authorities. In 2004, there were 11 deaths on Borders' roads - less than in 2003. In total, there were 640 people either killed or injured in total in the Borders in 2004 - a slight increase on the previous year.

The interesting and worrying fact revealed by the statistics is that the average number of people killed or seriously injured has not changed dramatically since 1994-98, being around 115 per year.

The picture is similar for casualties of all severities (ie. those killed or injured, whether serious or slight) - the average was 627 between 1994-98 and 620 between 2000-2004.

Most of the other authorities in Lothian and Borders have seen significant reductions in casualties over the last few years. The exceptions are the Borders and East Lothian. Both of these areas have lots of rural roads and this might explain part of the problem.

Lots of effort has been put into improving safety in towns over the past few years (traffic calming, pedestrian crossings etc.) but less has been done for rural roads.

The Borders now accounts for nearly one-quarter of all killed and seriously injured casualties in the whole Lothian and Borders force - compared to just 18% on average between 1994-98.

All of this shows that there is still a lot of work to be done to reduce casualties on the Borders' roads.

Kevin Hamilton

proven effective in combating head-on crashes, although controversial.

"Just because drivers, who are unfamiliar with a notoriously dangerous road, mistakenly take corners too fast and crash doesn't mean they deserve to die or be severely injured - particularly if they hit, for instance, a lamppost or road sign that better design would have shielded behind a crash barrier," says Paul Watters, head of roads and transport policy for The AA Motoring Trust.

"Perpetuating the notion that drivers are their own worst enemies, and need to be controlled through strict enforcement, is often a convenient over-simplification that saves money but not lives. By all means, keep the pressure up on drivers to improve their behaviour but not to the extent of failing to invest in life-saving road design and maintenance."

Source: AA Motoring Trust

What is the IAM?

The Institute of Advanced Motorists (the IAM) is a charitable body with 3 very simple aims and objectives -

1. To improve the standard of driving and riding on the UK's roads.

2. The advancement of road safety.

3. The administration of an Advanced Test.

The Advanced Driving Test has been in existence since 1956 (and the Advanced Riding Test for motorcyclists since 1976). Due to the existence of around 200 local IAM Affiliated Groups throughout the UK, all charitable organisations in their own right, the support for people wanting to prepare for and pass the IAM's Advanced Test is unparalleled throughout the UK. The support of the Groups means that the Advanced Test is available and probably achievable for ANYBODY who has an interest in improving their driving skills.

By "improving their driving skills" we are not talking about those who want to enter motor-sport but anybody who feels the way that drivers are left to their own devices once they have passed their "L" test is not good enough, or even that the nature of driving has changed since they passed their "L" Test, especially in today's unforgiving traffic and

The Test gives a thorough workout of driving ability, allowing the candidate to alter their drive according to the conditions and environment of the road. The types of road vary from quiet country roads, motorways to busy town centres. In each case there are hazards and situations that need to be avoided and taken care of using the methods and

to show restraint and composure to deal with tricky hazards that may become apparent throughout the drive. Such as in a town centre situation, where observation is used to pick out hazards in situations that are constantly changing. The main objective is that the candidate has to perform well in all situations rather than excel in one.



roads.

The 'Test'

The Advanced Driving Test lasts for about 90 minutes and usually covers between 30 and 40 miles along all types of road.

The Examiner will hold a Police Advanced Driving certificate (either serving or ex Police Class 1) and will have extensive experience from working within the Traffic sections of the Police Force.

techniques that advanced driving gives. There may be situations where the candidate can show flair and panache (or what we term as Sparkle) on an open country road where optimum progress can be gained at maximum safety, using optimum road positioning and excellent observation. All this combines to give a brisk smooth drive, at the legal limit on the open road. In other situations, the candidate will need

Many people often comment on the Test after taking it and more often than not, the comments revolve around how much they enjoyed the drive. On Test the candidate gets to "show off" the new skills that they have been tuning for the weeks during their course. The Advanced Driving Test **IS NOT EASY** but is within the reach of most motorists with the right guidance.

How do I join?

Visit the IAM website at <http://www.iam.org.uk/Skill4life/> and gain a 'Skill for Life'.

Alternatively, contact any of the Borders Group committee who will be pleased to tell you more about Advanced Driving.

IAM Special Assessment

The IAM *Special Assessment* is designed to be the ultimate Advanced Driving/Riding challenge for civilian drivers and riders and offers IAM Members an opportunity to demonstrate their driving or riding skills to the highest possible standard.

What's Involved ?

- The Chief Examiner will select the Examiner to conduct each IAM *Special Assessment* from those available in the area concerned. The IAM *Special Assessment* is not intended to be a learning experience in the same way that the IAM Driving Assessment is. Nevertheless, it is hoped that Members will benefit and learn from the experience, and from the comprehensive written feedback that they will receive after the IAM *Special Assessment*.
- Car Members are required to give a high standard, flowing commentary, unless there are special circumstances why this cannot be done (speech defect etc.) Any such problem must be notified on the application form when application to take the IAM *Special Assessment* is made.
- Members will be asked to answer six questions relating driving/riding matters and road safety at the conclusion of their drive/ride. The Chief Examiner will provide the Examiner with a unique set of six questions for each candidate, in confidence, from a bank of questions maintained in the Test Department.
- The IAM *Special Assessment* is voluntary and is not a Test. Members undertaking it will not be considered to have either "passed or failed" and their continued Membership of the IAM will not be affected.

Some Members may question why the IAM *Special Assessment* is not a Test. Members can, if they wish, consider the IAM *Special Assessment* as a "Test" - a test against the perfect driver or rider

(who does not exist). The report and percentage evaluation is designed to show how the drive or ride compared to perfection.

The Examiner will give some verbal feedback in the debrief session after each IAM *Special Assessment*. Subsequent comprehensive written feedback from IAM Head Office will give Members an analysis of their driving/riding and will include an overall evaluation of it expressed as a percentage. The contents of this report will remain confidential between the IAM and the Member.

Members who successfully complete an IAM *Special Assessment* will be entitled to an IAM *Special Assessment Certificate*.

Notes:

The IAM *Special Assessment* is only open to IAM Members who:-

- have been Members of the IAM for one year, or more, at the time of application.
- have not had a blameworthy crash in the 24 months before application is made, or between the date of application and the date the IAM *Special Assessment* is carried out.
- have not been convicted of a driving related offence (including a Fixed Penalty Notice) in the 24 months before application is made, or between the date of application and the date the IAM *Special Assessment* is carried out.
- do not have any proceedings of any sort (including a Fixed Penalty Notice) pending against them.
- do not have more than six penalty points endorsed on their driving licence.

Members who cannot meet these requirements will still have access to the (ordinary) IAM Driving Assessment. Members will be permitted to undertake only one IAM *Special Assessment* in any twelve-month period.

Sudoku

Thanks to *Bob McKendrick*, **Sudoku** returns to the Borders Observer! The puzzle in the last issue was so difficult that I can't find the solution - sorry!

For those who don't know (where have you been?) Sudoku is a simple logic puzzle which has taken the UK by storm over

the past year. The rules are very simple:

Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. There is only 1 possible solution.

It's graded as being of easy difficulty. The solution will (hopefully) appear in the next newsletter.

	1					6	
2		5				8	3
3				4			9
7		3	5		2	6	4
	9					2	
1		6	4		9	3	8
4				5			2
6		8				5	1
	5						8

Borders Group Website

For those of you who are 'web enabled', why not visit the Borders Group website for up-to-date information on group events and news.

The site has useful information on the workings of the group and advanced motoring in general. There is also an archive of old newsletters and a range of useful motoring links.

The site address is www.bordersiam.org.uk

Driving Downhill

While Olympic competitors risk life and limb for gold and a place in history, many British drivers will take the same risks for a few seconds' advantage on the road, says The AA Motoring Trust.

During the fortnight of the Turin Winter Olympics, the competitive streak of some British motorists will help to kill around 120 people on UK roads.

The AA Trust's behavioural scientist Jo Hill identifies the winter Olympic equivalents of five types of motorist who will land themselves, and others, with a place in hospital or the mortuary:

- *Ski jumpers*: hurtle down the outside lane before it narrows to see how many cars they can beat before forcing their way inside;
- *Speed skaters*: tail each other as fast and as close as possible on motorways and dual carriageways - one slip-up leads to calamity;
- *Slalom skiers*: weave in and out of traffic, barely missing other vehicles, just to gain a few car lengths;
- *Ice hockey players*: charge aggressively at other cars to try to force the drivers to give way - until they meet other players;
- *Bobsleighers*: are usually young drivers who cram as many people as possible into a small car, tear down winding roads at break-neck speed and expect to steer normally, until they misjudge a corner and spill everyone all over the road.

"Competitiveness and aggression may be traits shared by Olympic competitors and go-for-it drivers, but there are no medals to be won by nipping three cars in front", says Jo Hill.

"These drivers show a dangerous over-confidence and a sense of indestructibility created by being insulated in a metal box, often protected by airbags, ABS and other safety features. Winter Olympic sportsmen and women, many of whom travel as fast as a car, have no such protection but understand the risks and how far they can push their luck and abilities."

"Perhaps the worst judges of speed, skill and risk are what we might call the 'bob-slayers' - young drivers of small, ageing cars who pack in three, four and sometimes more of their friends, and litter Britain's roads with multi-casualty crashes."

(Editor's note: as Advanced Motorists, we probably come under the category of 'curlers')

Source: AA Motoring Trust

© Borders Group of Advanced Motorists

Registered Charity SC 023509

Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists

www.iam.org.uk

Views expressed in Borders Observer are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Borders Group or the IAM.

© 2005 Borders Group of Advanced Motorists

