

**Gloucestershire
Group**

**Spring 2009
Newsletter**

Future Events Roundup

Date	Day	Time	Event	See page
19/Apr/2009	Sunday	10:00	Who's Nicked Me Cheese?!!!	page 16
25/Apr/2009	Saturday	All day	BikeWest Regional Event	page 16
26/Apr/2009	Sunday			
3/May/2009	Sunday	10:00	A Ride North	page 16
9/May/2009	Saturday	10:00 - 17:00	Heart of England Bike Show	page 16
18/Jun/2009	Thursday	19:30	Glos-RoADAR AGM	page 5
3/Jul/2009	Friday	19:45	RoADAR v SAM Advanced Skittles Match	page 9
6/Dec/2009	Sunday	12:00	Christmas Lunch	page 6

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Welcome & Congratulations

New Car Associates:

- Tony Collinson - Forthampton
- Wendy Buffrey - Quedgeley
- James Jones - Quedgeley
- Sharon Jeynes - Quedgeley
- Sven Kirkpatrick - Gloucester
- Nick Ford - Newnham
- Simon Hogan - Gloucester
- Stephen Daniel - Cheltenham
- Carol Greenup - Hardwicke

Car Test/Retest Passes:

- Mike Hammond
tutored by Janty Jones
- Gareth Davies
tutored by Janty Jones

New Motorcycle Associates:

- David Price - Prestbury
- John Houghton - Tewkesbury
- Robin Pettigrew - Ledbury
- Sarah Juniper - Dursley
- Peter Crowson - Swindon
- Paul Ambridge - Cheltenham
- Nigel Warwick - Churchdown

Motorcycle Test/Retest Passes:

- Chris Hearn
tutored by Phil Baker
- Dan Mandic
- Phil Baker
- Derek McMullan

Chair's Report

by Lorraine Williams

Well, Spring seems to have sprung and the weather is slowly but surely getting better. For the bikers among us, that means just one more reason to get out and about on the bikes so keep an eye on the group ride-outs planned throughout the year.

And make a note in your diaries of any training events as they come up. I know there are plans in the pipeline for at least some more bike tutor training.

The AGM will have been and gone by the time of the next newsletter so please humour me as I once again put in a plea for members to attend and input their thoughts about the past and up coming year. And, as usual, the need for people to help fill committee posts.

Don't assume those on the committee now want to be there for ever more. If you fancy giving it a go, chat to one of the current committee for an idea of what it's all about. After all, the group wouldn't exist without members but it also wouldn't function without a committee.

Looking further ahead, we've had the annual invitation from SAM for a game of skittles (details page 7) and, as it would be nice for us to return the invitation, we're thinking about skittles and a BBQ later in the year.

And then the Christmas meal will follow. On that note, another plea from me. Those of you who've attended this in the past will be well aware of my fun raffle (no costs involved for anyone). While I can gather lots of goodies, I struggle to find bike-related items so if any of you have suitable offerings (chain lube, helmet cleaners, DVDs, leather cleaner, locks, etc, etc, etc) that you're willing to offer up, please pass them to any committee member who will get them to me. I promise not to let you 'win' your prize back if you

come to the meal. Any other items suitable for the ladies in the group would also be appreciated.



So, on that note, thinking about Christmas as we move into Spring, have a safe season and make sure you brush up your skills as training sessions come up.

See you all at the AGM? 🌟

AGM Notice

The Glos-RoADAR 2009 AGM will be held in the function room at the Civil Service Sports Club (Tewkesbury Road, Uckington, Cheltenham) at 7:30 pm on Thursday the 18th June 2009. Map at: www.cacssa.co.uk/google_map.htm or the postcode is GL51 9SL if your SatNav accepts them. 🌟

Training Session - Acquiring a Grade

by Janty Jones
(Thursday 29th January 2009)

Training Officer, Andrew Curtis gave a **Gold** performance using **Silver Service** Power-Point slides to get the year off to a **Sterling** start to a packed audience of assorted members of the Group: an Examiner, Tutors, Associates and a few from the faithful biking fraternity.

Andy's carefully constructed and sound instruction left us in no doubt as to the difficulty in acquiring a grade and, how to recognise or improve on our driving skills or those of other's. He took us through an alphabet of points to watch; so many in fact that there were 32 letters in Andy's alphabet! From Cockpit Drill to Commentary; Hand Position to Highway Code, not a stone left unturned, every little detail of Advanced Driving was carefully explained, to a spellbound audience who were able to participate and ask questions freely.



Andy explained that a grade comes with practise, hard work and finesse; the fine-tuning of appreciating what is required in the test by an Examiner. He explained that inches can make a difference – in use of the limit point, vehicle sympathy combined with consideration and restraint to other road users are what make an Advanced Driver.

In the extra letters of the alphabet – AX, a proactive approach to observation is essential. This and many more subjects were covered. Thank you to all who attended, the calibre of the questions was 22-carat gold. I believe that Andy is constructing a hand out sheet for anyone who is interested or unable to attend; when he has the time. I would like to thank Lorraine Williams our Group Chairman for her introduction and vote of thanks.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Andy for giving up a considerable amount of his time to prepare this tutorial for the car section, and congratulate him for an excellent presentation. ☆

Christmas Lunch 2009

Sunday 6th December

It will be held at:
The Apple Tree, Stockwell Lane, Woodman-cote, Cheltenham, GL52 9QG. This is for everyone, including family. ☆

Bucket List (as in, before you kick it)

by Keren Rosser

28th – 29th March 2009 Location: Brecon National Park (south) within a private estate.

If you have a Bucket List, I would like to recommend to anyone (especially the ladies) to go on a BMW Off Road Riding Skills weekend, and if you have already done it maybe revisit it, just to know how good it was.



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www.1to1motorcycletraining.co.uk

I have just returned from the Ladies Weekend at BMW Off Road Riding Skills Centre set in Brecon National Park. I have to admit, I am physically and mentally exhausted. Sporting some fairly colourful bruising... BUT what an experience. I have learnt so much.

The Ladies Weekend is run by Linley, wife of Simon Paveys (as in Charley Boorman and Ewan McGregor fame). It is Linley's baby, to encourage more women to have a go at 'off road riding'.

The instructors were Patsy, Tamsin and Jenny and if I ever acquired a tiny bit of their skills in my lifetime I would be chuffed. These three could lift, ride, and manoeuvre a BMW Adventure GS 1200 bike with the dexterity of a push bike and none were over 5' 8"! These ladies know and want to share their huge knowledge and are willing and eager to explain over and over again until you've got it. They are amazing.

The weather was cold and showery, with a bit of hail I'm told on day 1. Day 2, the weather was sunny and glorious but quite honestly you become so involved with the riding, it is irrelevant. The cold at least dries the sweat. I was told, and they were quite right, "you sweat like a pig and fall off a lot, but don't let it put you off". As I have now learnt, you don't always hurt yourself.

For the weekend I had a F650GS (twin cylinder). It taught me how stable a bike is through gravel, mud and slushy ground if you just keep faith, look ahead and look at where you want to go. It also taught me not to doubt myself because if I did, I would eat dirt, which I confess, everyone without exception on the course managed in varying degrees of grace.

We were taught rear braking, front braking, how to get our bike back up if we dropped it, slow riding through cones, downhill descent using engine braking then using the front brake, hill recovery... the list of learning goes

on and on. We rode trails with stunning views through the glorious 4,000 acre estate.



On the second day we were allowed to try any of the bikes on a flat exercise area, which was great. I rode a GS 1200 and the GS1200 Adventure... what a beauty, I loved it. It is a phenomenal machine, I felt so at home, but know it is way above my experience level to have one for road or off-road use... but maybe after a few more 'Days in the Dirt' (another course available) on the trusty 650 who knows, I will be ready to take on a GS1200 Adventure. I will do it again but I will make sure I am fitter because I know fatigue became my downfall. I want to be able to achieve so much more because when I got it right, it was a BLAST. It could have you laughing and whooping with achievement and frustrated and swearing like a trooper when it didn't quite go to plan!

Give it a go, if nothing else it will show you that you love tarmac only.

Their web site is: www.offroadskills.com 

The Happy New Year Ride

by Dave Brazener

(Sunday 4th January 2009)

The coldest day of the year according to the weather man for the first ride of 2009. Yes, I know it is only the fourth day but true nevertheless. Having checked the route on the previous day, I was confident that our only concern would be the cold and not the road surface, although the very hard frost was abundantly obvious. I had noted one or two small patches of ice but nothing that would faze a highly trained RoADAR rider (sounds jolly good don't you think?). Of the five gathered at Teddington Hands for a 9:30 am start, one was a first-timer, another, an occasional supporter, arrived on a gleaming Fireblade (well done that man!), Chris on his Deauville, our motorcycle co-ordinator and me, the ride leader.



What, no Chris Lees? Poor chap had been laid low by the rampant flu bug so we were without the assertive guidance which we had come to take for granted. Also missing was Phil's navigator and personal organiser. Very unusual to see Phil riding a motorcycle on his own but he managed just fine!

With such a small group the pre-ride brief was very short and spot on the chime of 9:30 we were away with Phil Baker acting as sweeper. Roads were pleasantly free of traffic and steady, cautious progress was made. Stanway Hill was the first feature and then across country to Broad Campden and on to Shipston-on-Stour. North of Shipston we turned right onto country lanes and crossed the River Stour by means of a recently refurbished and very splendid stone bridge. Onwards through attractive and peaceful villages until pausing before the A422 to check on the well being of the following riders. Remarkably, everyone agreed to follow the full route and not dive for an early refreshment stop! Extraordinary how the cold can affect one's judgement. The climb and descent of Edge Hill was safely accomplished and then we took to country lanes again admiring more picturesque villages on mostly deserted roads. Passing tantalisingly close to Hook Norton Brewery we pressed on with thoughts only of refreshments and personal comfort to Wyatts Farm Shop where tales of motorcycling experiences were exchanged over hot drinks and food.

Clouds were gathering to the west and having heard rumours that snow was a possibility it was back on the chargers to head for Stow on the Wold (where the wind blows cold etc. etc.). On to the Fosse Way towards Bourton where two of the group peeled off to head for Cirencester leaving three to follow the road to Andoversford where we said our goodbyes. By the time I arrived home I had clocked 94 miles and I would think that some of our party would have covered a much greater distance by the time they reached their homes.

Yes, the conditions were a bit bleak but I for one enjoyed the ride and the company. Further, I would admit to a rather smug feeling for having braved the conditions and not succumbed to the alternative temptations. 🍷

Motorcycle Tutor Training

by Phil Baker

A tutor training course has been arranged. It is intended for new/aspiring tutors and experienced tutors. The course is being run by Nige Murray and Tony Dix at:-
The Gloucestershire Club, Sandhurst Lane, Gloucester, GL2 9RG.

The course will run for three Sundays. The three dates being:-

- Sunday 19th April 2009
- Sunday 3rd May 2009
- Sunday 10th May 2009

The first session (Sunday 19th April). This will be a classroom session for new/aspiring tutors and will cover the basic building blocks for tutoring.

The second session (Sunday 3rd May). This will be a classroom refresher session for established tutors. The day should also be attended by the new/aspiring tutors that attended the first classroom session on 19th April. The day will cover new material and will include a short exam on Roadcraft.

The third session (Sunday 10th May). An on-the-road session covering various tutoring scenarios. This day is to be attended by both experienced and new/aspiring tutors. Please note that all practising Tutors are required to attend these training sessions.

The course is open only to members holding a RoSPA Silver or Gold test pass. Each session will run from 09:00 to 17:00. Lunch on the classroom days will be taken at the Gloucestershire club.

For the on-the-road session we will meet up for lunch at a pre-arranged stop. Please confirm attendance asap. 🍷

Advanced Skittles Match

RoADAR v SAM

Birds Eye Walls Sports & Social Club, Barnwood Road, Hammond Way, Gloucester, GL4 3HG. Friday 3rd July, 7-45 pm for an 8-00 pm start. Please inform the M/C Section Rep. (see "The Committee:" on page 26) if you plan to attend. Open to all members. 🍷

January Jaunt

by Phil and Ann Baker

Another Sunday morning and what shall we do. Watch paint dry or do the RoADAR ride? Stick the finger outside for a weather check, at least it's not raining but it's blooming cold, so what's new?

Twelve riders met at Seven Springs for the 09:30 start. It was very good to see some new faces and some we hadn't seen for a while. Check to see if the dreaded transceivers are working, good job they were. So off we go, heading towards the Air Balloon roundabout and up to Birdlip.

After a number of Cotswold stone walled miles through some lovely but mucky lanes we pass the famous Daneway pub at Sapperton. Up the hill, then head towards the south side of South Cerney. More of the Cotswold stone walling and a number of deer watching the motorcycles ride by.

Living in this part of the country, we tend to take the natural beauty for granted. People pay hundred of pounds to do a weekend tour when we can do it for just a tank of petrol. The hands and fingers are now rather chilly but should be okay if the temperature doesn't drop (oh for heated grips). We now start to head northwards passing through a number

of quaint villages crossing some large 'A' and 'B' roads but staying on the small lanes at all times.



Eventually we cross the A40 and drop down into the Barringtons and through more mucky little lanes. Heading across country towards the lovely little town of Charlbury near Chip-ping Norton and over the still-swollen river near the railway station. As we approach the town centre, a slight change of plan has to be made due to an early comfort stop needed. As luck would have it, Charlbury is a very convenient town. Like everywhere, inflation has hit this little Cotswold town. No longer can you spend a penny but have to settle for ten pence. Two whole shillings, that's twenty four old pennies. Sorry, just reminiscing again.

Well as I said earlier, it was a good job the transceivers were being used today because it was arranged over the air that the main section of the ride would carry on and we would all meet up at the planned stop later.

A very welcome hot cup of coffee and scrummy cake at the garden centre near the Rollrights started to warm the soul ready for the homeward journey. A few of the group decide to make their own way home from the garden centre.

Due to the muck covered motorcycles, the ride leader decided an early bath was needed. So we headed back towards Stow. Turning right into more tiny roads, we came upon the rather brisk flowing ford where the bikes were to take a quick wash. Everybody took the plunge. Then onwards towards home.

We managed to lose a couple of the group a few miles on but they knew their way home so no problems. More scenic but rather grubby little lanes near The Guitings and over the River Windrush. Eventually to the end point where we say our goodbyes and thank the ride leader for a very nice little jaunt.



Thank you to Chris (ride leader) and to all those who made the effort and making it a worthwhile ride out.

Back home to see if that paint has dried! 🌟

Speeding?

from Janty Jones (01/04/2009)

Thought you might be interested to know that following the UK Government's freedom of information act you can now get access to ALL speed camera offences registered in the last 12 months.

Did you know that every time your car goes past a speed camera, even 1 mph over the set limit, it is registered and put on a database? You only get a ticket if you are way over the limit or, (this is the bit that I didn't

know) if you receive over ten near misses, you will be classed as a serial offender and get a ticket the next time you go just over the limit.

This is why you hear of people being done for 34 mph in a 30 mph limit area, whilst others doing 39 mph do not. You can check what has been registered against your vehicle at the following web address:
www.i-database.co.uk

Just enter your car registration. If there is any data on your vehicle you can click on the camera window to see a copy of the photograph.

Hope it's useful? 🌟

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Fifteen tests, and still counting

by Liz Pritchard

In January 1970, I was looking for a one-term evening class and enrolled on an Advanced Driving Course. Towards the end, representatives of the Ealing section of The League of Safe Drivers together with the IAM spoke about their organisations. I can't remember what attracted me to the former, but it may have been the retesting and grading system.

I took my first test that summer. I have no recollection of doing any preparation, apart from having attended the course and re-reading the Highway Code. My response to incredulous friends was that, after eight years as a full licence holder I was concerned that my driving may have become complacent.

I passed at Silver grade after a drive of about 40 minutes, followed by Highway Code and maintenance questions, plus a debrief. I still have all the reports; a single sheet of A4 written by the examiner and handed over before he left the car.

I purchased a badge which told me I was 'Tested Driver No. 439'. When I achieved a Gold grade the following year I was given a gold coloured button (next page) to affix in the centre. However, the button wouldn't stay in place. Over twenty years later I donated the badge to The National Motor Museum Trust at Beaulieu. Not long ago I found the gold button! I must remember to forward it to join the badge.



REFRESHER/ADVANCED TEST

NAME _____

MAKE OF CAR AUSTIN MINI REPORT BY MR CRABB

Driving off and stopping Very Good

Deposition at Wheel Upright + alert

Acceleration Sense Fair can be improved

Gear Changing Very smooth and in good time

Steering Very accurate, good hand position

Braking Good

Use of Clutch Good

Signals Good

Driving Mirror Good use made

Correct Use of Horn One occasion misused

Car Sympathy Good, Could have changed down a couple of ^{noting} times to

Overtaking Didn't arise

Reversing Very good

Positioning Good

General Observation Good

Use of Speed Could be a little brisker

Consideration for Others Good

Traffic Signs Good

Cornering Accurate, smooth controlled

Temperament Calm

Confidence Plenty

Restraint Good

STANDARD II

GENERAL REMARKS ON CANDIDATE'S DRIVING A very safe smooth driver, with a next time little attention to the few points mentioned, should have no difficulty with a 1

HIGHWAY CODE Good MAINTENANCE _____

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 25/6/70



On subsequent retesting though I did manage to upgrade. In my view, the League of Safe Drivers' test was nowhere near as challenging as that of RoSPA. For example I can't recall any motorway driving as part of the test - possibly there wasn't one in the test area in those days? The RoSPA test is of course longer. I have no clear memory of performing commentary or otherwise with The League - it was a very long time ago!

I bought a RoADA badge but after a few years, all the paint had worn off and I threw it away. I have never replaced it.

I have clocked up a further seven RoSPA tests, which reminds me, my test is due again next year! 🌟

Footnote

by Paul Crabtree

Our thanks to 'Liz for sharing her advanced driving history with us. It is always good to hear members' anecdotes and recollections, including what prompted them to take up an enhanced level of driving. Liz mentions the late Ron Harley who was a much respected county advanced driving stalwart, and ran his own driving school for learners. He did a huge amount furthering the local IAM, and then later RoADA for which he was founding chairman.

The embryo committee of Cheltenham & Gloucester Group met either in his driving school office in Imperial Square, Cheltenham or at Chris Stokes' house (treasurer) - which was great as we then got copious cakes and biscuits that he got from the Cash and Carry. I also got given a wife!

Local RoADA was not called 'Gloucestershire Group' on its creation because the established Cheltenham – based IAM group was already called that. Yes the car badges were round, before later becoming square. You got issued with a centre button to stick

on, the colour of which matched the grade attained and also included the figure "1", "2" or "3". Diploma holders' centre buttons had a "D" on them (unfortunately it would seem.....) and examiners an "E". Strangely enough, I do actually remember meeting Liz for that test many years ago. We sallied forth from a lay-by on the A40 near Highnam in a blue car, possibly a Datsun. Silver huh? Generous as ever then! 🌟

From the RoSPA website

by the editor

RoADA began life in 1955 as the League of Safe Drivers. It was an independent body with groups of members and examiners in many parts of the country. Members were required to take tests at regular intervals and those who passed were subject to a three-tier grading system.

By 1980 the organisation had become large and unwieldy and it was decided that RoSPA should take it over. At first it was know as the RoSPA League of Safe Drivers, but within two years, at the request of the membership, had changed its name to the RoSPA Advanced Drivers' Association. 🌟

A Useful Note on Insurance

by David Collicott

I have just renewed my insurance and when I asked about having my RoSPA advanced test taken into consideration I was informed that the scheme is not recorded on their system which is sourced through the Motor Insurance Bureau.

It is apparently listed as the: "Royal Society Gold Award", not as RoSPA.

Being an 'old timer' it would not have had any effect on my quote, but it may be useful for others to ask your broker to check under both, if there is a problem. 🌟



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Forthcoming Rides (and other bike related events)

by Chris Lees

The rides are open to all and I would particularly like to see more associates (and their tutors) supporting the efforts of the Ride Leaders. 🌟

Date	Meet Time	Meet Place	Details
Rides			
Sunday 19th April 2009	10:00 am	Mythe Water Works	Who's Nicked Me Cheese!!! (110m/5hrs). Meet in good time for a prompt 10am start. Open to all members.
Sunday 3rd May 2009	10:00 am	Mythe Water Works	A Ride North (80-120m/4-5hrs). Meet in good time for a prompt 10am start. Open to all members.
Other Events			
Sat/Sun 25/26th April 2009	All day	BikeWest Regional Event. The South-West region (Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Avon & Somerset and Devon & Cornwall) will organise a second regional event, again at the Haynes Motor Museum. An event to get motorcyclists out for the day, to call in to discuss post-training and to avail themselves of a "BikeSafe" assessed ride.	
Sat. 9th May 2009	All day	Heart of England Bike Show. 10am - 5pm at the Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, Warwickshire See www.warwickshire.gov.uk/bikeshow for more information	

Mad as a March Hare

by Phil Baker
(15th March 2009)

What a glorious morning, sun shining and hardly a cloud in the sky. Definitely a day for motorcycling.

A 9:00 am start at Mythe Water Works to destinations unknown. A very good turn out of riders and machines plus Roy Ploughman kindly came along to show his immaculate condition, late 1970's Honda 400-4. Such a small compact machine in comparison to today's offerings.

The journey was to take us in a north westerly direction towards Shropshire. The ride took us on a mixture of roads ranging from open dual carriageways near Worcester down to very small single track muddy lanes. Most of these were very enjoyable. Whilst travelling to our destination we passed the Kremlin Inn at Clee Hill, a mere 1,400 feet above sea level. The views were amazing looking back towards the Malverns.

The ride became fragmented at one stage after Clee Hill but regrouped at Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre where we enjoyed refreshments. Whilst there we met up with

one of our members on his way back home after a week's camping in Wales (small world).

The food was good and the break was welcome. One of the members was causing confusion with the public because of the writing on his over-jacket. It was mirrored due to a printing error but a good recovery was made by telling the lady it could be read in the rear view mirror after they had gone by.

The return journey was made up from a good variety of roads. Lovely little villages tucked away from the main humdrum of the cities and large towns. Eventually winding our way to Ledbury and then to the break up point at Staunton Garden Centre.

The weather had stayed very sunny all day. The majority of roads had been good but there were some parts of the public highway which were absolutely rubbish. All those taxes for what? 🙄

Cold Phone?

by Janty Jones
(from the ambulance service)

We all carry our mobile phones with names and numbers stored in its memory. If we were to be involved in an accident or were taken ill, the people attending us would have our mobile phone but wouldn't know who to call. Yes, there are hundreds of numbers stored but which one is the contact person in case of an emergency? Hence this 'ICE' (In Case of Emergency) Campaign.

The concept of 'ICE' is catching on quickly. It is a method of contact during emergency situations. As mobile phones are carried by the majority of the population, all you need to do is store the number of a contact person or persons who should be contacted during emergency under the name 'ICE' (In Case Of Emergency). The idea was thought up by a paramedic who found that when he went to

the scenes of accidents there were always mobile phones with patients but they didn't know which number to call.



He therefore thought that it would be a good idea if there was a nationally recognised name for this purpose. In an emergency situation, emergency service personnel and hospital staff would be able to quickly contact the right person by simply dialling the number you have stored as 'ICE'.

Please forward this. It won't take too many 'forwards' before everybody will know about this. It really could save your life, or put a loved one's mind at rest.

For more than one contact name simply enter ICE1, ICE2 and ICE3 etc. Please pass this around as many people as possible as this can help in an emergency. 🙄

SatNav/GPS.... What's in a name?

by Charles Lyne

Many car drivers (and most likely a few motorcyclists too) will probably have a "Sat-Nav" (Satellite Navigation system) as they're colloquially known. Typically these are either small self-contained units that plug into your 12V power socket and mount on a flexible arm stuck to the windscreen with a large sucker, or may be built-in to the car's electronics system and form a part of the in-car information system.

Either way, the basics will be much the same:

- a multi-channel GPS (Global Positioning System) radio receiver;
- a moving map display that can plot the vehicle's position in real time;
- and (usually) software that can plot a route (or a selection of different routes) from the current position to a destination and guide the driver to the destination using on-screen instructions and (option-



ally) a spoken description of where and when to turn as well.

And what a wonderful thing it can be: guiding you infallibly to an address in a strange town that's completely new to you is far better than even the best road atlas and a competent navigator could ever do, as no road atlas has ever been published that shows virtually every address in the country (let alone the rest of Europe, or even the rest of the World).

Unsurprisingly, many of us have come to rely on these 'magic' devices, but let's hope that younger drivers don't lose the ability to read maps because, as with any highly technological device, things can go wrong, and it may not be immediately obvious that you are being wrongly directed, or that the system isn't working as expected.

Human errors

A recent example of a SatNav 'problem' was the driver who unquestioningly followed his SatNav's directions through Todmorden in W. Yorkshire along a farm track, until he hit a fence at which point he stopped; on the very edge of a 100 ft cliff!



There are also numerous examples of drivers of larger vehicles using conventional SatNavs designed for cars, and following them down lanes that are patently too narrow for the vehicle, eventually getting to a point where they can't go forward and finding it all but impossible to reverse out as well.

A recent article in The Telegraph (website at www.telegraph.co.uk) has some interesting statistics:

- The survey showed that 56% of those polled had yelled at their satnav and 79% had had "regular conversations" with their SatNav system.
- While 20% of women have ended up in a field rather than at their intended destination, the figure for men was 30%.
- Overall, 56% had gone wrong with SatNav, with north west England road users the least likely to be led astray.

In many cases, it will be just simple human error in programming the SatNav wrongly, or blindly turning left in 50 yards - onto a railway line - yes, it has been done!

But the technology itself is not infallible either, even when it is used absolutely correctly. For instance, the maps used in the SatNav may not include the most recently built roads, or may include roads that are unsuitable for your vehicle, or for any vehicle.

They may also not be programmed with recent changes to a one-way system - driving the wrong up a one-way street isn't condoned by the law just because the SatNav said it was okay! Clearly, a little common sense is called for as well as an understanding of the limitations of the system.

Many SatNav systems will offer a choice of different route options: fastest, shortest, cheapest, etc. Sometimes, it can save time and problems if the proposed SatNav route is examined in detail before setting off. The shortest route may well be carefully calculated by the software as the shortest possible route between the two points, but do you know what roads or tracks may be involved? The SatNav will generally allow the user to examine a proposed route and choose a different option if it looks dubious.

Even when used with the utmost common sense, there are still possibilities for errors due to the very nature of the GPS system itself, and a basic appreciation of the technology can help.

Unhuman errors

A SatNav receives multiple sophisticated radio signals from the orbiting network of GPS satellites, put into space by the United States Department of Defense, originally for the guidance of military vehicles, both manned and unmanned, e.g. cruise missiles.

The GPS network comprises 24 active satellites, though to ensure that at least 24 are active at all times, there are actually 31 presently in orbit so that satellites can be taken off-line for reprogramming or other reasons.

The heart of each satellite is an incredibly accurate atomic clock. These clocks are so accurate that Einstein's Theory of Relativity needs to be taken into account, because the movement of these satellites relative to the surface of the earth affects the speed of these atomic clocks by some 38 μ s per day (that's 38 millionths of a second).

While that might not sound like a particularly large error, your SatNav may well be capable of timing the arrival of the timing signals from these satellites to an accuracy 1,000 times better than this, i.e. a few tens of nano-seconds (a nano-second is one thousandth of a millionth of a second).

It is this amazing ability to time the arrival of the different signals from several different satellites that allows your SatNav to work out where it is. Basically, the SatNav requires good signals from at least three different satellites to get a fix on its position. Essentially it's using simple triangulation to do this.

As the satellites know exactly where they are at any given moment in time, and put out signals describing their positions and the exact time they send out each signal, the SatNav can measure the relative time taken for each signal to reach it from space, and knowing that each signal is travelling at the speed of light, can work out how far away each satellite is and hence where it is.

In practice, it's not quite as simple as that and a fourth satellite signal is required to act as a clock reference signal, which allows the SatNav to get a far more accurate fix.

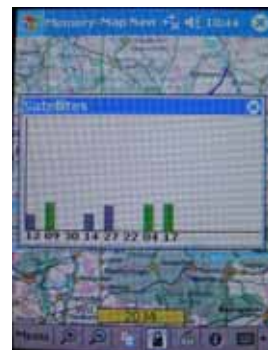
Until the 2nd of May 2000, the Department of Defense degraded the publicly available GPS signals to limit positional accuracy to about 100 m, ostensibly to prevent potential enemies from launching GPS guided weapons against U.S. targets. Fortunately, this 'selective availability' system has now been turned off, and a typical commercial SatNav system can, under good signal conditions, measure its position to within 20 metres.

Taking into account the speed of light (299,792,458 metres/second), that implies measurements to the nearest 67 nanoseconds. But how do you know what 'good signal conditions' are?

In practice, your SatNav will tell you when it is 'locked' to the satellites, but few, if any, commercial systems will tell you how accurate their current position estimate actually is.

The orbits of the 24 (+5) GPS satellites are carefully planned so that at any given time, almost every point on earth should have a 'line of sight' to at least six satellites. Your SatNav may even have a rather smart display showing where the satellites are relative to your position, and possibly some idea of signal strength/quality (examples over).





But such a display is likely to be an alternative to the moving map and realistically, the signal qualities can change rapidly, second by second, as the vehicle is moving. This is especially true in a built-up area. In a town or city with high-rise buildings on both sides of the road, the SatNav's view of the sky, and hence of the GPS satellites is very restricted. Even if it can 'see' four satellites, the visible satellites are very unlikely to be those that are closest to overhead, which would be the ones that would offer the best accuracy.

Under such conditions, the only visible satellites may be low down near the horizon. The signals from these have to travel through much more atmosphere and ionosphere, which gives rise to errors, in much the same way as the sun appears to shimmer (and changes colour) at sunrise and sunset.

So, the accuracy could easily change from about ± 20 m to ± 50 m, which in a busy and confusing town centre, could easily cause you to miss the correct turn unless you're watching the SatNav almost as much as the road ahead - not recommended! In such circumstances, having a passenger to watch the SatNav and relay accurate guidance using street names and other clues to the correct route, is a significant aid to everyone's safety and sanity.

It doesn't necessarily help that the SatNav's software (if it's designed for vehicular use) will generally assume that you are driving

along a road. It will therefore try to always place your position on the nearest road it has in its database, even if that road is wrong, or its position for you is wrong. So, for instance, if you (heaven forbid) turned the wrong way up a dual-carriageway, the SatNav would (almost certainly) assume that there was a slight positional error and show you as driving on the correct side.

In addition to positional accuracy, there are other data offered by the SatNav that might be questionable under difficult reception conditions. For example, many SatNavs offer a good estimate of your speed.

The software in your SatNav will calculate your speed by timing how far it has moved between position updates. With good signals from many satellites, this can be quite accurate, especially if averaged over several points. When the signals are not so good though, the system is effectively using several big fuzzy blobs to estimate your speed, so it could easily be out by quite a large margin. It will also take time to catch up with a change in speed while accelerating, even with good signals. A speed camera can measure your instantaneous speed to at least 1/10 th of 1 mph - the law won't accept an excuse that your SatNav said you were doing 29.8 mph when the camera has recorded 36.7 mph!

So be wary of putting too much trust in your SatNav, it's an aid, nothing more. 🌟

Keep warm & smart

Great quality Glos-RoADAR clothing

The group now has a range of very good quality 'T' shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts and fleeces for sale to members. All have a smart (but discreet) contrasting RoADAR logo with our URL (internet address) underneath.

The logo on the black garments is in gold, or black on the light grey garments.

The prices are:

Grey T-Shirts	£10.00
Grey Polos	£12.00
Black Sweatshirts	£15.00
Black Fleeces	£17.50

They are available in small, medium, large, XL and XXL.



If you're interested, please contact Phil Baker, our clothing coordinator (motorcycle section) see page 26 (back page). 🌟

The 'T' shirt (with optional large logo):



The sweatshirt:





The polo shirt



The fleece



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All makes and models of motorcycles serviced
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Photocard Licence Issue

by Charles Lyne

In July last year, it was ten years since the very first batch of some 13,136 photocard driving licences were issued, and had hence expired as they are only valid for ten years¹.

The DVLA do try to contact everyone to remind them via the address held on their records (which should be correct at all times) but in practice, not everyone tells them when they change their address.

Some drivers have therefore not renewed their licences and are in breach of the law and subject to a substantial fine.



The expiry date is the centre (4b) of three parts of line 4 on the front of the licence (as shown above). There has been some adverse publicity about this being a stealth tax (especially the £1,000 fine if caught driving without a valid licence) and that the small print is difficult to read.

In reality, the DVLA have been very open about this and there has been plenty of publicity, including a regular publication “DVL today”, in which issue 33 highlights the problem. The photocard licence does contain all the relevant information, including the fact that date 4b is the expiry date of the licence.

So, if you have a photocard licence, do check that it's still valid please. 🌟

1. This is to ensure that the photo embedded in the card can be kept up-to-date.

Car Tutor Training Day



by Janty Jones

This day was held at the Gloucester Club near to what some of us will remember as the cattle market in Gloucester.

The training was led by Andy Curtis, Group Training Officer. It was attended by seven tutors, three of whom are new recruits and are taking out their first associates, four of the tutors were old hands and came to update their knowledge and skills. Seventy five years of shared tutoring skills between us were put to good use.

The initial training was a classroom session given by Andy, using impressive PowerPoint delivery; complete with gaffer tape for “elf and safety” reasons so that the likes of me did not trip over the wires. This dealt with the tutors’ approach to fault recognition, fault analysis and then how to deal with it (Andy had more professional terms and I should have been taking notes and paying more attention but was too nervous about the next session – the practical).

The practical sessions were led by three drivers, Andy Curtis, Andrew Robbins and me (Janty Jones). We split into groups; the advanced/senior tutors driving to a prescribed “stooge” drive. The first drive was to be that of a novice, i.e. as many mistakes as you could put into the drive whilst staying safe and legal. This proved to be alarmingly easy! It cemented a bond within each car; the tutors were instructed to tutor and observe as they would normally. It was a challenge for us all but everyone returned safely and in high spirits for lunch provided by the Club and an informal chat (no such thing as a free lunch!).

The afternoon session was yet another practical, where all of the drivers had miraculously improved to a level of competency to be determined by the reshuffled tutors. The afternoon concluded with an informal debate with everyone sharing their experiences; not



only of the days training but of tutoring problems and experiences. Andy managed to nail the last detail by talking about finesse. The polish needed to get that grade whilst emphasising the fact that tutoring is not always about test results, it is about getting folks to a safer level of driving and achieving their full potential.

A huge thank you to Andy Curtis for all his hard work in structuring the day. A thank you to Andrew Robbins and me, for being such good sports by giving up a sunny Sunday.

And thanks to all the dedicated Tutors who attended. 🌟

What's wrong with this?

Lyrics from Chris Spedding's " Motor Bikin' "

An investigation by Charles Lyne.

Motorbikin', Motorbikin', Motorbikin', motorcycling,
 Movin' on the Queen's highway
 Lookin' like a streak of lightnin'
 If you gotta go, go, gotta go motorbike ridin',
 Listen to me and I'll tell you no lie,
 Too fast to live, too young to die,
 I bought a new machine today and say
 It take your breath away!
 Motorbikin', Motorbikin', Motorbikin', motorcycling
 Movin' on the Queen's highway
 Lookin' like a streak of lightnin'
 Baby won't you come with me?
 I'll take you where you wanna be
 Here I am again, I'm dressed in black,
 I got my baby, she's a ridin' up back,
 We doin' 'bout ninety-five,
 Whooh, it's so good to be alive!

Motorbikin', Motorbikin', Motorbikin', motorcycling,
 Movin' on the Queen's highway,
 Lookin' like a streak of lightnin',
 If you gotta go, go, gotta go motorbike ridin',
 Motorbikin', Motorbikin', Motorbikin', motorcycling,
 Movin' on the Queen's highway,

Lookin' like a streak of lightnin',
 If you gotta go, go, gotta go motorbike ridin'

Is this rider paying more attention to his appearance than his safety?

**Could this indicate a 'death wish'?
 Should his tutor have noticed/
 corrected this aspect of his riding?**

**Worrying!
 Not even 'run in' yet, let alone
 familiar with the new machine!**

**Riding with a pillion should demand
 even greater caution than normal
 with increased stopping distances!**

**This might just be condoned while
 overtaking a slower moving vehicle,
 but**

**But none of these are the real
 problem**

**No, the real problem is that he's
 singing while riding - he can't
 possibly be paying full attention to
 the road!**

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(Click on underlined names to send e-mail)

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The committee members work on behalf of the whole group. They are always pleased to receive your comments and ideas on any subject. Please give your views (complimentary or otherwise) to any committee member and they will be relayed to, and discussed by, the relevant people.

The newsletter editor is always pleased to consider any articles for publication, which may be of interest to the group. Most document formats can be handled, and email is usually the easiest and quickest way of sending text (and photos). If using a document editing program such as Microsoft Word, please do not embed digital photos, but send them separately, preferably as an exact copy of the camera original without any reduction in resolution (as sometimes offered by email programs). Closing dates for items for publication are the end of the month prior to publication, i.e. end of February, May, August & November.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor, the committee, the RoADAR Gloucestershire Group, or RoSPA. Neither the editor, the group or RoSPA accept any legal responsibility for any of the contents published.

Group website: www.glos-roadar.org.uk