



The **BEDFORD** Group of RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders Members Newsletter

Visit the **BEDFORD Group** online at www.road-a-bedford.org.uk *Jan 2012*

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January Meeting

Start the New Year with a bit of fun and friendly (we hope) competition.

Once again quiz master, Andrew McGroverry has been busy compiling another quiz. General knowledge with, I am sure, a few road safety / driving questions lurking will be the order of the day. Teams can be decided on the night, but if you want to get one together prior to the event please feel free to do so.

Please join us at 8pm on Tuesday 17th January 2012 at the **Barkers Lane Fire Station MK41 9SB**

Parking: We cannot park at the fire station itself. There is however plenty of parking space available at the **Bedford International Athletics Stadium, Barkers Lane, Bedford MK41 9SB** opposite the fire station. Please take care crossing the road. Parking is also available at the Aspects Leisure Park behind the Fire Station.

Welcome to the first 2012 newsletter – I wish you all A Happy and Safe New Year.

November meeting: We said a fond and sad farewell to Eric Simpson, who retires as our Regional Senior Examiner starting with an introduction by our Chairman Bill Brady who has known Eric for some years.

Eric thought he was with us to say good-bye after some interesting times helping the group. He explained the RoSPA set-up, which is a very large safety organization of which RoADAR is but a tiny part with Driver Fleet Solutions. He gave an example of conflicting information fed to drivers where we are being

told ‘to drive environmentally friendly’, but humps and pinch points are installed to make us do exactly the opposite by having to stop and start.

Eric highlighted the ‘C1 and D1 license grandfather rights’ where mini bus drivers that did not qualify now have to take a test after costly training. This is slowly eroding the number of volunteer drivers.

He is concerned about the Hazard Awareness test that has to be taken by new drivers and ADIs as there is just a five second window in which to click after spotting the hazard. The problem is that experienced drivers fail (in

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passing the test) as the hazard is spotted before the 'click window' opens so the test candidate clicks too early for the software and it is not accepted. Successful hazard awareness is a combination of both concentration and reading the road ahead so you can react to a hazard often before it becomes a significant one.

Eric explained his eventful debate with the DSA following his candidate's mini bus test in Leighton Buzzard. He referred to the recent proposal of increase in speed to 80mph and advised that when still in service over twenty years ago he gave a presentation to his Chief Constable to raise the limit to 90mph. There followed some discussion on this point.

Tony Gabb, Eric's replacement as Regional Senior Examiner, was introduced by Eric, and Tony gave a little of his own history. His home was Derby and he worked as a diesel fitter with British Rail. He joined the Met in 1987 and went through the usual beat work, traffic and eventually at Hendon Driving School, which he enjoyed as an Instructional Motorcyclist. Whilst there he became involved with RoSPA testing on motor cycles and progressed to cars. Tony was pleased when Eric asked him if he would be interested in becoming Regional Senior Examiner and we know the result. Tony now works on Royal Protection.

Tony agreed with Eric's comments about the DSA Hazard Perception as he and others have failed because the hazards are spotted well in advance of the open window. Tony emphasised the importance of concentration and discussed how associates feel when taking the advance test. Nervousness causes mistakes so concentrate and do commentary and try to relax. Tony acknowledges the efforts and will of associates going through the test.

We finished the evening with Bill Brady presenting Eric Simpson with a gift in acknowledgement of all the support he has given the Group since its inauguration.



Bill presents Eric with a thank you gift of a clock for his help, support and commitment to the group.

Eric clearly appreciated the gesture. Later Eric said "As you saw, for once I was speechless - and that is unusual!!".



Eric checking that 'the clock is roadworthy' before using it!



Editor: Keith Hooson

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