

Chairman's Report by Linda Davies

Welcome everyone for our 45th AGM - thank you for coming.

Hopefully the Pandemic is completely behind us now and we are back doing what we do best training Associates to pass their Advanced tests. As well as holding Social Evenings every 3rd Tuesday of the month 8pm here at Grove Green we have also started to organise some outings too! At the moment although things are on the slow side with your help we will get there - so please do your best to support the Group activities!

Despite COVID we were able to hold some highly entertaining events such as:-

An indoor Street Party to celebrate our late Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee which was a great fun! A royal quiz was won by Mike Ingram's team, best outfit prize went to Avice Harms and best hat prize was won by Carole Nunn. Four stories from those who had met the Queen or members of the royal family were told including one from Lester Parsons. My thanks go to Christine who excelled herself on the night with a fabulous buffet, to Andy & Elaine who did an amazing job running the Raffle and to Terry Nunn for organising the whole event.

John Mills held a 'talk back' session where several controversial topics were discussed without bloodshed

IAM Examiner Lester Parsons has kept us entertained with a really useful Paramedic Driver Training Video and a session on roundabouts.

We've also welcomed 2 beautiful amazing Guide Dogs and their owners

Our December Quiz evening was well attended including teams from RoSPA, EKAM and the KAMG. Thanks to Quiz masters Paul & Janet Fletcher for doing a great job, Andy & Elaine for organising the Raffle and Christine for another excellent Ploughman's supper. What a fun way to round off 2022 thoroughly enjoyed by all that attended.

The Kent, Sussex & Surrey Air Ambulance came along to give us an update on their amazing work and subsequently a visit to their base in Redhill was arranged. Sadly both helicopters were out at the time but great fun was had in the full size mock up of the latest aircraft which is considerably bigger than the earlier versions. The patients no longer have their feet sticking out the tail section but are now placed centrally with the crew having access all around.

Guy in the sky - Guy Bartlett gave us an amazing insight into Stealth Aircraft and State of The Art Warfare

Another IAM Examiner, Graham Galvin shared archive footage of some serious speeding cases and the fines imposed back then.

In March the Group went to the Rochester Masonic Lodge for a scrumptious Sunday Carvery Lunch. It would have been great to have had some more attendees but the 32 that did come had a good time with excellent food whilst enjoying other members company - Lester Parsons was our guest speaker. For those that wished to take part a tour of the Masonic Lodge was conducted.

Hot off the Press 2 dates for your diaries our founder member Roger Phillips, who now lives in the USA, will be coming to Kent for a visit later in the year and has kindly agreed to be our speaker on October 19th. So, if you'd like to learn how our Group began and what his life is like now in Oregon, please come along.

Also a famous former Queen's bodyguard, Richard Griffin LVO, will be our speaker on February 20th 2024

Throughout the year our hardworking Outside Events Team have attended :-

- The Community Showcase at Ditton,
- Classic car events at Deal and Canterbury,
- Three Classic/Motor events at the Aylesford priory,
- Cars on the Green at Bearsted,
- Classic cars at Thurnham,
- Cats Protection League at Bredhurst, and the Kingston summer fete

The Team, who continue to operate in all weather conditions, generated 49 contacts from which there have been 11 completed applications to date. Great stuff guys keep up the good work and thank you! If anyone is interested in helping the team at any Event, please contact either Phil Mason or Alan Rowe - who will be pleased to hear from you!

Our current membership stands at 466 being 421 full members and 45 associates - slightly better than last year's 437. Associate numbers are gradually on the increase but more are needed for our team of fully trained Observers. So, if you know of anyone that would like to undertake the Advanced Driving Course - please put them in touch with Associate Coordinator Terry Nunn

Our membership secretary and course leader Sue does an amazing job and our congratulations on her recent marriage to Derek - she is no longer Sue Sharp but Sue Hayes . Well done Sue and thank you!

The Group has 38 Observers, of whom 23 are National Observers, 9 are Local Observers and 6 trainees with others waiting to start. The Local Observers and trainees are being trained straight away up to National Observer standard. All have been registered with the I. M. I.

7 National Observers are also training officers

We have 10 Master members, 9 of whom have passed with distinction and 2 more are being mentored...

A pretty impressive list of credentials I'm sure you will agree. This means that we can offer our associates a first-class experience so well done everyone and thank you!

Our hard working Lecture Team comprises of Leader Mike Ingram, Daren Bubb, Peter Burbidge and Julian Brockies who between them do an excellent job covering all the Lectures both here and at The Barn as well as any outside talks - Thank you guys!

As you know the Group makes no charge for any refreshments, instead just a few coins in the Air Ambulance collection box are always welcome. I am very pleased to tell you that this last year we raised a magnificent £113.84 for their very worthwhile cause. Well done everyone thank you for your generosity!

Associate pass rates - our figures are usually good and better than the National average but this year ...we have the highest pass rate I have ever had the privilege to report to you a staggering 97.3%. Of the 37 tests that were taken, only one person was not recommended, 36 passed 17 of whom achieved a F1rst What an amazing achievement and special thanks go to Associate Coordinator Terry Nunn, our Outside Events Team, our dedicated Observers and our Lecture Team who all play their part in making it happen!

So many people work tirelessly for the Group and my personal thanks go to :-

Terry Nunn our Associate Coordinator,
Graham Aylard-Poxon our Website & Social Media Co-ordinator,
Sue Hayes our hardworking Membership secretary and Course Leader,
Mike Ingram our Lecture Team Leader,
Avice Harms our Minutes secretary and social evening tea girl
Neil Lakeland our GDPR Manager,

Phil Mason & Alan Rowe our outside events team
and to Neil Oliver who once again kindly reviewed this year's accounts.

Many thanks as always to Christine who provides our refreshments
including this evening's delicious buffet & homemade celebration cake.

Down at The Barn Cynthia Merritt does an excellent job as Course Leader
and husband Colin our Catering Manager always has a welcoming smile
and a cuppa waiting.

Your Committee continues to beaver away and a special thanks to them
all especially to the Group Officers: My right hand man Vice-Chairman
Peter Bott who is also our Chief Observer, Val our Group Secretary and
Daren our Treasurer all of whom have done an amazing job over the last
year. My thanks to everyone for their continued support. It is a pleasure
working with you all.