



Image courtesy of David Gillan

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EVENTS in August

Hartside Hill
19th August. 09.00 at The Steading. A 275 mile run led by David Betts.

Please refer to the EDAM Facebook page for the latest news about events:
<https://goo.gl/zyVD3q>

Previous PDF issues of TG are available here: <https://goo.gl/y2FcoR>

COVER UP

During the odd spells of nice weather I have witnessed several bikers riding in less-than-appropriate clothing around Edinburgh and further afield. The best (worst) example was a chap riding through Leith on a cruiser wearing t-shirt, shorts and open sandals - I kid you not!

I expect we have all taken the odd short trip wearing jeans and trainers and got away with it; most times we will. But the sight of someone riding past The Green Welly on a sports bike, in the pouring rain without gloves sent shivers down my spine. Quite apart from the obvious and painful consequences in the event of a crash, how long would it be before he lost the feeling in his digits due to wind-chill?

clothing for a moderate cost and there really is no excuse for not dressing for the conditions and/or carrying additional garments to use in case of a down-pour or temperature drop.

As usual, articles, photos or suggestions can be sent to be at the address below:

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You can buy effective motorcycling

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR: Vulnerable Road Users & Some Statistics by Sandy Dickson



I have a collection of sisters and when I was a callow youth, one of them disappeared off to college in Aberdeen and I inherited a rather large dobbie to look after and exercise. Apparently, it was assumed by all and sundry that I would not mind at emptying out stables and feeding and exercising said dobbie, no matter the time of year or the weather.

There are some similarities between horse riding and motorbiking when you are on the road. In both instances, you are the vulnerable road user and are subjected to the idiocy of many other road users. One of the big differences with the horse is that the brakes don't really work and the gears are entirely dependent upon the cooperation of Mr Ed (look it up). So needless to say, when I come across a horse and rider on the road I understand that they are not fully in control of the situation and I need to take extra care with my popping and banging motorbike. I do not need to make a difficult situation into something worse. So sometimes, I just stop, shut off the bike and let the horse & rider pass as, that way, they seem less stressed about the situation.

Two tonnes of horse is never going to mix well with a motorbike (or car for that matter) if he/she decides to demonstrate the charge of the light brigade. Interestingly the 'horse lobby' never get much of a mention as road users.

Whereas our Lycra®-clad chums in their

pelotons are a much more effective lobby and put us motorcyclists to shame with their 'bang per....well no buck at all', as far as I can see. My issue with cyclists is not really about their alleged planet saving credentials but rather that as a group, they lobby for the wrong things. They have even got Mr Polis (who is allegedly short of resources) to make up a special carpet to show all these nasty car drivers how to drive past them.

In my view, the real issue with this shiny road marked carpet is what it is missing – namely, pot holes, over banding, bus ridges, splits etc, all of which will cause the cyclist to move around the road or risk falling off. This, in turn means that all other road users need to be aware that cyclists will not necessarily travel in a straight line – so give them a bit of space. I see that cyclists tend not to look where they are going, particularly when in a peloton, so they do not notice defective road surface until very late. Other road users would be well advised to give them plenty of room and the 'safety' lobby would be well-advised to explain this to the general motoring populace.

It would be good to see the immensely successful cycling lobby getting some traction by way of improvements to our road surfaces (from which we would all benefit) and for them to seek to be confined to the pavements in towns & cities, suitably adapted of course, to make it safer for them and safer for other traffic.

Pedal cyclists seem to lack any self-preservation instinct, which is an integral part of operating within traffic.

I noted the car driver in Galashiels at the weekend that made a sterling attempt to knock me off at the Tesco roundabout for having the audacity to ride at 30mph in the 30mph limit – so thanks for that.

Ultimately, road users are just ordinary members of the public and I do not expect to be attacked by anyone in Tesco/the street/in the park, so why are there so many nutters per mile on the roads? No particular group is right or wrong or has more rights than any other, so why not rub along as we do in other walks of life.

I came across the IAM Roadsmart Faceache site recently (had not even realised it existed) and was interested to see more banging on about road deaths/safety and the '12 point manifesto'.

What you do not see on the site is any mention of an item reported by the BBC – 'Car's on England's Roads increase by almost 600,000 in a year' (Scotland was about 125,000).

Perhaps the road accident statistics come into sharper focus when you consider this number. I would be a little more than surprised to learn that this is new drivers; it is far more likely to be a mixture of new drivers/immigrants (from all over) and others. In other words, there are likely to be a raft of new cars on the road driven by less than experienced drivers and those less familiar with the customs and practises of UK road conditions. So a small increase in accident statistics, is actually pretty good news overall.

The other obvious point is that IAM Roadsmart with approx. 90,000 members, seems to be missing a bit of a trick?

So, when you are out and about, look out for other road users and give them a break. Nor should you rely on them to keep you safe or even to understand how to behave in a rational manner – the chances of them being an advanced driver/rider are slim and rarer than hen's teeth and not nearly as big as dobbie's teeth.

RIDE REPORT: Marshaling the Moon Walk by Ian Astley



Every year the Moon Walk, a sponsored walk for charity over the marathon distance, comes to Edinburgh. For the last two decades or so, the project has raised money for cancer research, specifically breast cancer. I first became aware of it some years ago when a good friend of mine starting "power walking" in preparation for the London Walk. Power walking is seriously quick walking, pretty much as fast as you can go without breaking into a run (or becoming an Olympic walker -- it's not quite that crazy!). Although this is the original, preferred way to do it, many walkers do not prepare with anything like the assiduity that my friend displayed, in fact many do not prepare at all, which means that most walkers are pounding the roads well into the following morning and suffering quite badly! Remarkably, the dropout rate is low, testament to the dedication that all

these walkers show.

Around 2,800 walkers had registered for the Edinburgh Moon Walk (so-called because they walk at night, under the light of the moon). The whole thing is quite a logistical undertaking, which is where volunteers from groups such as EDAM come into the picture. Marshals of various kinds are needed: on foot at junctions; bicycle marshals to accompany some of the walkers, especially the serious athletes who complete the course more quickly than many a leisure runner in full marathons (or even do the course twice!) in cars, ferrying pedestrian marshals or medical volunteers; and motorcycle marshals who can patrol long stretches comfortably.

There was a briefing session on the Thursday evening prior to the event, where we learnt some of the historical

background to the Walk, including the millions that have been raised in the twenty years or so of its existence. We were relieved to discover that the security services did not consider it to be under threat from terrorist activity, but an officer from Police Scotland gave us a thorough and welcome briefing on procedures nevertheless.

The task of motorcycle marshals is quite important, as our mobility enables us to patrol lonely stretches of the Walk (such as along the sea front from Granton to Portobello) and to be a first point of contact for anyone in need.

We were asked to register from 8pm onwards, so under the direction of Glynn Jones, who co-ordinated the EDAM effort throughout, four of us duly rocked up and, well, registered. Even I managed it, having gone and forgotten my authorizing letter, to everyone's amusement. Still, Elliot Beattie's blagging skills meant that I only needed to smile a bit and I was in. After that it was a case of hanging around until 11pm or so, catching up with other biking groups, watching the Walk belles get photographed astride a Harley (why must it always be a Harley?) admiring the moon rise, and generally avoiding getting too cooled off by the stiff spring breeze until proceedings started in earnest.

Once the walkers were started out first port of call was the Royal Mile, where we were able to witness the traffic chaos caused to Saturday night revellers. By this time we were all kitted out with fluoro yellow T-shirts that had "Here to help" printed on the back, and a lovely





frilly facsimile bra on the front. No-one dared go near us.

The first walkers to come through, striding up St Mary Street, were the serious athletes and they commanded some respect, the pace they were going. As the numbers of walkers started to increase, Glynn moved us all off towards our first station at the shore west of Granton. We managed to lose Sandy Dickson, who went straight on at the first lights, possibly because he didn't want to mix it with the lovely young man at the wheel of a crowded compact, who had been trying to outrace me in the traffic jam.

The first stretch of shore is completely unlit and whilst Elliot and Sandy patrolled other parts of the route, Glynn and I parked up along the shore, I in the middle and he at the end. The walkers were in good spirits and, we trust, glad of a little encouragement from us and the other marshals. By this time the moon was quite high and shedding welcome light of its own on the seafront path.

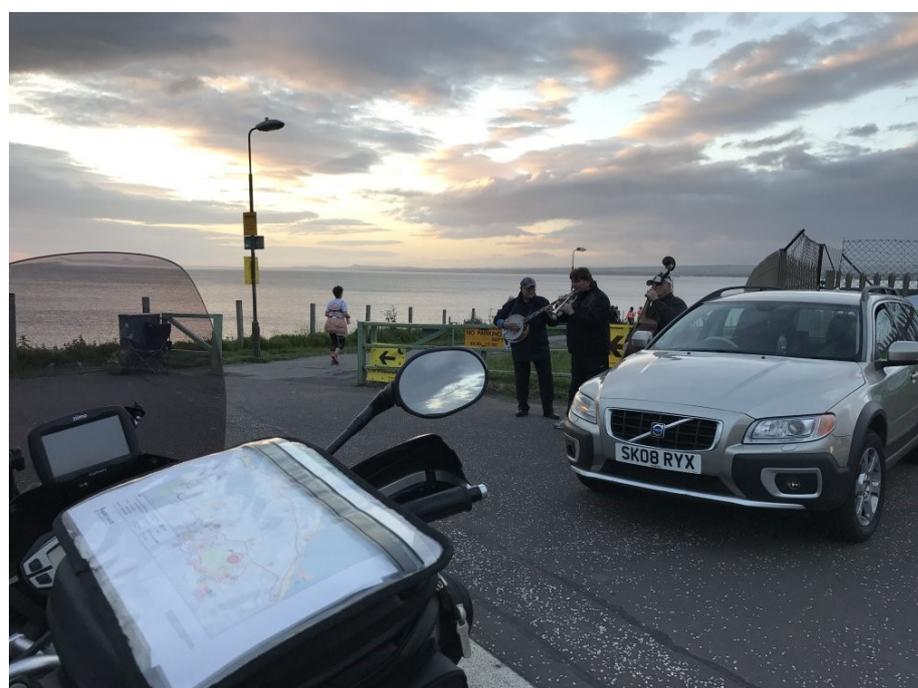
My next task was to ride over Willowbrae way, to help out at the junction where the route joined the A1, as there was only one marshal there because others had had to call off. It was also

near-ish to home for me, so it would be my last task for the night. On the way, I patrolled part of the route that passes through what the briefing notes called "less scenic". It became clear to me how well the event had been thought through: there were marshals at important junctions, and Marshall's cars passing by as well as me. Walkers were never really left on their own at any point, very important when you consider the dis-orientation that many of them would have felt as a result of their exertions.

I arrived before the first of the walkers came through and had a chance to talk at length with the other volunteer at that station: it seems that everyone you meet at this event has a story of a life affected by cancer.

At that point of the walk, the participants had about nineteen miles behind them and were on the whole suitably knackered. But they still had about seven miles to go, so one of the pieces of advice that we had received at the briefing, came into play: Never try to encourage the walkers by saying that they are "nearly there" ... If you're nearly on your last legs and still have further to go than most people can manage in in one stretch, it is not encouraging at all. So generic encouragement is the order of the day, as well as ensuring that people do not cross in front of buses or other vehicles, or take the wrong turning. It all sounds rather simple, even patronizing, but from the blank expressions on some very tired faces, often very necessary.

I finished my shift shortly before seven after about eleven hours on the go, returning home to a welcome bit of sleep. Thanks to Glynn for co-ordinating the EDAM contribution, kudos to the organizers, and thanks also to Shaban for kind words as he passed by at the end of a night shift of his own.



NEW FACES

EDAM welcomes the following members:

Justin Richardson, Edinburgh

IAM TEST PASSES

Congratulations to the following associates:

Ade Black on passing his test with assessor Ian Wightman.

John Gordon, Mohammed Shaban & Gareth Michell on passing their tests with assessor Alistair Maclean.

Michael Molden on gaining a distinction in his MASTERS test with ASDM Mick Kinghorn.

Jim McLaughlan on gaining a distinction in his MASTERS test with ASDM Scott Tulip.

Bruce Renfrew on gaining a F1rst with assessor Alistair Maclean

OBSERVER NEWS

Congratulations go to Mark Ellis, Jim Campbell, Sarah Fleming & Gavin Davis for qualifying as a Local Observer.

FUTURE EVENTS

Please check the EDAM Facebook page nearer the time for more details and in case of changes: <https://goo.gl/zyVD3q>

Laidlaw Trophy:

Sunday 24th September. Saltire Suzuki, Edinburgh.

Daytime Run:

Sunday 1st October. Glen Lyon. Details to come later, start from Steading, time undecided yet.

RIDING TIP By Sandy Dickson

OAPs

As many of you will know and OAP taught me that OAP meant Observation, Anticipation & Position.

I use this as a bit of a mantra with my associates and on my way back from The Green Welly IAM Roadsmart event, two of us got an excellent demonstration of why this important and that it works.

We came off the Forth Road Bridge under the average speed regime and were moving towards the uphill section.

With a bit of observation and anticipation, I stayed in the middle lane to filter off to Barnton without coming into conflict with traffic joining from South Queensferry.

I could see in the distance a guy standing on the embankment on his phone with his Mercedes stationary in the live flow, hazard lights on. It wasn't too difficult to join the dots and figure that the car had broken down and was blocking the live lane... unless you were the lady driver determined to keep my colleague out of her lane and not paying any attention to what was directly in front of her.

I saw in my mirror the queue of 5 cars sitting behind the breakdown as they all came to a sudden halt – how sudden or not, I cannot say. It just goes to show that you cannot rely upon the driver in front of you 'saving' you or reacting competently – so OAP everyone and perhaps you will get to live to become one...

LIDLAW TROPHY

The Laidlaw Trophy competition was held in August 2016 but the final results in the Full Member competition were delayed until the on-road riding assessments could be completed by Ian Wightman. These have now been done and the results are as follows:

1st—David Henderson
2nd—Stuart Richardson
3rd—Trevor Keay

The 2017 competition will be held at Saltire Suzuki on Sunday 24th September. All EDAM members are able to take part.

RIDING TIPS by Elliot Beattie

Motorways/Dual Carriageways

When joining a dual carriageway or motorway, it is important to check for vehicles in lane 2 who may be planning to resume lane 1. If your attention focus is elsewhere, late signalling by such vehicles may be missed. Consider a relative road position on merging to avoid being in their blind spot.

<https://youtu.be/-FvEogjZUIg>

Overpass bridge observation at Dreg-horn. Vehicles crossing bridge on your approach will meet you at the bottom of the on-slip road

<https://youtu.be/63GMNX-9rQI>

Observation & Planning

Roundabouts - try and identify your gap and keep rolling. At Lothianburn with the trees removed, we can identify our gap at the end of exit slip road, a long time before reaching roundabout

https://youtu.be/SzMl_z5FY8

FACEBOOK

EDAM operates a Facebook page:

<https://goo.gl/zyVD3q> which provides information about current and future events, items of interest and debate about various motorcycling-related topics.

Even if you are not a regular Facebook user it can be useful to visit the EDAM pages every so often in order to get the latest updates. By its very nature, Facebook will always be more up-to-date than Twistgrip or the EDAM website.



RIDE REPORT: Holy Island by Glynn Jones



We set off at about 9.30 am and took a route out on the A1 to the A720, hopped along one junction and then took the A68 followed by the A697 and B6461 to Horncliffe where the Union Chain Bridge spans the Tweed, which also marks the border between Scotland and the Other Place.

The bridge is well worth a look, if you are into that kind of thing. The ride to it is a nice combination of smooth tarmac, long straights and some tricky bends for practising limit points. The roads were really quiet and we made good progress, but could only find 5 cars to

overtake between the start of the A68 and Horncliffe.

After stopping for a few photos we set off for Seahouses for lunch. Just after the Union Bridge is a honey farm which looks like it would be a good place to visit on another trip.

Seahouses was chosen for lunch because we already knew the Holy Island causeway wouldn't be passable until 12.30. The fact that Seahouses has at least 4 chippies had absolutely nothing to do with it!

I have never been to Holy Island (Lindisfarne) and so with the weather set fair on a Tuesday in July I decided to take my favourite ballast (Lulu, 10) on a wee trip over the border. Lulu has the twin advantages of being good company and light enough not to affect the performance of the bike.

On a recent trip down to York in the car I had spotted signs for the [Union Chain Bridge](#) near Berwick-on-Tweed. Curiosity got the better of me and I looked it up on t'internet. I discovered it was, at the time it was built in 1820, the longest iron suspension bridge in the world. Worth a look then...



Seahouses was very busy with tourists, but we barged our way through and parked in the centre of town. Strolling around, eating chips, we discovered a rather strange 'grandstand' area which wouldn't look out of place on the IOM TT course (see photo above).

After an ice cream for pudding (we were on our holidays) we set off north, passing the magnificent Bamburgh Castle for the second time.

We hit the causeway at just the right time and managed not to get wet. Holy Island itself was predictably full of tourists and the car park already half full. I suspect there are better times to visit—possible when the tide is about to come



in so that most people have already left. We had a quick look around and a coffee/lemonade before setting off for home.

The ride home was via the A1 as Lulu's bum was getting numb. As this was the longest trip she has done on the back of the bike she didn't do so bad.

Anyone wanting to do follow our route can see it here: <https://goo.gl/sVy8D1>

EDAM at the Green Welly

by Glynn Jones



On 29th & 30th July EDAM members joined the IAM Roadsmart Mobile Display Unit at The Green Welly Stop in Tyndrum. On the 29th I travelled up with Elliot Beattie, Sandy Dickson, Scott Barron and Barry Lawford. True to the weather forecast, the day was plagued by rain and Noah was seen heading south complete with several pairs of animals.

On the Saturday, we managed to do two GoFAR assessed rides and spoke to a number of potential associates.

Despite the better weather on the Sunday, the effect of the poor forecast was to reduce even further the number of bikes venturing up to Tyndrum. On the Sunday shift were Sandy (again), Dave & Ann McCutcheon, Craig Harrower and Stuart Rugg.

Many thanks go to Fiona Robertson for her fabulous hospitality.



Photos

Top: One of the brighter moments!

Middle: Novel top box on a Lambretta that had travelled from Northern Ireland

Bottom: Multi-modal transport, Dutch style



ANOTHER DAY WITH RODDY BENZIES: by Glynn Jones & Elliot Beattie



This is the second article referring to G2G in the last couple of months. This is not an advert, other training providers are available, but it is a different perspective on what is, without doubt, an excellent way to learn or reinforce new skills. This training was paid for at full price and without any suggestion that this article would be written.

After hearing Roddy Benzies' talk at the EDAM AGM, Elliot Beattie and I signed up for a day-long session to hone our skills with Get2Grips Advanced Motorcycle Training. I had considered doing the day as a one-two-one session with Roddy but, as Elliot was also interested, we decided to do it together. This had the advantage of giving each of us a rest whilst the other rode at the front.

The format for the day was that each of us would take it in turn to ride at the front, closely pursued by Roddy. I mean CLOSE! It was only when following as third man that I could appreciate just how close Roddy rides to the bike in front whilst still being in total control. This proximity allows Roddy to see exactly what the lead rider sees in real time.

We were all connected via Bluetooth 2-way communication systems. This allowed Roddy to give instructions and directions and also allowed the trainees to give feedback. As the day progressed, Roddy was also giving full commentary on the view ahead (as well as riding within inches of the leading bike). I sus-

pect he still had enough skill in reserve to crochet a blanket and make a cup of tea at the same time! I think it's fair to say that Roddy rides a bike like a Centaur rides a horse – man and machine in perfect harmony.



For this day's training we had agreed to focus on cornering and overtaking. You would think that a pair of observers with a combined riding experience approaching 80 years (mostly Elliot, obviously) would be able to corner and overtake with ease but, the fact is, without assessment, how can we know how good (or bad) we are?

I don't want to give away all of Roddy's secrets, but the cornering work focussed mainly on limit points. Some (hopefully, most) of us know what these

are but we only get to read about the theory. It is a great advantage to have someone right behind you seeing what you see and able to correct mistakes and encourage. In my case, I was reading the bends fairly well but entering a little too fast. "In slow, out quick" was the mantra that I kept hearing in my ears and it paid dividends as the day progressed. In fact, the whole cornering section of the session started at low speed, with us describing limit point movement to Roddy via the radios and checking that he agreed with our interpretation. As we improved so the speeds increased until we were, more or less, flowing from one bends to the next like pros.

We worked on observation links, too. These covered a broad range of situa-

tions: SLOW paint on the road potentially warning of junctions on or after bends; hazard lines; habitation in the middle distance suggesting a side road in the near future. In fact, there were so many examples within Roddy's fast-flowing commentary that I can't remember them all. We also played the 'what was the last warning sign you saw' game, testing our observation and memory in equal measure.

Natural overtaking opportunities occurred during the ride and this gave the



chance to polish those skills too. The main points were the planning of overtakes in terms of a safe return gap (between vehicles >three seconds apart) view, hazards (vehicles overtaking us, side roads, road and weather conditions...). Getting 3 bikes past a line of cars/trucks takes some planning and in many cases only the lead rider and Roddy got through. This provided a good opportunity for the third man to observe the exactly how the passing manoeuvre played out and also a challenge to catch the others.

The day was punctuated by lunch and a couple of fuel stops but it all went very quickly because we were extremely busy! The final debrief gave us all a chance to give feedback and discuss various finer points. Elliot and I were very happy with the day and agreed that the session was very worthwhile. You are never too old to learn!

By way of punishment, what was otherwise a day of reasonable weather descended into a downpour on the way back down the M90. I am happy to report that my new Halvarssons water-proofs are indeed just that.

Elliot’s Comments

I was quite impressed by Roddy’s Scala Bluetooth comms – to the point I have invested in some Bluetooth kit.

Roddy offers you a commentary video of the day – this is well worth purchas-

ing, allowing you to review any issues & Roddy’s critique of your ride.

Despite videoing hours of footage of others riding, with a camera mounted bike you only ever see where your bike is going and not a view of you riding. So it was useful to see myself as the rider in Roddy’s footage (from close up!).

Whilst EDAM are offering full EDAM members a free assessed ride, and this could be a useful refresher to full EDAM members, this does not compare to the maintained input/output with Roddy over a full day.

Roddy will set the level for the day according to his initial assessment of your ride. You should receive an Enhanced Rider Certificate (ERS) afterwards, to present to your insurers. I suspect my insurers will not adjust their premium.

I would recommend doing this with a chum – gives you time to slack about at the back.

Visorcat Invitation

by Glynn Jones

I met the Visorcat boss, Jill Boulton, at The Green Welly when the IAM MDU was in residence. Visorcat is a unique, Scottish visor-cleaning device that attaches to your glove and is always available to quickly clear flies & road grime using a wet sponge and squee-

gee.

Before launch, the product was tested by EDAM members and it later received the ‘IAM Likes’ accolade for road safety initiatives.

EDAM member, Jill (currently searching for her next bike) welcomes visitors to the Visorcat factory and is looking forward to giving a presentation and demonstration of the product being made to fellow EDAM members. She reminded me that there are some great roads between Edinburgh and Dunbar. ‘It’s easy to find the roads’, she says – ‘just avoid the A1!’ There are also fuel, pubs and cafes nearby.

While individuals are welcome to pop in anytime, Jill would like to arrange a demonstration and talk for a group of visitors – as long as they turn up on their bikes. So there’s a challenge – who’s up for it?



MEMBER DISCOUNT:

Helite AirVest by Glynn Jones

At the recent IAM RoadSmart Observer event at Silverstone AirWest were showing their range of Helite ‘airbag’ vests. I decided to buy one and I will report back on it in due course. In the meantime, all IAM members benefit from a £50 discount off any model in their range.

More information about their product range is here: www.airvest.co.uk.

