

RIDERS

... magazine of the KAMG



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KENT ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS GROUP



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Cover - Just a nice picture from NZ



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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

March

- Sun 3rd Ride to Birling Gap
- Sun 9th Annual Observer Conference
- Sun 9th Associate workshop
- Sat 16th IDCAM
- Sat 23rd Peterborough Training Weekend
- Thurs 28th AGM and Group Night

April

- Mon 1st Ride to Loomies Café
- Sat 13th KAMG members' open day at A2 Motorcycles
- Sun 14th Pillion workshop
- Thurs 18th Fish and chip run
- Sat 20th IDCAM
- Thurs 25th Group night

- Sun 28th Terry Friday Memorial Ride to Headcorn Aerodrome

May

- Sat 11th IDCAM
- Sun 12th Peterborough Training Weekend
- Thurs 16th Fish and chip run
- Sun 19th Machine Control Day
- Sun 26th Grass Track Racing, Frittenden, TN17 2ED
- Thurs 30th Group night.

This list is correct at time of going to press. Check all KAMG dates on Tracker to ensure that there are no changes. Details of contacts for IDCAM, Machine Control Days and Ride-outs are on pages 30 and 31.



Nick Farley, Editor

The views and opinions expressed in this magazine are solely the views and opinions of the people who write the articles, and those views and opinions should never be taken as, nor be presumed to be, the official view of, nor views supported by, either IAM RoadSmart or the KAMG.

Every article that appears in this magazine has been written expressly for this magazine and has not appeared in any other print or electronic medium before, and none of the material in this magazine may be reprinted elsewhere without the express permission of the KAMG.

Everything is done to ensure the correctness and accuracy of the editorial content of the magazine, but neither the editor nor the KAMG accepts liability for information errors, omissions or typesetting errors.

Riders is the place for every single member, or associate member, of KAMG to say what he/she thinks about anything and everything connected with riding and driving and the KAMG. Every article submitted will be published (provided it is legal) and no opinions or views will be changed or cut out. The magazine is apolitical, but criticism or praise of politicians of any political colour is welcome if the criticism, or praise, is about the politician's actions or views on road safety, roads or some other aspect of transport.

Please submit articles for publication, or letters to the editor, to the email address of the editor (see page 30). Please send pictures for publication as separate file attachments to an email if possible, rather than embedding them in the email content, and ensure that the pictures are of the highest resolution possible. Please do not send information or pictures via Facebook.

MAGAZINE DESIGN AND LAYOUT
BY JOHN GARDINER

EDITORIAL

An Important Warning

There are various reasons why you sometimes need to renew your driving licence: it can be because of a new qualification, or for age – when you reach 70 you are required to renew your licence every three years – or perhaps for a change of address, and Ian Burchell wrote to remind us that this seemingly straightforward renewal process can go badly wrong. Ian says that he will be renewing his licence shortly and will be taking photos of the front and back of his licence and will be printing his information and categories from the DVSA website before he sends his licence off for renewal. He says, “I met a rider at a training centre recently who was undergoing all his riding qualifications again even though he was 50 years of age and had passed his test 20 years ago! This was because he sent his licence off for a change and when it was returned, the DVSA had missed off his motorcycle entitlement. No amount of arguing helped, as he did not keep his test pass certificate – who does after 20 years?” Ian goes on to say, “that rider was forced to start again, at some considerable expense and time, with a CBT and then the MOD1 and MOD2 tests and the training needed to pass them.” Ian says that he knew that these errors were a problem some years ago, but he thought it had been sorted out. “After all,” he says, “computers never make mistakes – just ask the Post Office!” And he adds, cryptically, “You have been advised/warned!”

Several years ago, there were various reports of this kind of mistake in circulation, but like Ian, I thought the problem had been sorted out. Obviously not.

The two second rule

I know that the ‘two second rule’ has become the ‘three-second rule’, although I don’t know if there’s enough room on our roads to apply it, but in France last year I noticed that the French are still sticking pretty rigidly to their famed and suicidal ‘two nano-second rule’. Ever since I can remember it has been a feature of driving a car in France that when you look in your mirror you can actually count the individual bristles in the five o’clock shadow of the chap following you. Until last year, having ridden in France for the last 15 years, but not having driven there in that time, I had quite forgotten what it was like to drive there enjoying the very close attention of the *monsieur ou madame* following me. Family duties demanded four seats on holiday last year, and apart from the close attention of France’s following drivers, I thought what a monumental waste it was to be in France in a car. France, as I’ve said so often, was designed and built for motorbikes.

Very Important KAMG stuff

As you will see from Dave Murphy’s *View from the Chair* on page 5, there is a proposal to change the status of KAMG from a charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This change obviously needs to be approved (or rejected) by the membership and that vote will happen at the AGM on March 28th either by your being present at the AGM or by appointing a proxy. The documents explaining what is proposed are available on the Members section of the website, and it is clearly sensible to read them before voting. Please take the time to read them and vote.

Note too that the accounts for the calendar year 2023 are on the website in the members section.

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Sadly, yet another honorary and founder member of KAMG has recently passed away. Mike Knowles was one of the drivers behind the formation of the group, and I am sure that you will join with me in offering our condolences to his family at this difficult time.

Now that the freezing weather is behind us, and with the exception of a few that remain in hibernation, a nice clutch of associates have continued with their training. It has been noted, however, that a good number of associates have not been out with their observers as often as they should. Our associate co-ordinator, Joe Mair, will be contacting those associates to assess their progress and to see if there is anything we can help with to increase their activity.

The training team are kicking off the start of the 2024 season with their observer conference on the 9th March, when we will be welcoming six new trainee observers to the IMI/IAM Roadsmart programme for this year. It is a tough training schedule and these volunteers will be putting in a lot of work, but with the help of the existing observer team we hope to have them qualified and in action before the end of the year. (See page 25 for 2023 training results.)

The AGM is in a month’s time, on the 28th March. I will be standing for election as chairman for a further year. If successful, this will mark the start of my last year as chairman as my three year tenure will end in 2025. So thoughts on succession planning are on our mind. We are always on the lookout for members who feel that they would like to put back into the kitty and offer their time and talents to the committee. If you feel that you might like to get on board to help steer KAMG in future years, please approach any committee member, we would love to get you on board. The AGM is a good time to join the committee and

start giving back to the group. Should you wish to consider joining the committee this year, then please email group-secretary@kamg.org.uk so that we can get your name entered on to the nomination form at least seven days before AGM.

For 44 years, KAMG has operated as a simple group of members with a few volunteers and trustees driving it. However, for 2025, a major change in the way that KAMG operates will be presented for approval at the AGM. It was 18 months ago that we started a process of evaluating the group and exploring ways forward to move with the times. At present, because of the way the group is formed, we have no official identity. This leads to many difficulties with banking, paying for services, card payments and so on. Therefore, we need to change our formation to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and we need the approval of the existing members to make this happen. The AGM is the time and place to formalise this, so we are calling on you to attend the AGM, where the results of our investigations will be presented as a package and will need approval from YOU. It is a very important change that is being proposed for the future of KAMG, and it is very important that you are involved, so please consider attending AGM and casting your vote.

There are two documents explaining the formation of KAMG CIO on our website in the ‘Downloads’ Area of the site. Please log on to the site to gain access to these documents. <https://kamg.org.uk/kamg-downloads/>
Document 1: Modernising KAMG.
Document 2: Proposed new KAMG constitution 2024.

Dave Murphy

TEST PASSES Since the last edition



Thomas Kempster receiving his Advanced Rider qualification from his observer Craig Ayres



Louise Thompson receiving her Advanced Rider qualification from her observer Roger Lancaster



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You Ride like A Rupert. You are a Bounder, Sir.



Martin Brown is not able to complete Part III of his 'Honder' Deer Hunter story yet, so he's riding like a Rupert instead.

Ride like a Rupert! "What the devil," I hear you cry. Ah yes, what indeed? Well, every summer for the last few years a gang of 'Ruperts' have donned their best tweeds and party frocks, shouted, "Tally Ho," and then roared off for a motorcycle ride around West Sussex, East Sussex and Kent in order to raise money for a UK charity. Welcome to the 'Ride of the Ruperts' (RotR).

Think 'Distinguished Gentleman's Ride' (see *Riders* November 2016 on KAMG website), but without any machine restrictions and with a UK charity benefiting. RotR founder Steve Morrell started the ride in 2017 and since then a staggering £101,000 has

been raised for charity. RotR is now the umbrella name for not one but two prestigious events that should be in your diary for 2024 – The Ride of the Ruperts and The Hop Ride. Inclusivity is the name of the game, so all are welcome and there are no machine restrictions as there are with the Gentlemen's Ride. And such has been the success of their efforts that Steve and his fellow organisers were invited to a special reception at the Houses of Parliament to mark the success of the rides.

The supported charity for the last couple of years has been Whizz Kidz. Whizz Kidz is the UK's leading charity for providing





powered wheelchairs for young users. The chairs are all custom built to the requirements of each individual child, and the team works super hard to make sure that all the children have the equipment and life skills they need to help them live as independently as possible. 100% of the money raised goes to the charity, so if you are keen to support a cause and want to be sure that all of the donated money goes where it should, look no further.

From its humble beginnings the rides now attract around 200 riders each year on a wide variety of machines. Once you complete the simple registration process

you are in. On arrival at the start, you will see everything from vintage and classic machines such as BSAs, Triumphs and the like, to the most modern offerings from all the big boys like Harley Davidson, BMW and Ducati, who are always well represented. The dress code is as you like, but with the emphasis on dressing up. You will see a lot of tweed and false moustaches as well as outfits ranging from army dress uniforms and kilts to party frocks and everything and anything in between.

This year's RotR takes place in late September (date to be advised). However, if you can't wait that long then on the Sunday 9th June Steve has created The RotR's

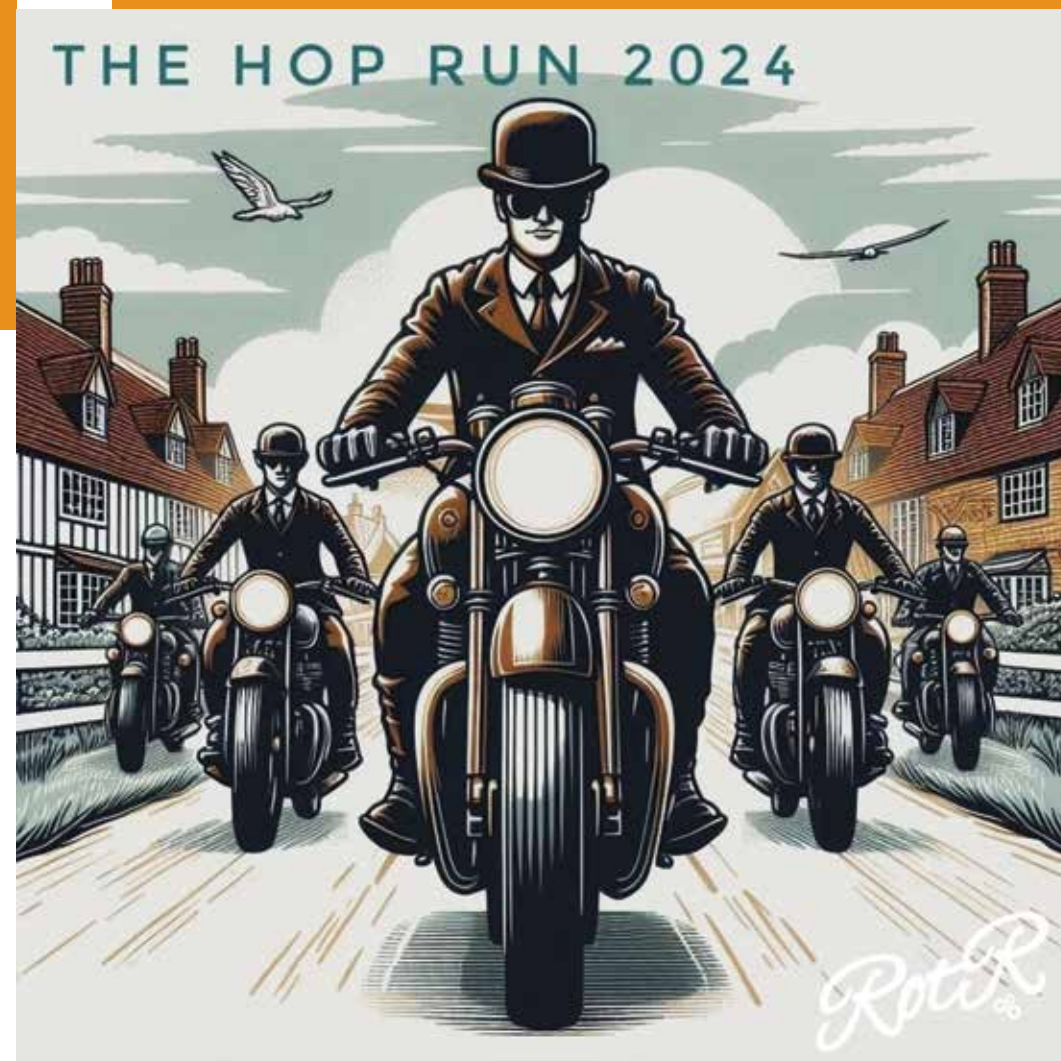
sister event called 'The Hop Run'. This will start at Motogirl in Tonbridge and finish at the 'B Road Hunting Club' – The Stag in Challock – via a tea stop at Headcorn Aerodrome. I understand that the format will be pretty much the same as RotR, with hot food and live music at the finish. Last year the event went down incredibly well with riders from all over taking part, many for the first time.

RotR itself starts from The Milk Churn, Rudgwick, West Sussex, and the 65mile ride then wends its way through the pretty villages and country lanes of Sussex and Kent. There is a stop-off for a comfort break and a chat halfway, before the final trip to the finish point, which will be The White Hart at Netherfield, again with food and live music to finish the day in a spiffing manner. I say. What?

So, if you enjoy riding bikes through the countryside, meeting nice people, and being part of a very worthy cause, then come along. Be quick though, once registration opens places go quickly. Visit the website for more information and some great pictures and videos of previous events.*

We look forward to meeting you. Carry on.

* This year's Ride of the Ruperts will be on Sunday, September 22nd. And the registration for the Hop Run will open soon, so keep an eye on the Ride of the Ruperts website for information about both.



MIKE KNOWLES



The original Bantam in 1958

Having said goodbye to Terry Friday only last August, sadly we now have to record the death of another KAMG hero, Mike Knowles. Mike Knowles was Terry Friday's wingman as they established the KAMG and got it proper IAM recognition. It's probably true to say that without Mike Knowles at his side Terry Friday would not have been able to achieve what he did. If ever you see an early KAMG picture of Terry and club members you will certainly see the ever-present Mike in those pictures. Always there, but never prominent. We owe him a huge debt.

Unlike so many of us, who left motorcycling in our twenties as families and careers took priority, Mike never had a break from riding: he rode motorbikes non-stop for 65 years, since 1958 in fact. He bought his first bike, a BSA Bantam, as a means of transport to and from home while he was doing his national service. He had never ridden a bike before the day that he picked up that Bantam from Halletts in Canterbury, but undaunted, and with an 'experienced' mate on the pillion shouting instructions, he reached home in one piece. You could do that sort of hare-brained thing in the 1950s. That ride, he said, "was a revelation," and it opened the door to a life of non-stop motorcycling. So enthusiastic was he that later that same day he rode the 30 miles from his home to Maidstone to see his girlfriend Margaret (Meg), who later became his wife of over 60 years.

Mike's role in KAMG history is crucial, and his partnership with Terry Friday began like this: in the late 1970s Mike was the Road Safety Officer of Kent County Council, and, in that role he was responsible

for co-ordinating 14 RAC/ACU training schemes in the county, and he thought that it would be a good idea if all the RAC/ACU instructors obtained some proof of their prowess and took the IAM advanced test. So he contacted someone called Terry Friday, who was the IAM's car and motorcycle examiner in the south east at that time, and arranged for him to test all the instructors on one day. That day turned out to be both a very bad day and a very good day: the bad part was that none of the instructors performed well and none of them was in any sense 'advanced'. Right at the end of that very dismal day, a despairing Terry was not expecting much when he finally tested Mike, and yet that test changed everything. Mike could really ride! Terry said to me only a couple of years ago just how important Mike's test was on that fateful day, "In that moment," he said, when telling me about Mike's test, "my day changed, no my life changed." And that is how Mike and Terry came together and why Mike was so important to the formation of the KAMG and to its acceptance by the IAM. Kevin Chapman, an early member and later a KAMG Chief Observer, said Mike gave the founder members the confidence to start the KAMG, "... having him on board from the start, gave them a serious qualification (KCC Road Safety Officer) to use." Implicitly, if the KCC Road Safety Officer was on board, this was a serious organisation.

Mike had 60 bikes in his lifetime and he had just bought his sixtieth, a brand new AJS, only days before he died. Sadly, he never had a chance to enjoy it; he only rode it once, on the day he bought it, and it now sits unriden in his garage. Brenda Vickery, another founding KAMG member and a great friend of Mike's, supplied me with Mike's own list of 56 of those bikes. This list takes his inventory up to 2018, but since then he acquired four more bikes, finishing with the AJS, which, unusually for Mike, he bought new. The list shows the date he acquired every one of his bikes and after each entry there is a cryptic comment, such as – 1980, Moto Guzzi V50, "crap finish"; 1978, Honda 400F, "super bike, best to date". In 1970, we learn that he obtained a brand new BSA Bantam, which he bought by part-exchanging his ex-police LE Velo; however, three months later he bought the Velo back and "Bantam crap!" appears in the comment column. In 1983 a 250cc Honda Benly is listed, "Bought new for Meg."

Perhaps an LE Velo and a Bantam don't sound very exciting, but there are some very big bikes in the list too, including two Ariel Square Fours and a mighty 1937 1100cc V Twin Royal Enfield with hand gearchange, which he restored himself. I would have loved



... in contrast to the Bantam this is a 1937 1100cc Royal Enfield V twin. It's not Mike's but you get the idea ... You don't ride and restore things like this without being ... capable.

to have seen that. But what is so striking about the list is the sheer range of bikes he had owned. There are small two strokes, big singles, several trail bikes, one of which had to be sold in 1998 because he says, "prostate op made kick-starting hard". Virtually every modern maker's name is in the list: there are BMWs, Greeves, several Royal Enfields of different vintages, there's two MZs, a Jawa, umpteen Hondas, a Kawasaki, a Yamaha, a Douglas Dragonfly "sold to get married", and more; there's even a pre-war 350 Sunbeam bought for £10 in 1962 with the revealing comment "All I could afford with two small kids. Paid in instalments." And there were, of course, a few sidecar outfits, including the ubiquitous sidecar lugger of the 1950s and 60s – a BSA M21 that he hitched to a giant Busmar Astral family sidecar in 1961. But his favourite bike was a 1982 BMW R100 bought in 1986 and kept for 25 years. His note about it says, "Perfect. Only sold because the weight of 218kg was aggro for arthritic wrists." Indeed, weight became a key factor in later years and in 2015 he bought a 125 Honda and commented, "After a stroke I needed the lightest bike possible, so back to a tiddler. Very reluctant, but at least it's still motorcycling." However, he

went on to have two more 250cc bikes after that including another Honda Benly with "odd steering," and a 1997 250 Suzuki TU250X, before he finished with the brand new, once-ridden AJS 125.

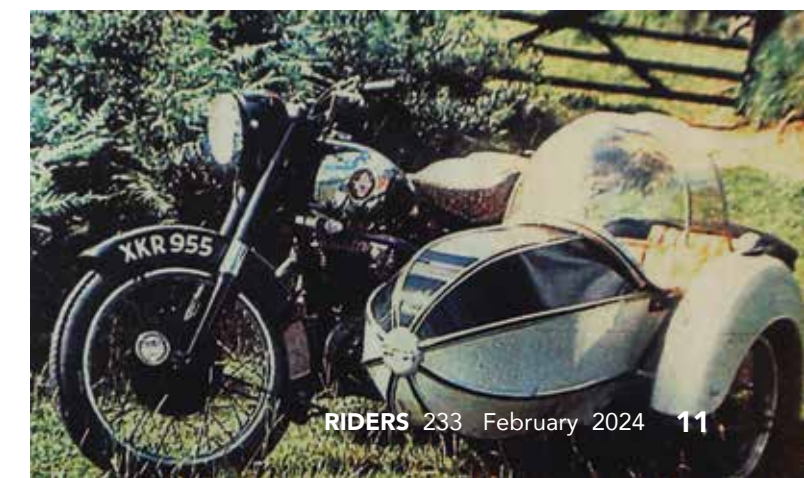
That's quite a list! But Mike was quite a rider. "He could ride like the wind, which completely caught me out for such a gentle man," says Kevin Chapman. In fact, that quiet, gentle manner is frequently cited when people describe Mike and it was certainly my impression of him in the relatively short time that I knew him too, but as Kevin says, "Mike was a gentle man until you tried to follow him on a bike."

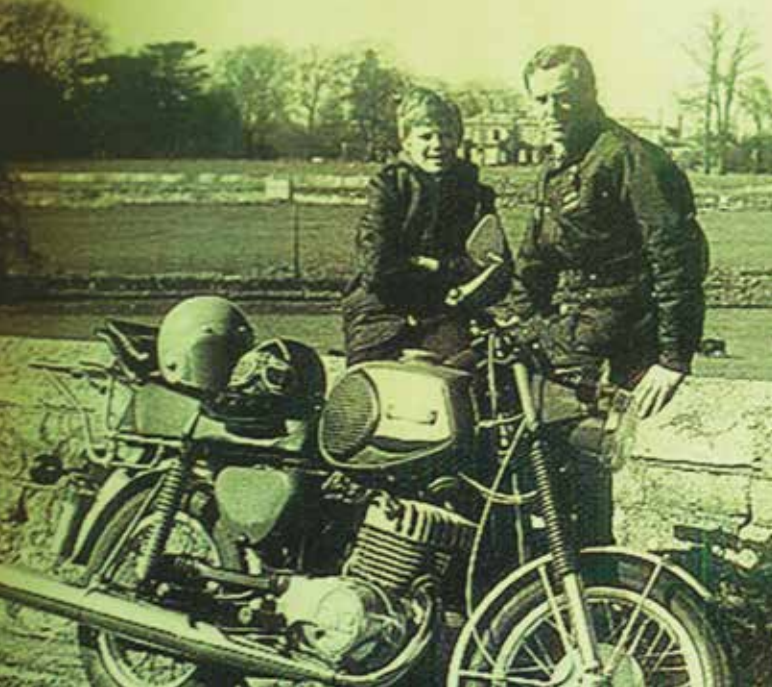
I only knew Mike in the last ten years when he, Terry and I met a few times and I was privileged to listen to the pair of them discussing the early days of KAMG and their adventures, official and 'unofficial', in pursuit of KAMG business and entertainment. It was obvious listening to them that Terry was the door kicker and Mike was the quiet man behind the scenes. Their talents were complementary and interdependent, and their admiration for each other was very obvious. Kevin Chapman confirms that "Mike was a very quiet man, which is surprising when you consider his job," he says,

Mike and Meg in the Cotswolds on his "perfect" R100



Mikes BSA M21 here hitched to his Garrard GP sidecar





On Teston bridge with his son Peter and one of his MZs.

"he always had time for you though." That's my impression too. Mike was as Kevin says "... a very wise, introverted, private man," who came alive "when put in front of a group of people. Especially motorcyclists." However, he wasn't one of those to be seen on KAMG tours or preaching to other groups, rather he was the one who gave others the confidence to go out and do that. When Kevin was in his early days as Chief Observer Mike was

invaluable with advice on managing the observer team and in training the observers to stand and deliver a short speech in front of an audience. It was a great help even though nerve-racking for everyone. There had been no training in the KAMG like that before.

Mike's KAMG activities were not all training focussed. KAMG has always been as much a social motorcycle club as it's been an advanced riding and safety orientated group, and Brenda Vickery tells of one of Mike's contributions to that social activity was to organise treasure hunts – *in rhyme*, no less – which she would then try out to make sure that everyone could follow them.

Mike was one of those people that I always referred to when I wanted some information about KAMG's past and it never occurred to me that one day he simply wouldn't be there, and yet one day he wasn't there. People like Mike don't turn up very often. He is a great loss to us all even though I realise that the majority of today's members will be unaware of just how much KAMG owes him.

(One of Mike's favourite YouTube videos is this https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZ15mbuE_pw I urge you to watch it.)

NF

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

We still have the most, the biggest, the deepest, the oldest and the best



I see that some young upstart has published a list of the top ten (i.e. the worst) towns for non-repairing of potholes and we are not in it!! The worst (or best, depending on your point of view) is Glasgow and the next worst (or best) is Edinburgh. So, yet another little Sturgeon legacy. Heigh Ho!

To we sturdy Men of Kent and/or Kentish Men this news comes as a bit of a blow, because, as you well know, here in Kent our potholes are definitely and indisputably the worst/best/biggest in the country. We actually have more potholes than we have ordinary smooth, metalled road. Our road inspectors are now putting white paint round the good bits of road rather than round the potholes because it's less work and saves on white paint. The default state for a Kent road is a deep gaping hole. You might have thought that at least one Kentish town – Medway perhaps – would have been in this new list; but no, we don't figure anywhere. We don't even make it in tenth place. How can this be? The rest of this so-called top ten list is made up of farty, out-of-the-way, tumbleweed places such as Hereford, Wrexham and Stoke-on-Trent. No doubt very nice towns, in their way, but what do they know about real potholes? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. They are mere amateurs in a fiercely professional world.

Kent County Council long ago said to itself, look, if we are going to have potholes let us at least have the best bloody potholes in the country. And they did. Let us be top dog at something, they said. And they are. No matter what this new survey says, Kent is the undisputed pothole capital of the country, with East Sussex challenging hard in the silver medal position. However, somehow, someone has managed to organise a national pothole competition – a competition where you'd think the form book would tell all the wise money to get on Kent to be a runaway winner – and yet we haven't even made it through to the knockout stage. What has gone wrong?

Kent County Council is rather proud of how awful its roads are. It knows its roads are crap and it even boastfully claims they will get worse: the KCC itself says that Kent's roads are in "managed decline," which means presumably that the council wants them to deteriorate, and is even planning to make them deteriorate. "Managed decline" are the actual words used by the KCC, so I expect that it

will be a bit pissed that a couple of Scottish towns have been acclaimed as being worse than anywhere in Kent. "Managed decline", sounds good, doesn't it? Actually, it's just a posh political way of saying we are deliberately allowing them to get worse and, implicitly, we don't give a sh--. It's as if deliberately making them worse was actually a constructive and positive thing to do. Imagine a councillor who was seeking re-election, knocking on your door and saying: "... and by the way, we're deliberately letting the roads disappear round here, it's part of our exciting re-wilding programme."

The KCC is even very proud of the fact that it refuses virtually every claim made by the motorists and pedestrians that suffer injury or financial loss as a result of the potholed landscape of Kent's road network. It was only a few years ago that the KCC's Deputy Cabinet member for Highways, Councillor Michael Payne, tried to make political capital out of the KCC's miserable treatment of claimants by saying in a radio interview as he defended the council's non-payment of claims: "It just goes to prove that we (the KCC) have a stringent and disciplined inspection regime."

However, I don't want the Scots, the Welsh and various other lightweight pothole-provincials to rob us of our justly earned crappiest roads crown, and so I investigated how this 'Top Ten' list was constructed, and you'll be pleased to know that it doesn't stand up to scrutiny. It's a fiddle. What 'they' have done is to divide the number of reported, but unrepaired, potholes into the population of a town in order to finish up with a figure of potholes per 1000 people. But these figures ignore the potholes outside of the towns. How daft is that?

What's more, one of the two key variables in this daft calculation is the size of the population. This means that areas with large dense populations are bound to have a relatively low number of holes per 1000 people simply because there are lots of people among whom to share the available holes. That's why the south east doesn't figure. The south east is the most densely populated area of the country and, therefore, despite our prodigious number of potholes we will have a relatively low pothole-per-1000-head of population because we have a large population. In Hereford, with a population of three men and a dog (I'm guessing), you haven't got many people to allocate potholes to, so obviously you get a high pothole per 1000 figure. However, if instead we measured the sheer number of potholes, or perhaps the aggregate depth of all the millions of Kentish potholes, or the acreage of our potholes, or the cost of pothole damage to vehicles, Kent would, on any of those bases, be at the top of any ten you care to nominate. So I think our crown is safe. Glasgow does mount a strong and freakish challenge on the rather quaint pothole-per-1000 basis, but if you include the countryside surrounding Glasgow, I don't think they'd stand a chance, much as I admire their cheek.



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PETERBOROUGH ENCORE AND YET AGAIN, ONCE MORE

Katrina Lowe follows the well-worn KAMG groove to Olde Peterborough!



I am very grateful that despite stepping down from the role of ASDM (Area Service Delivery Manager for the IAM), the invitation to join KAMG for one of its training weekends in Peterborough, remained open, as I was genuinely eager to take part in the weekend's activities. While I recognise that many KAMG members may have already attended one of these weekends before – the one I attended was the 16th time this event had been run – I felt it would be valuable to provide an outsider's perspective, and I hope this overview will offer an insight into what it entails, and assist anyone who is wondering whether this experience is suitable for them.

To ensure a smooth start that didn't involve my getting up too early, I opted to spend Friday evening at the West Thurrock Premier Inn in preparation for the 8am start at Thurrock services on Saturday morning. On my arrival at 7.45am, several bikes were already present, with more members joining shortly thereafter.

Tina and Colin Underwood first distributed information packs to all participants. These comprehensive packs contained document declarations, a spreadsheet detailing the make-up of the groups and the itineraries for the weekend, as well as individual schedules outlining our activities. Additional information about the cafés at each stopping point was also provided. While this was going on, POWDERS checks and eyesight tests were conducted, and observers introduced themselves to the members of their respective starting groups. Following these initial preparations, we all gathered for a comprehensive briefing led by Steve Riches and Colin Underwood. The briefing encompassed an overview of the weekend's agenda, essential safety instructions, and other pertinent information.

Then the individual groups of three departed just before 9am, leaving at three-minute intervals, starting with the more progressive groups, including those with Master riders. Each group consisted of two trainees and one observer. Many groups included full members seeking additional training from their observers, and there were also groups of

associates, some of whom would be tested for their Green Badge Advanced Rider award during the weekend. I joined a Masters group as the fourth bike. Each ride covered approximately 30-35 miles and lasted around one hour. Our group also included the Chief Observer for EKAM (East Kent Advanced Motorcyclists), who had been invited to observe the weekend's proceedings with the intention of implementing a similar format for EKAM in the future.

Our first stop was at a cafe, where a debrief was conducted before we left on the second leg of the ride, with riders changing positions within their group for this leg. Our next stop was for lunch, where the second riders in each group received their debriefs. Following lunch, the pairs in the groups swapped observers, allowing each rider the opportunity to be assessed by different observers throughout the weekend. The afternoon mirrored the morning's format, with both 'trainee' riders in each group being observed and with a mid-ride stop for debriefing. Each debrief was supported by a run sheet and a brief report, to be compiled in full by the observers after the weekend. Each observer would generate up to six reports.

We arrived at the Premier Inn in Peterborough at approximately 4 pm, ahead of the group dinner, which was scheduled for 6:30 pm. This dinner was meticulously organised, with pre-submitted food and drink orders efficiently delivered by the welcoming and efficient Underwoods! After dinner, there was an excellent opportunity to socialise with fellow riders, share stories of our journeys and occasional adventures, and celebrate one associate's successful test, resulting in a F1RST certification that afternoon.

The following morning brought some rain, but it had cleared before our departure. On this occasion, both myself and the other examiner present, Trevor Shearsmith, conducted Advanced Rider tests before the remaining groups set off. My candidate executed an exemplary ride, also earning a F1RST certification while the other candidate also achieved success.

Following a lunch meeting, the afternoon consisted of the whole group riding to Brentwood together. This practice emerged after the organisers recognised from earlier weekends that riders were becoming fatigued on the second afternoon and that a group ride was the safest way to return everyone to a central location, allowing them then to head home individually. We all arrived at a country park in Brentwood at around 3pm, leaving participants ample time to return home in time for dinner. My own journey home took just under two hours, and I arrived feeling excited, happy and grateful to have participated in such a well-organised and valuable weekend.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the organisers, Steve Riches, Colin and Tina Underwood, and to all the observers and participants who dedicated their time to ensure that KAMG continues to deliver exemplary training. The entire weekend was executed with precision and provided valuable learning experiences for all involved.

Initiatives like these distinguish KAMG from many other groups, offering continuous training opportunities in a welcoming and friendly environment for all members, regardless of their level. I hope these training events will continue for many years to come. Thank you once again for allowing me to be part of this exceptional weekend.

The Peterborough training and social weekends have become a signature part of KAMG's activity. Apart from being instructive, they are a good way to get to know people in the group, and they are very good fun. We are lucky: no other group runs weekends quite like this. See 'Riders' for May 2023 on the website for a more detailed report. There will be three Peterborough Weekenders this year: March 23rd and 24th; May 12th and 13th; August 17th and 18th. Details are on Tracker. Get your name down now.



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"AM I STILL AS GOOD AS I THINK I AM?"

Joe Mair might have found the answer on a Masters training weekend

Am I still as good as I think I am? I'll answer that question later, but let me say first that the attitude of KAMG members towards training, and indeed to further training, is incredible and never ceases to amaze me. As a group we have by far the highest percentage of 'Masters' riders of any IAM group in the country and those of us who are observers are constantly asked by members about what additional training is open to them after they have got their green badge? At this point I should make clear that Masters riding isn't about being part of some supposed elite group; it's simply about honing your existing skills and fine tuning them to try to achieve 'perfection'. It's much more cerebral than physical; and literally anyone can do it with the right attitude and training.

The holders of the Masters qualification are always looking for ways to maintain and/or improve their skills, and clearly everyone on this training weekend came with the right mental approach. Standing at the Weald Country Park at the start, the whole group was buzzing with anticipation, and perhaps a little bit of trepidation, but all were keen to rise to the challenge and ride as though they were taking their Masters tests again.

So, the format for the weekend was broadly similar to the normal Peterborough training weekends, although

with fewer, but longer, observed rides. As there are only a select few Masters mentors, we all got the chance to evaluate each other (positively!) regardless of whether or not we were qualified observers. I'm pretty sure the non-observers found this challenging at first, but quite satisfying as well. From a personal development point of view, I found watching someone else closely also gave me a bit of an insight into my own strengths and failings.

The first of three routes on Saturday was from Weald Country Park to Lavenham, then from Lavenham we went to Southwold and finally from Southwold to The Bell Hotel in Thetford. (Home to the *Dad's Army* film crew. Appropriate don't you think?) On the first leg David Howard brought up the rear of our pod while I had the dubious pleasure of observing Mr. Riches (a Masters mentor) and at the first stop in Lavenham I had the job of debriefing him. The concentration levels required to focus on everything one of the mentors is doing, as well as trying to keep my own riding up to scratch, was pretty high, yet I can happily confirm that I found the process both challenging and enlightening all at the same time. The point of the exercise is to ride to the required standard consistently and be able to articulate what your fellow riders are doing at the same time. Personally, I found that it definitely focused my



mind and made me analyse my own riding as much as I was analysing the guy in front.

After leaving Lavenham it was my time to lead and be observed. We encountered flooded roads, debris all over the place and some pretty poor road conditions, all of which was good practice and added to the challenge. On this weekend the lead rider is also responsible for navigation, just to add another dimension to the thought processes required, and again it's surprising how tiring it can be maintaining the necessary concentration levels. Arriving at Southwold we stopped for some lunch and another debrief, this time by David who had been following me, and although he is not an observer, he was very thorough and missed little.

After lunch it was the last ride to Thetford with David leading and Steve observing him. Being third man took the pressure off me a bit, but I was still keen to ride to the system and obviously the pace set by the leader required full concentration. Arriving at The Bell there was a repeat of the debrief process and a quick review of the day followed by a well-earned drink.

One of the nicest things about these training weekends is the social side in the evening. The staff at The Bell looked after us well, and we effectively had a private room. The food and service were very good, and the

accompanying photo shows how enjoyable it was. The hotel itself is a little bit tired, but, overall, our stay there was very good.

The following morning, we enjoyed a good breakfast and prepared to do it all again, albeit in a slightly different format. I was paired with Adrian Roberts for the first leg to Elveden Farm Shop, but after turning the wrong way out of the hotel, I suffered the indignity of having to turn round up the road and go back past the hotel and the, by now, cheering group. All very embarrassing and not very Masters Zen-like at all. In my defence, I was set up with the wrong directions... and I've got a long memory!

Adrian and I made it to the farm shop for the obligatory debrief and a cup of coffee without any further dramas. Elveden is a really nice place to stop and I think it should be a permanent fixture on tours to the area from hereon. The last leg was back to Sturmer, a place many will know from social tours, for the final debrief and a chance to reflect on the high points of the weekend. After that the ride back home to the Weald Country Park using the usual marker system led by Steve with good progress made by all, as you would expect from this group.

So, the question is: can I still cut it as a Masters rider? Well, there is no question I made some mistakes, but did I learn anything? Yes. Without a doubt this was a worthwhile exercise and I'd do it again in a heartbeat. Clearly if we're not practicing at the highest level and getting regular feedback, our skills will diminish. Sometimes it's hard to hear criticism, yet it's the only way you learn, and provided it's done in a positive and constructive way, it can help us maintain our riding at the highest level.

My thanks to Colin Underwood and Steve Riches for organising the weekend and to the Masters mentors for their time and commitment, but especially thanks to all the participants for making it such a positive and enjoyable experience. Put me down for the next one.



LIFE AFTER TWO WHEELS

John Ward doesn't put his feet down when he stops

Due to circumstances beyond my control my two-wheel journey is coming to a close. It started over 50 years ago when as a 16-year-old apprentice I wanted my own motorised transport. At the time all I could afford was a mate's used Puch Maxi. There were other mopeds available, and the Yamaha FS1-E was considered the best at the time, if I remember correctly, but that was too expensive. A year later, I sold the Puch to a certain Colin Billings, and it was the start of his illustrious motorcycling career. Then, after a few years with cars (Dad didn't like me riding motorbikes), I bought a Yamaha DT125; did a course with the British Motorcycle Federation, and started commuting. Many years and many bikes later my son Alex (now a KAMG observer) and I went on the Met Police BikeSafe course, where we were advised to join the IAM and learn to be Advanced Riders. We did this and both achieved 'advanced' status in 2020.

I've been riding on and off ever since buying that moped when I was 16, including commuting (in all weathers), and also doing a little bit of off-road riding, and I have loved every minute of it. It is therefore with mixed feelings that I have put my motorbike up for sale. *Riding* bikes has been fine, but this year I've found *manoeuvring* them by hand, when parking, to be a problem. However, it isn't the end of the fun, because I recently bought a Can-Am Ryker Sport!

"A what?" I hear you ask. "What's that?" Well, it's a Canadian three-wheeled bike (I don't like the term trike), which is made by the guys who make snowmobiles and various other adventure craft. They've taken the skis off



and put wheels on! Visit the Bombardier Recreational Products website for more details. They make some interesting things.

Anyway, I tested a three-wheel 'bike' recently and they're as much fun as riding a snowmobile. You don't need a bike licence to ride one, you don't even need to wear a crash helmet, although I think you'd be foolish not to. I first saw a Can-Am Ryker at the café at the bottom of Box Hill – coincidentally called Ryka's – being ridden by a guy who parked it with a Blue Badge. I was intrigued, we had a chat and he let me sit on it. I loved the way he's customised his. Having read and watched many video reviews I decided to arrange a test ride. My local dealer is London Speed, just off the North Circular Road in Woodford. However, they won't let you just take one out on your own for a test. Instead, they took me to a car park as a pillion passenger, and there we changed over and I rode it around the car park with their guy as pillion. After a few minutes he realised I could ride so we went back to the shop and he picked up another three-wheeler, and we spent the next 20 or 30 minutes riding around the streets of North London before returning to the shop.

Can-Am also make a three-wheeler called a Spyder, of which one reviewer said, "It lacks all of the practicalities of a motorcycle and boasts the visual nuances of an extra-terrestrial toilet". The Ryker is the Spyder's little brother, but it is a different thing altogether. The Ryker comes with either a 600cc Rotax twin or a 900cc Rotax triple, in 'Sport' or 'Rally' versions, both with a CVT (Continuously Variable Transmission) gearbox as standard. Mine is the 900cc triple version. As is Can-Am tradition, the Ryker features a simple 'twist-and-go' throttle system, which means there's no need to trouble yourself with clutch levers and biting points. There are more options available than you can shake a stick at, including a huge array of coloured trim panels, alloy wheel accents, grips, luggage sets and seat options to get it exactly the way you want it. I've chosen a 900 Sport with yellow trim panels and hand guards. I collected it in early November and at the time of writing (November 30th) I've ridden it over 300 miles, so I'm beginning to get the measure of it.

What was patently obvious from the start is that it's more like riding a bike than driving a car. The main differences from riding a bike, and which were clear right from the start, are that there's no brake under your

right hand and you need to watch both front wheels closely: the near-side to avoid kerbs and parked cars, and the off-side to avoid oncoming traffic. Neither of these issues is a showstopper though and they become second nature the more you ride.

Starting it requires the plastic RF D.E.S.S. (Radio Frequency Digitally Encoded Security System) key to be inserted on the near-side RF D.E.S.S. post, a press of the starter button to wake it up, the engine stop switch to be set to the RUN position, the throttle to be twisted forwards until you hear a beep and the foot brake to be pressed. You then press the start button. Nothing difficult about it, but it will just beep at you to say, "Ha! You've missed something," if you don't get it right.

Once you are running and you pull away, your immediate challenge is to master the steering. You need to push with one hand and pull with the other to go round slow corners and to grip with your knees and lean a bit to go round faster corners. It will just try to go straight on if you let it. Other things to look out for are pot-holes, speed bumps and similar; if you straddle them with the front wheels, you'll definitely catch them with your rear wheel. On well-worn roads the front wheels will try to stay in the grooves made by other vehicles, which is ok, but the rear wheel will spend its time bouncing along the ridge in the middle. It accelerates smoothly, with the CVT transmission handling speed variation well, although at slow speeds, of 4mph or less, the transmission clunks a bit, which I'm told is the CVT belt drive taking up the slack between itself and the final shaft drive.



Although these points may seem critical, nothing I've mentioned takes anything away from the great fun that the Ryker is designed to be. It has selectable Eco and Sport modes, ABS, Stability Control, Cruise Control, reverse gear and tool-free adjustable foot pegs and handle bars. There will be those who will say that it's not a proper bike or that it has all the disadvantages of a car and a motorcycle in one machine, but I don't care; it's fun and makes me smile, which is the whole point of riding. Given the choice between riding one of these and not riding at all, which is the choice I had, then I'd take riding one of these every day of the week.



SMALL WORLD

Richard Bromley finds a small world in a very large garden

Have you ever noticed that when motorcyclists talk about their biking holidays, they always mention the miles they have ridden. It's as if that's the important achievement above anything else. Sometimes they might mention the weather, or maybe the roads, but never the people they have met and the moments and memories those meetings bring. As I'm getting older, I'm a great believer in *carpe diem* (seizing the moment), so when I bump into someone who wants to talk about bikes, I make the time; you never know what you might learn or where it's going to take you.

I want to tell you about just such a case: it was a brief encounter in a cafe in Provence, back in June last year on our usual return journey from that part of France. While we were sitting at our table eating and drinking, we got talking to a fellow biker, a local Frenchman, who after conversing for a while asked if we had any English coins. In particular he was interested in coins with King Charles's head on them, but, as you know, these coins weren't in general circulation at that time. He seemed disappointed as he was a coin collector and was very keen to get one. However, I had seen a few and heard from friends that they had also seen some, so I said that if he gave me his contact details, I would be more than happy to forward one when I had one. He politely declined this at first, but returned a short while later with a piece of paper with his contact details.

Upon returning home we located one of the coins a few weeks later and emailed to say that we would forward via the post. However, that wasn't good enough, was the gist of his reply, and as we would be returning again from Provence a few weeks later, he instead invited us to stay with him for a few nights. But I was a little apprehensive. I have a cautious and suspicious mind – and I've seen the films *Misery* and *Deliverance*.

Anyway, on our journey home after our August trip to France, we arranged to stop over for one night. This wasn't too much of a problem; he was off route by about three hours. He lived on his own in a big house with 14 Acres of land at the foot of a mountain in the middle of nowhere, and half of the 14 acres were his front garden. At 10 miles an hour, it took five minutes to ride from his entrance gate up to the house (I reviewed my dash cam footage) along a dirt track driveway. No one would have known we were there. However, it turned out to be all right. It was a lovely house in a stunning location. Helen and I had an early tea that evening with our host on the patio, overlooking his garden, which had no fencing between it and the outside world, like we would have here in the UK. And it was quite amusing that meat scraps were simply thrown into the garden to feed the foxes. In the winter months he feeds the wolves, when they venture down from the mountains. I would love to do that.



Our host Michel, turned out to be a retired civil engineer and had worked all over the world, mainly in the former French colonies. Now he is an author of several books and an avid collector of classic BMW motorcycles, which he loves to ride all over Europe (a French version of Dermot I suppose). And it was our mutual love of bikes that got us talking in that restaurant in June in the first place.

During our overnight stay, Michel had made arrangements for us all to visit his brother for late evening drinks. He lived higher up in the mountains and Michel offered to drive us up in his beloved 1983 Land Rover, which was a treat. The brother lived very near a ski resort, which I was looking forward to seeing as I have never been to one before. There was obviously no snow in August, but it was interesting nonetheless. The brother's English was better than Michel's because he had lived in England for a while in Midhurst. He had also worked in Chichester Hospital, a city that we visit regularly, and it turned out that we had a mutual friend there. Small world.



A PERSONAL 'MEMORIAL' RIDE

Ian Shuttler remembers Terry Friday

As we all now know, Terry Friday, the man who was the 'father' of Advanced Motorcycle Groups in the IAM, passed away in late August. He founded the KAMG in 1980, and I was fortunate to have passed my motorcycle advanced test in that year, and in 1981 I discovered and joined the KAMG. By 1982 I was an observer and over the years Terry became a firm friend and mentor.

In those early days we would ride all over the country to support the new groups that started to spring up. The farthest I went on such a mission was Glasgow, but I also remember a very wet meeting in Nottingham and afterwards blasting back through the Blackwall Tunnel at about two in the morning – those were the days. Terry visited me several times in southern Germany, when I lived there, and the last time we rode together was in 2015, in Switzerland. What this involved was me periodically having the pleasure of leading and being 'examined' by Terry as we rode through the Alps, the Black Forest and similar places.

I have fond memories of Terry: he made me the rider I am, and I still have my 1980 copy of *Roadcraft* marked up with notes and phrases from the observer meetings that Terry hosted at the Kent Police Driving School. We all owe a huge debt to people like Terry and Rod Collins and Mike Knowles; without them we would not be able today to go almost anywhere in the UK and find an advanced motorcycle group that we can simply slot into, knowing on our first ride-out what the approach to riding and the standard will be.

The memorial ride for Terry, with KAMG riders accompanying his ashes from Maidstone to Headcorn aerodrome, was to be on the morning of October 2nd, and I knew that I had to be there. I planned a four-day return trip down to Kent from my home in Caton near Lancaster via overnight stops at my mother's house in Tamworth.

As I rode south, Terry's words and advice kept flashing into my brain: smoothness, keep it smooth, remember the three 'S's, Safety - Smoothness - Speed, in that order. Terry's words from long ago came to the fore as I faced torrential rain all the way round the M60 north of Manchester. Traffic was dense and my 'safety bubble' was constantly being invaded. My plan was to head out to Glossop in the Peak District, then south from there to Buxton before following the A515 all the way to Lichfield, and finally across to Tamworth just north east of Birmingham. At some point the traffic ground to a halt and now in heavy wet conditions it was decision time – filter or not? You may wonder why that was a question, but if you have spent the last 20 years living in countries where filtering could cost you your licence, you get out of practice, and you do not want to be re-learning the skills in bad conditions.

It is at times like this that we draw on our accumulated years of experience and I asked myself what would Terry



My GS with memorial rosette.

have done? I don't think I have ridden with anyone who was as smooth as Terry, he just flowed down the road. Following him, you kept thinking, I want to ride like that. So, I looked as far ahead as possible, moved slowly between the lines of traffic, carefully looking for any signs of a vehicle possibly changing lanes, not forcing my way past, being patient, ensuring that all drivers saw me and gave me that bit of extra space. Terry always said, "Put brain in gear before starting the motorcycle." My brain was using all its gears, balancing the clutch, rear brake, and throttle, to pass through the lines of traffic, without needing to pause. Using all the forward observation I could gather, and planning – what will I do if that truck doesn't move, how do I get the Range Rover to give me more space? It's all about positioning, 'showing' yourself to the drivers, and slowly you can shepherd them around. Gradually, my confidence grew, in spite of the rain starting to seep into my neck scarf, and memories of my time commuting in London on my R100/7 came flooding back. Don't push; be patient; a gap will open up; all the time be 'ready to stop, prepared to go'. The miles went by in a mass of spray. Finally, south on to the A6 and then the A515. By now, the rain had eased off and I was in with the weekend traffic that was bumbling through the Peak District.

Being followed by Terry could be frustrating at times, the man was an overtaking machine. Catching up with a vehicle you would start planning the overtake, then rear observation before moving out and invariably Terry would already be sat out in the overtaking position, big smile on his face, waiting patiently for you to move out and accelerate past. I never ceased to be amazed at just how far ahead his observation and planning could be. We mere mortals can only strive constantly to achieve something close. Now I was into overtaking mode; a challenge as the A515 has a 50mph limit most of the way. Not to worry, it just means I have to be really crisp and selective and work on positioning to maximise forward view. The mixture of poor road surfaces, wet conditions and changing road layouts had me focusing on information gathering – what could I see? Road signs, scanning up, down, sides and rear and all the time what additional information could I pull from the look of the hedges and trees? Remembering the hilarious story

from Terry of a police training course when a trainee was observing the telegraph poles that indicated that the road went straight on round a bend; however, the telegraph poles actually went across a field. Needless to say, the trainee went through the hedge and into the muddy field. No one was hurt but a salutary lesson not to blindly assume anything. All the time, Terry's words on acceleration sense are with me. Good observation coupled with sound judgement of speed and distance, working to ensure that I don't need to brake excessively, nor be surprised by anything, as I try to achieve that smooth progress that he would have wished to see. We always would comment that we could never see a brake light from Terry, and some riders, at a coffee stop, would try his brake lever to see if the light was working!

Working on observation links was another of Terry's key areas of excellence. He seemed to be able to extract every piece of information from what he could see, smell and sense, and make the appropriate riding plan. Sat beside him in a car and listening to his running commentary was a revelation. We all thought that we were looking as far ahead as possible, yet Terry looked further and was always assessing what he saw and what it could mean. He also taught us the verbal shortcuts for commentary such as stating what is happening behind, rather than saying you are looking in your mirrors. If you know what is going on behind it is obvious that you are using your mirrors.

We all make mistakes or errors of positioning, where we know that we could have done something better. Terry could easily spot when a rider was still thinking and worrying about what had happened rather than thinking about the new hazards up ahead. He taught us not to worry about the last poor bend positioning, but to focus on the bends ahead, work on getting those perfect. Ride in the moment not the past. Ride postmortems took place at the roadside or over a cup of tea. Terry had the most amazing memory recall and would give you a step-by-step analysis of every bend and every hazard as the ride unfolded. Years later, sat round the dinner table with Terry in southern Germany, maps spread out to show him where we had been, our riding would be discussed and analysed in incredible detail. Nothing was ever missed and so we all kept our standards high and worked towards perfection. After several hours of this my wife would ask, how long we needed to discuss each day's ride? Terry responded with, "Up until we start the next ride."

On the next day of my journey south, much to my surprise, it was not raining. Following the punishment from the rain the previous day, I now had to polish my motorcycle boots. Terry and I had had a long running 'joke' since my early days as an observer, he always insisted that you sent any associate away after a ride debrief on a positive note. Even if it was the worst ride ever, say something positive, even if you only compliment them on their polished boots. I then made sure that on any ride where Terry was present, my boots would be freshly polished. Meeting Terry and Bob Knight at a small Autoroute services in France on their Switzerland trip in 2015, there was much amusement as

Terry spotted the freshly polished boots. It would be remiss of me to be at his memorial and not have shiny boots.

The ride down to Maidstone was via Henley-on-Thames, as I needed to drop off a present to the people who let my son stay with them during the summer, when he was coaching the GB Rowing U23 men's eight. This would also be a trip down memory lane as I rode in this area with Thames Valley Advanced Motorcyclists and retrained with them as an observer in the early 2000s, before another relocation took me to America. Through back roads from Bicester to Aylesbury the prevalence of stretches with 50 mph limits meant that what Terry would call a 'make good progress ride' was somewhat curtailed. I made it to Checkendon and delivered the gifts. Amazed (and proud) that my son happily drives a truck and trailer loaded with about £1M of rowing boats down these narrow roads, when they are competing at Henley.

Monday October 2nd was an early start, as the KAMG 'escort' was meeting at Mickey's Diner on Bluebell Hill between 8.30 and 9.30. I had planned to be early, but I had not been to Mickey's Diner before and... well, the approach is not as simple my GPS thought. After a loop up the A229 and back I finally saw a police bike and two Kent fire bikes, I felt certain I knew where they were going so tagged along and my guess was correct. Sadly, the weather was not playing the game and it was thick fog.

At the diner, there were lots of bikes and also some very old friends, so while decorating the bikes with green, black and white ribbons, and memorial rosettes, provided by Tina Underwood, we caught up on the last 40 years. The green of the rosettes was a reference to Terry's beloved set of green German 'Polizei' leathers.* He had the 'Polizei' lettering taken off the back of the jacket, but the specific colour and design were unmistakable to anyone living in Germany. One day in Germany, I was leading Terry back to the autobahn and we were deep in the minor back roads of the Black Forest having a blast. It was time for lunch and in the next little village I spotted a small *gasthaus*. We parked and walked through the door. The busy and loud hubbub of conversation stopped dead and everyone looked aghast at the 'motorcycle policeman' that had walked

Switzerland 2015, L-R, Terry Friday, Ian Shuttler and Bob Knight



Terry's ashes arriving at Headcorn aerodrome

in. I knew immediately what was going on – we were off the beaten track and the police only showed up if something was seriously wrong. You could have cut the atmosphere with a knife. I guided us to a table, sat down and started speaking loudly to Terry, and only then did the room relax; we were just two Brits, so no danger. All eyes moved away from us, back to their Weizen beer, and the lively conversation started again. Terry had not realised what had happened, but as a German speaker, I knew. We reminisced about this amusing incident many a time.

At Mickey's Diner at 9.30 there was a briefing on how the memorial ride would be conducted and the group formed up. Led by the police bike with Terry's ashes, flanked by the two fire bikes, the rest of us followed behind, ably supported and marshalled by the 'events team', who kept all the roundabouts and traffic lights free for us. There was something very moving and memorable about being part of a long convoy of 56 bikes making its way through Maidstone and Headcorn and then on to the airfield. We parked up and as the police bike rode in we all revved our engines, as Terry had asked for. Due to the foggy weather, the scattering of the ashes had to wait, so more time to chat, catch-up and reminisce about rides and memorable moments with Terry.

Finally, at about 11:30, there was enough visibility for the light aircraft to take off and scatter Terry's ashes. Dave Murphy gave a short eulogy for Terry and estimated that over 30,000 riders nationwide had been exposed to advanced riding as a result of Terry's activities, through all the groups that he encouraged and the

army of observers that he sent out into the world. An amazing legacy.

Following a light lunch and after saying goodbye to old friends, I headed back to Tamworth, sad but happy to have been there. While the afternoon started with sunshine, dark grey clouds built up and before I knew it, I was diving into a services on the M1 to don my waterproofs. This whole trip was becoming an exercise in wet weather riding. And on the final day too of my trip back home to Caton there was yet more rain. I stuck to my plan to avoid the motorways and reversed the Saturday route.

For the final homeward leg, I jumped on to the M60 round the north of Manchester, again the heavens opened, and I repeated a long, wet ride up the M6. Home by the early afternoon after having ridden 1200 km. Weary, but happy that I had made the effort to join the memorial ride. I sat on the GS in my driveway and reflected on the mentoring and learning that Terry had imparted to me from the mid-80s up to today. My friends and I were all in our mid to late 20s when we joined KAMG and started our lives as observers. We had the raw enthusiasm of youth and Terry nourished us, guided us in the right direction, gave willingly of his time – any excuse to ride – and made all of us into thinking, safer riders, with a passion for advanced motorcycling, striving every day to be as smooth and composed as he was. His legacy lives on with us. Rest in peace dear friend.

* For the story of how Terry acquired his famous, and genuine, Polizei leathers go to page 18 of the November 2016 edition of *Riders* on the KAMG website.



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WHY THE KAMG EXISTS

While we ordinary, common or garden, run-of-the-mill members and 'friends' of KAMG lounge and lollop uselessly about the place gorging on fish n' chips and ice cream, it's very easy, to forget that there is a small band – a very small band – of devoted and selfless souls throwing themselves into making KAMG a powerhouse of advanced riding technique, and turning the group's 'advanced riding' mission into a reality. Speaking for myself, I can say that as each mouthful of ice cream or each deliciously greasy chip, passes over the taste buds to begin its journey south to my waistline, I try to remember this small band of advanced zealots riding across the potholed landscape in the wind and rain to bring the message of advancement to new converts. I tell myself that I should be doing that too, but I'm afraid I'm not. It was ever thus.

The KAMG membership figure fluctuates a bit but there are somewhere between 380 and 400 members doing the chips and ice cream thing while there are only 31 missionaries carrying the 'advanced' word to the wider world. Yet, as you will see below, those 31 are doing it in spades. Mind you, if the rest of us chose to lounge about in a freelance unconnected fashion rather than as paid-up KAMG members, there would be no KAMG, and there'd be no funds and no organisation to organise all this advanced stuff. So, if you are a KAMG lounge rather than a KAMG observing zealot, don't feel too bad. I don't. Never have. The group needs us too.

Observed rides
In 2023 there was a staggering total of 836 observed rides, covering 158 different riders, 92 of whom were associates. The other observed rides were of trainee observers, and qualified observers being checked out, and existing members ensuring that they were still up to standard, plus 35 taster rides for potential new members. It is estimated that each observed ride covers about 50miles for the observer, including the mileage to and from the meeting point. That means that in total the observers covered 41,800 miles last year, which is almost twice round the world... well, actually one and two third times round the world if you must be pernickety. Anyhow, it's a lot. One observer alone conducted 76 observed rides, which is 3800 miles. Think about that. That's 3800 just as an observer in one year. That's a lot of petrol and a couple of well-worn tyres. Just think about that commitment again. Chief Observer, Colin Billings, said that he did make an estimate of the quantity of tea and cake consumed on all the rides, but the figure was too frightening to print.

	Taster	Associates	Full Members	Trainee Observers	Observers	2023 Total
Total Observed Rides	35	650	77	49	25	836
Number of Different Riders Observed	35	92	16	9	6	158

Results
Observed rides are one thing, but what about results? The table below shows that 2023 was a good year with 28 green badge passes, the highest number for the last five years, seven of which were F1rst. In addition, there were seven new Masters and three existing Masters who requalified. What is really encouraging is that seven trainee observers qualified as national observers and four existing local observers also became national observers. (Note that the qualification 'local observer' will be phased out from April this year.) If they all go on to be 'active' observers too we can look forward to even better results next year. I'll try to eat more ice cream in anticipation. One has to do one's bit.

	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		TOTAL	
First	2	12%	8	26%	8	33%	6	22%	7	23%	31	24%
Pass	11	70%	17	55%	10	42%	18	67%	21	64%	77	59%
Fail	3	18%	6	19%	6	25%	3	11%	4	13%	22	17%
Total Passes	13		25		18		24		28		108	
Total Tests	16		31		24		27		32		130	

IDCAM and MCD
It is good to see that IDCAMs and MCDs were well attended, but why do so few existing members go to the Machine Control Days? They are so valuable, and there are good Sue Aspinall cakes too; you'd be silly not to go to every one. See page 30 for dates of this year's Machine Control Days.

IDCAM attendance

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
45	31	37	45	54

MCD attendance 2023

	May	June	July	Sept
National Observers	9	11	13	11
Trainee Observers	3	1	3	0
Full Members	6	4	9	5
Associates	16	8	13	12
Guests	2	2	9	1
	36	26	47	29

Summary
All round it was a cracking year, and when you take into account that there were three Peterborough weekends last year, which place a monster workload on the organisers and the observers, and there are three more scheduled for this year, we can say that the future looks bright.

(Thanks to Colin Billings and Martin Ford for producing these figures.)
NF

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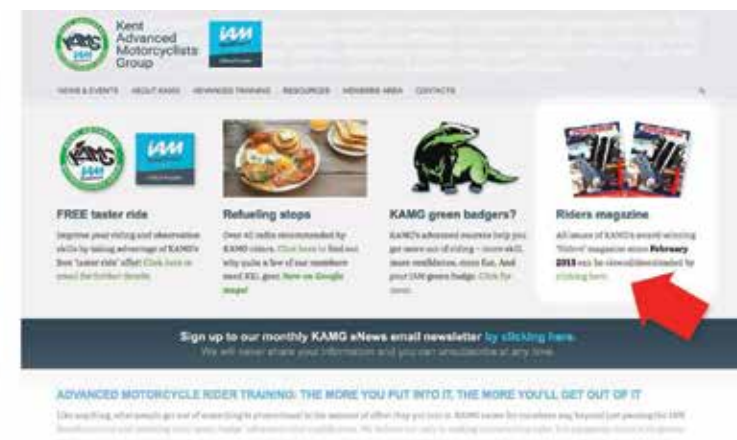
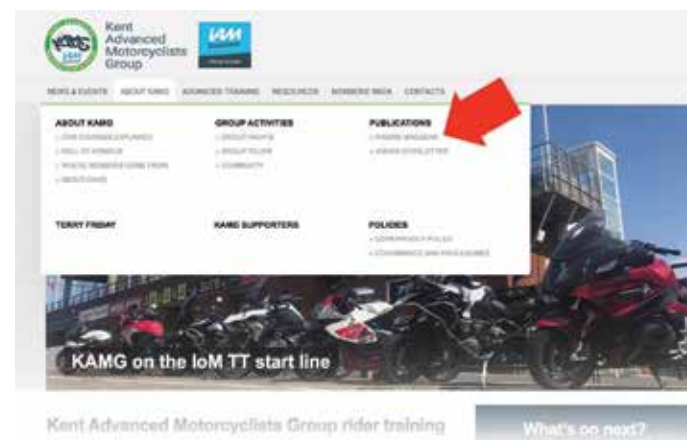
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Riders back numbers

We often refer in the magazine to articles that appeared in back numbers and which may be relevant to a piece in the current magazine. There are some references in this issue, for example. All back numbers of the magazine from February 2015 are available on the KAMG website.

There are two ways of finding them: either navigate to ABOUT KAMG/PUBLICATIONS/RIDERS MAGAZINE, or scroll approximately half way down the 'Home' page and click on the green link under the Riders Magazine picture.





FOR THE RIDE

- New and used bike sales
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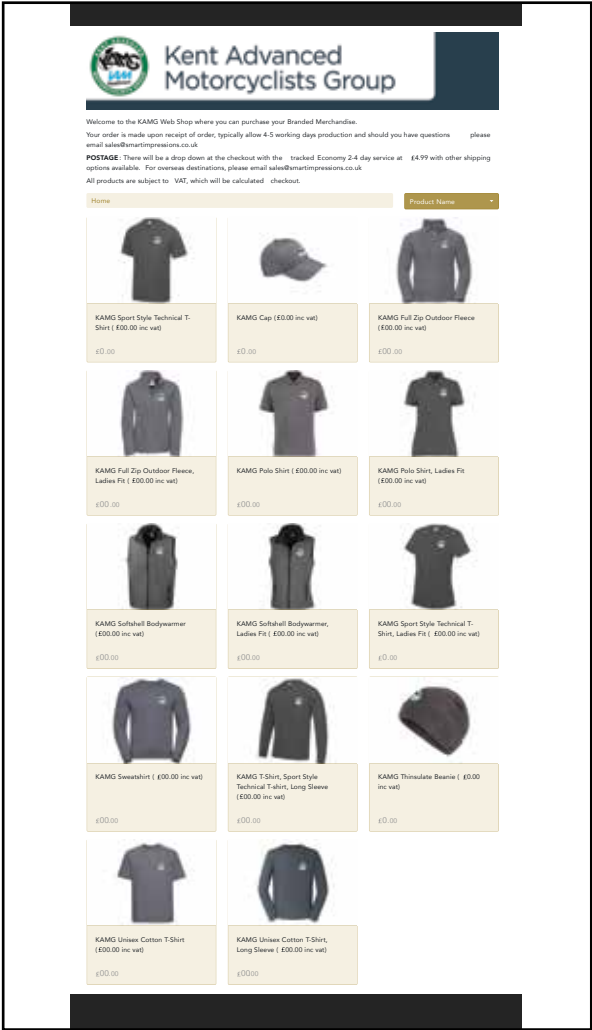
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KAMG MERCHANDISE is here now...

... actually, it's *almost* here now. The merchandise exists, but the access details to the website so that you can buy it had not quite been finalised when the magazine had to go to the printer. Everyone will be sent the access info in... well, probably a few minutes after the magazine has been printed. That's the way things work. But, fear not, it's all worth waiting for, and a little wait sharpens the appetite.

There is a big range of excellent stuff including fleeces, bodywarmers, sweatshirts, polo shirts, beanie hats, caps and, of course, T shirts – including 100% cotton, long sleeve T shirts. How about that? Everything comes in a wide range of sizes ranging from XS to 4XL, and in ladies versions too. And everything is branded with a choice of two KAMG logos. How about that, again!



NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

By order of the Group Committee notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Kent Advanced Motorcyclists Group (Registered Charity No: 1060837) will be held at 20:00 on Thursday, 28th March, 2024 at The Kentagon Restaurant, Brands Hatch Circuit, DA3 8PU.

All group full members, associates and friends are invited to attend the AGM, however, only group full members are allowed to vote. A group full member entitled to vote at the AGM may appoint a proxy to vote in his/her stead. A proxy need not be a group full member.

The KAMG accounts for 2023; a committee member nomination form, and the minutes of the 2023 AGM are available on the Members' section of the KAMG website. www.KAMG.org.

Alternatively, please email the Secretary, Gerhard Lottering at secretary@kamg.org.uk to request copies of the documents.

While it is not required by the group's constitution, all current officers and committee members will resign their positions on March 28th. All except Roger

Lancaster will stand for re-election. The committee also wishes to appoint an understudy to the vice chair, and so requires two additional members to fill this position and to fill the position vacated by Roger Lancaster.

For the continued success and future of KAMG it is vital that all members consider how they can best help and if they could serve as a Committee Member.

By Monday 25th March 2024 a complete list of candidates standing for election as either an officer or as a committee member will be sent by email to all members together with a voting form for members unable to attend the AGM. Voting forms must be returned to the Secretary at secretary@kamg.org.uk by close of business on Wednesday 27th March 2024.

If any member requires any details on a specific Committee position, such as responsibilities, time commitments, experience needed etc, kindly contact the Secretary at secretary@kamg.org.uk whom will gladly provide the necessary information.

Rutland Water

May 4th to 6th (Bank Holiday)

Rutland Water is a gentle 3 day tour staying in the same hotel for both nights. It's an easy but still very enjoyable tour for all levels of riders. It's the first one of the year. It's a great first tour, or a relaxed practice. Rooms £240, 25 rooms only, day 1, 180 miles • day 2, 138 miles • day 3, 180 miles

North Coast 500

May 25th to July 2nd

9-day tour
Hard tour of some of the best places in Scotland. Every day in a different hotel. It's a great tour Over 2000 miles with only 200 on the motorway. A wonderful route with great stops, cafes and coffee stops. The scenery is exceptional. Cost of rooms only, single £1200, double £1250 9 rooms only. Cost of ferry included

Southern Scotland

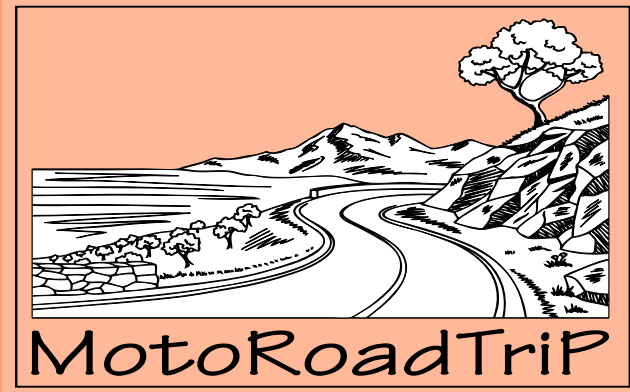
June 15th to 22nd

8 day tour
A medium level tour around the Southern Scotland and Northern England If you have never been to Southern Scotland its absolutely great 1700 mile tour of which only 200 are on the motorways. Great sweeping roads, empty most of the time, great cafes wonderful views what's not to like. 9 rooms, single £850 double £870, includes access to Beamish Museum

Wales

July 8th to 12th

Mid week 5 day tour
A medium level tour around the Brecon Beacons and Snowdonia. 2 nights in each hotel, total of 1000 miles, from paddock wood and returning via the M25 through Essex less than 40 miles on motorways. The scenery and stops are great. 9 Rooms £600



Fort William and Highlands of Scotland

August 3rd to 11th

This tour includes bed/ breakfast, evening meal - as all the hotels are remote. A medium level tour around the Highlands, the bottom of Glen Coe is a great place to stay. If you have never been to Scotland its an absolutely great 1900 mile tour of which

only 200 miles are motorway. We have a day to Shieldaig and Applecross, cattle pass, Eilean Donan castle (most photographed castle in Scotland). A day over to the Isle of Mull, my favourite Island, a hotel with a view over Loch Leven. 9 rooms, including breakfast and evening meals. Single £1350 Double £1600

KAMG ACTIVITY CALENDER 2024

January							February							March							April							Agenda		
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Committee Meetings		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Group Nights	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	IDCAM		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Masters Weekend		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	MCD		
29	30	31					26	27	28	29				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						National Holidays		
May							June							July							August							Nat Obs Training Events		
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Observer Meetings		
			1	2	3	4							1	2										1	2	3	4	Pillion Workshop		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	PTW		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	S&T Rides		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	TSC Meetings		
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31				
September							October							November							December									
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su			
						1		1	2	3	4	5	6						1	2	3						1			
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22			
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
30																					30	31								

Agenda	
Committee Meetings	
Group Nights	
IDCAM	
Masters Weekend	
MCD	
National Holidays	
Nat Obs Training Events	
Observer Meetings	
Pillion Workshop	
PTW	
S&T Rides	
TSC Meetings	

I will be running other trips during the year, please see the web site for further details and availability

www.motoroadtrip.co.uk 07786 592845 steveiches12@gmail.com

IDCAM

INTRODUCTORY DAY COURSE IN ADVANCED MOTORCYCLING

2024 Dates

- March 16th
- April 20th
- May 11th
- June 22nd
- July 13th
- August 31st
- September 21st
- October 19th



Our IDCAM is held at the Kent Fire and Rescue Road Safety facility in Marconi Way, Rochester, ME1 2XQ. If you wish to attend, please register your interest via the calendar on Tracker. Attendees are asked to arrive at 08.45 for a prompt 09:00 start. The morning session consists of a presentation about IAM RoadSmart, about KAMG and the aims of the course, and how to check that both the rider and motorcycle are fit for the road. This is followed by a coffee break.

The second presentation is all about the system of motorcycle control and, if time permits, a *Highway Code* quiz. The morning session will finish at approximately 12:15.

Please note that lunch is not provided. You may bring along your lunch or, if you wish, your allocated Observer can take you to a local café.



The afternoon session consists of an observed ride with a National Observer, and includes a pre-ride briefing and post ride debrief. The finish point is at a mutually agreed location that is usually closer to home than the start. The afternoon session lasts around two and a half hours.

If you would like to attend as an Associate, please contact associates@kamg.org.uk.

MACHINE CONTROL DAY

Our machine control days are organised by Paul Aspinall. If you have not yet signed up then do it now – simply log on to Tracker and register your participation or contact email below:

mcd@kamg.org.uk

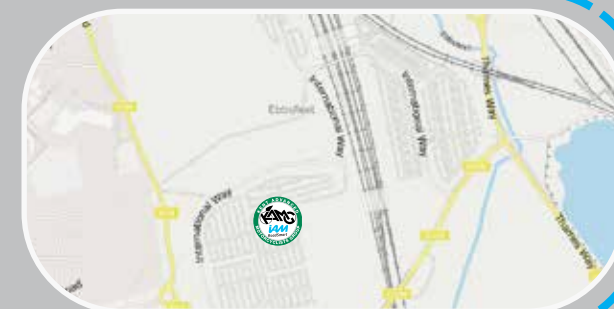
Held at: Car Park D, Ebbsfleet Station,
International Way, Gravesend, Kent DA10 1EB

2024 Dates

Sun 19th May Sat 15th June
Sat 20th July Sat 7th September

Non-KAMG members will be asked for a small fee of £10.00 contributing to the running costs.

Arrival time: 08:45 for 09:00 start
Finish Time: approx 13:00 Hrs



Vice President Dave Murphy
Honorary Life Members Kevin Chapman
Christine Botley
John Leigh
John Lemon
Brenda Vickery
Ian Burchell
Sue Mills
Tina Underwood
Tony Young



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