



**RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders
North Wiltshire Group**

www.northwiltroadar.co.uk



Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

December 2008

Newsletter

Secretary:

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Dates for Your Diary

Monthly meetings are all held at
Liddington Village Hall opposite
the church.



**Friday 23rd January
2009,
7.00pm for 7. 30pm
Christmas Meal at
The Village Inn,
Liddington**

**Monday 9th February,
7.15pm for 7.45pm**

Meeting: Dennis Cole, Head of Street
Smart, Swindon Borough Council

**Wednesday 25th February,
7.30pm**

Chris Gilbert evening.

**Monday 9th March,
7.15pm for 7.45pm**

Meeting: Mike Horn RoSPA
Examiner, and Class 1 Police Car
Driver

**Do you have a Topic you would
like discussed, or know of an
interesting speaker? Please
contact Monica!**

Merry Christmas



I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the newsletter this year, to Geoff for keeping the committee meetings in order, Nick for keeping the finances in check, Bill, who gets to both general meetings and committee meetings to open the up the hall and make the tea and coffee, and everyone on the committee who has helped the with promoting the group and moving it forward.

**I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a
safe New Year.**

Monica



Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Ann Tamplin** who passed her car test with Bronze recently. Well done to her tutor **Bill Cork** too!



Just when you thought it was safe to go Christmas shopping...



Nick, Geoff and Monica take a breather during the recent recruitment event at the Designer Outlet Centre in Swindon.

Welcome!

Welcome to the following new members who have joined us recently:

Chris Davis (car)
Paul Bennett (car)
Sara Holden (car)
John Smith (bike)



Forthcoming Meetings

January 2009: No monthly meeting instead we have our Christmas Meal!

Monday 9th February, 2009 7.15pm for 7.45pm: **Dennis Cole**, Head of Street Smart, Swindon Borough Council

Wednesday 25th February, 2009 7.30pm: **Chris Gilbert** will be coming to give a talk on 'In Car Training' for all Tutors and anyone interested in becoming a Tutor. The cost of this is £3 to help cover expenses. There will be a break half way through the evening. This is very much about training and how to correct faults. If you are a tutor and have had an issue with an associate that you feel you could have explained differently, or you need some advice on how to handle a situation please come along and bring your queries.

Monday 9th March, 2009 7.15pm for 7.45pm: **Mike Horn**, RoSPA Examiner, and Class 1 Police Car Driver. He is also president of Banbury IAM. Can be quite controversial!! *Should be an interesting evening!*

One of the responses in the questionnaire was that members wanted more events. As above, I have arranged these and booked them! I would appreciate it if we had a little more support for them. Please get in touch with me, all my contact details are at the top of the newsletter.

Monica

Events



Christmas Meal: Friday 23rd January 7.00pm for 7.30pm. The Village Inn, Liddington. Three Course Meal: £15.95. The Menu is at the end of this newsletter. To reserve your place send your cheque made payable to **RoADAR North Wilts Group to Monica. Include your Menu choices please!** This is very popular! Husbands/wives, partners and friends are welcome. **Note: Monica needs to confirm numbers with The Village Inn by 8th January so please respond ASAP.**



Skid School Wroughton: To be booked for early in the New Year. We have five members interested in this, and would like at least one more for one session. If more people are interested then another course will be arranged. This is a very worthwhile course. Cost is £85 per person (10% discount for 4 or more people). Please contact Monica if you are interested.

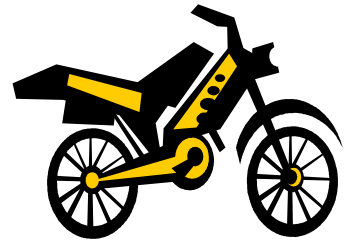
First Aid course: Saturday 18th April, 8.45am – 5.00pm. Liddington Village Hall. First Aid Course relating to car accidents. Weather permitting some training will be done outside. Cost £60 to include tea and coffee breaks, lunch and a contribution to the cost of the hall. This is excellent value and well worth doing. Please contact Monica if you are interested.



November's Meeting Report: Brendon Ball

London to Vladivostok and back, the long way round...

Brendon and Natasha Ball's epic adventure, as related by Brendon at the November meeting.



16,000 miles, one new rear tyre, and a bust indicator. Doesn't sound much, does it... Dig a little deeper, and the story begins to unfold. By air first to Canada, then 5 weeks to get bedded in, with the crossing of Canada. Lovely, helpful people, even the policemen (as long as you bribe them with a free pen or two!). Long, straight roads. More, long, straight roads. Mountains, more nice helpful people, and a small "off". At no more than 3 mph, none the less managed to attract large numbers of police, an ambulance and 2 fire engines.

That small mishap over, time to finish crossing a continent, and then it's off to Japan, and the mysteries of Japanese bureaucracy. The story of the releasing of the bike from Japanese customs alone was worth turning up for. Nothing seems to faze Brendon, running backwards and forwards around Narita airport in search of indecipherable Japanese documents is all in a day's work. Gradually, however, the picture of the next couple of weeks emerges. Horrendous heat, horrendous traffic, but impressive scenery and yes, more lovely, helpful people. Japan over with, it's time to cross to Russia, the biggest adventure of all.

Russia should be easy though, after all Natasha is Ukrainian, so speaks Russian, and they'll love and understand her, right? Well, not exactly. Russians, it seems, are not quite living up to the standard set so far in the journey. Still, enough of that, back to the road. If you can call it a road, that is. Seems it's a mixture of loose gravel, potholes, big stones, mud, in fact everything except anything you'd recognise as a road. Except for the 2km either side of a city centre. And then came the big off! A bit faster than the last one, and a chance for Brendon to try out the tobogganing properties of map cases. Luckily, no major injuries, or to the bike. This time, however, nobody came to help. Not a soul. Oh well, soon be in Ukraine. Just a few thousand miles of burning stubble, grotty hotel rooms, and other depression to get through first. Some lovely scenery, and good food and beer to temper the experience, though.

And then it got better again. Home for Natasha, and back to civilisation. Poland, Germany and France and then it's all over – back to the white cliffs of Dover.



I've left out huge chunks, and Brendon didn't have time to tell it all, but you get the gist. One hell of an adventure, and hats off to two very gutsy people, who managed to preserve a sense of humour all the way through.

Would he do it again? Well, on the whole, no. Perhaps something else, not involving Russia. (Brendon's opinion of the Russian people may take a while to heal!)

Lastly, contrasting questions from Brendon's two talks. When he came to talk to us last time, and set out the plans for this trip, someone asked: "Are there any bits you're not looking forward to?" "Probably Japan", he replied. "I've heard they're difficult to get on with, and there's this guy who has the reputation of being the rudest human being in the world..."

Naturally, the obvious question at the end of this talk was: "So what would you say was the highlight of the trip?".

"Probably Japan everybody was so polite ..."

If you want to read the whole story, check out Brendon and Natasha's blog at

<http://www.horizonsunlimited.com/tstories/smilemenders/003241.php>

Nick Carrington

Thank you!

Can I just say that I was very touched by the 'Presentation' that I received at the October Meeting. As most of you know it was a 'Thank you' for the work I have put into the group over 12 years. As the only member left of the original working party that set up the group I am positive about the future of the group and feel that it is in good hands. The Committee do a sterling job on behalf of you all, and you can repay them by making sure that you as members make the effort to attend the monthly meetings. For the 'Speakers' that give the talks it is a way of appreciation that we have as many as possible to attend each month. That is what the group is all about, to meet 'Like Minded' people and to talk to each other about Road Safety/Advanced Driving and Riding.

It has been said that "If Chris Gleed gave up Driving and Road Safety that would be it!"

Well it's not 'IT' yet!!

Chris Gleed



December's Meeting Report:

Chris Ellis, Rospa Examiner

I must admit to feeling a bit nervous on attending the Dec meeting, as our speaker was to be Chris Ellis, a well respected Rospa car Examiner. However, Chris removed this fear very quickly with his light hearted intro and audience participation.

Chris, whose expertise in the world of advanced driving comes from his background as a police driving instructor, continues his important role passing on valuable road skills to enhance driver safety in his current position as fleet driver training instructor for Honda.

So, with no crack of thunder or the merest hint of brimstone, Chris presented to us the kind of things he is looking for in a test candidate which came under the headings of Safe, Legal, Smooth and Systematic. Stressing the importance of the Highway Code and the application of the principles of Roadcraft, he advised us to actually listen to what the Examiner requires rather than what we think he wants to see or hear.

Other subjects covered were mirrors and shoulder checks, block changing of gears, and the importance of associates practicing between tutor sessions.

How to deal with Emergency vehicles on blue lights was informative as Chris was able to give us the Police point of view. They're trained to get round you, so don't brake, just drive sensibly, and look for an opportunity to let them past.

So with authority, humour, and at times a wicked sense of fun, Chris was able to put our minds at rest should we present



ourselves to him for that all-important advanced test.

The presentation ended with questions from an enthusiastic audience ranging from subjects such as principles of cornering to eco-driving.

Many thanks to Chris for a great presentation and to the committee for arranging the event together with those all important mince pies.

Merry Christmas everyone.

Les Alley (Motorcycle Section)

Merchandise

The merchandise page of the web site has now been updated! Copies of Roadcraft, Motorcycle Roadcraft, Not the Blue Book and The Highway Code are all now available to purchase through the group.

www.northwiltsroadar.co.uk





Christmas Meal Menu 2009



Village Inn, Liddington

Soup of the day

Melon and Prawn Cocktail

Pate with Melba Toast



Homemade Beef Bourginon

Beef Cooked in Red Wine with Bacon, Mushrooms and Onion

Roast Lamb with Mint Sauce

Homemade Steak and Ale Pie

Chunks of Beef Cooked with our Local Beer.

Homemade Game Keepers Chicken

Chicken Breast Cooked with Mushrooms and Onion in Red Wine

Fish Cakes

With Creamy Parsley Sauce

Homemade Wild Mushroom Goulash

Wild Mushrooms with Walnuts in Creamy Sauce.

Lasagne Verdi

Served with a Crisp Salad Garnish and Garlic Bread

Sweet Board and Coffee

Three Courses £15.95

