



## RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders North Wiltshire Group

[www.northwiltsroadar.co.uk](http://www.northwiltsroadar.co.uk)



Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

July 2009

# Newsletter

### Secretary:

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### Dates for Your Diary

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

#### Saturday 25th July

Calne Bike Event.

#### Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September

Emergency Services Show

#### Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September,

7.15pm for 7.45pm

Meeting: Roger Blythin, Wiltshire  
Police Accident Investigation

#### Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October,

7.15pm for 7.45pm

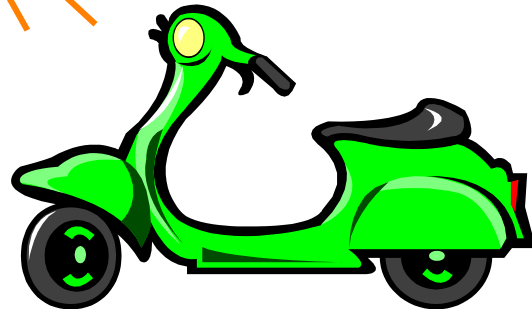
AGM. Guest Speaker: Paul  
Silverwood, U17 Car Club

#### Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November,

7.15pm for 7.45pm

Meeting: Steve Haley from SkillDriver

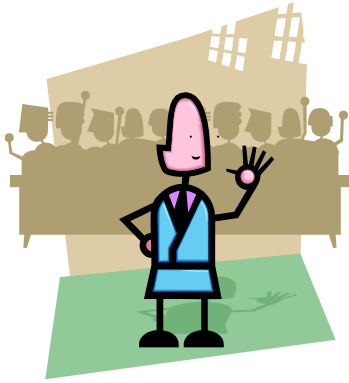
**Do you have a Topic you would  
like discussed, or know of an  
interesting speaker? Please  
contact Monica!**



# Welcome!

Welcome to **Patricia Hicks** (car),  
**Stuart Powell** (bike) and **Helen  
Rowley** (bike) who have all joined the  
group recently.





## Forthcoming Meetings

**Note that there is no meeting in August!**

**Monday 14th September, 7.15pm for 7.45pm:**

Return visit from Roger Blythin from Wiltshire Police Accident Investigation. Roger's talk proved very popular last time so this should not be missed! This time the subject will be motorcycle accidents.

**Monday 12th October, 7.15pm for 7.45pm:**

Annual General Meeting. The guest speaker will be Paul Silverwood from the Under 17 Car Club. Come along and find out how young drivers should be taught!

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November, 7.15pm for 7.45pm:**

Steve Haley from the SkillDriver road safety project and author of "Mind Driving".



## Events

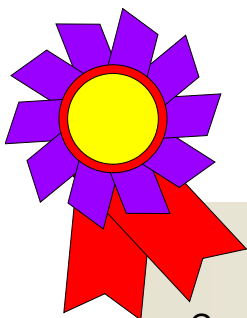
**Saturday 25th July: Calne Bike Event.**

This proved very successful last year so we will be erecting the marquee again this year! **Help is required** to man the stall. Please contact Monica if you can help.

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September, 10am-5pm: The Emergency Services Show, Hullavington Airfield (near M4 Junction 17).**

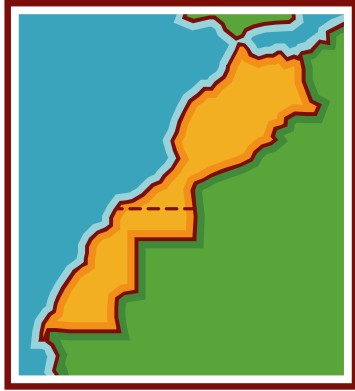
We will be manning the stall again at this event so **offers of help** would be appreciated! This is the first time we will be attending this show but it looks like it could be really good! See [www.emergencyservicesshow.com](http://www.emergencyservicesshow.com) for more details, and let Monica know if you can help.

**Bike Ride-outs:** Don't forget that regular Bike Ride-outs take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month. Check the Motorcycle Discussion section on the Web Site Forum for more details.



## Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Lisa Wilcox** who recently gained a silver grade in her bike test. Also to our Chairman, **Geoff Summerling** who passed his car retest with a gold grade.



## July Meeting Report:

**Julian Burton**

and

**Rob Braybrooke**

At the last meeting on 13th July Julian Burton and Rob Braybrooke gave a talk and slide show on their adventure last year to Morocco with four others, self supported on their motorbikes.

The journey to and around Morocco is a fairly typical one for the adventure riding community, and one that Julian had done twice before. But each time something new and exciting would be found or experienced and this latest journey would be no exception!

After many planning meetings throughout the year, the group gathered on 5 BMW 1150s and one Honda Africa Twin in Plymouth, where they set off on an overnight ferry to Santander in northern Spain.

Whilst it's actually possible to travel the length of Spain in one day, they elected to take two, getting another ferry from Algeciras on the Wednesday morning. The short sea crossing landed them in the Spanish province of Ceuta; and after a short ride they were at Customs with all of the usual offering of services and bartering that's become the norm at these places. Interestingly locals simply walked around the checkpoint to trade on the Spanish side, before walking back home.

From Ceuta the team travelled along the north coast and then into the deep valleys of the Riff Mountains and on to Chefchaouen where they spent their first night under canvas in a camp site.

The following days saw them travel down to Fez, with changes in landscape and road conditions making for interesting riding. On arrival at Fez they checked into a hotel with secure bike parking for a good clean-up and re-pack before heading off the next day. South was again the direction of travel, on excellent roads, but with minimal vegetation and no trees apart from in the villages. This lack of vegetation and extremes of weather cause many washouts that turn tarmac into rubble which are only passable by motorbike (just!). Camping was now just a short distance from the tracks



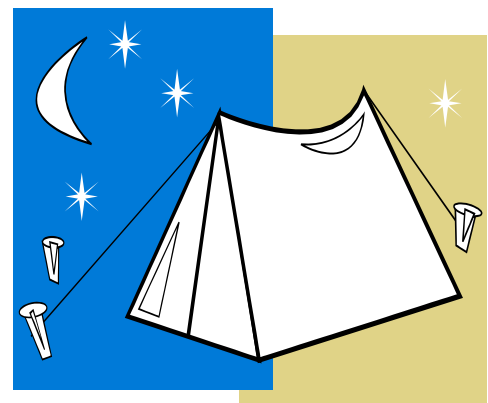
they were riding along; these were the main roads and the only traffic they saw was donkeys.

Bearing in mind that each rider was carrying food, water (15 litres plus), fuel (including spare), clothing, tools and oil each bike weighed in at around 450kg. This meant that only the most skilled (or lucky) riders remained upright and frequent stops to pick bikes up became a regular occurrence. Luckily conditions were dry, although there was a lot of early rain up in the mountains which might set alarm bells ringing for some!

At some point they found that their planned road south had pretty much disappeared and a local Berber suggested using their route of choice instead. This was a mule trail which followed a wadi. The team duly followed this for some time. That was until Berbers that were in the wadi made their way up out of it! At pretty much the same time, a rumbling could be heard and the riders found themselves at the front of a flash flood (the photographs have to be seen to be believed). Remembering the weight of their steeds, each rider did their best to get up the side of the wadi as high as they could. Unfortunately only three managed to get high enough; the other three lashed their bikes to trees and to each other as the flood waters rose, eventually submerging the bikes. Chances are that if they'd not tied them down they would have floated away, made buoyant by their panniers!

After a disturbed night's sleep on the slope above the raging torrent, which subsided and then rose again, the riders set about stripping the three flooded bikes down, tanks off, plugs out, and did their best to get the bikes running again. This involved draining the wadi sludge which filled pretty much every hole on the bikes! Once the bikes were running, albeit rather roughly, the whole team continued along the wadi then out onto tarmac to the nearest garage where further work was carried out on the damaged bikes, including lots of oil changes and the removal of more wadi mud.

Rather than turn round and head home, the riders continued into the mid and upper Atlas Mountains, ending up in the Hotel Jurassic in the area of Er Rachidia. Whilst there they found that one of the bikes had a broken engine case which was quickly fixed by a local with a few tools and a lot of skill. This was when the team decided to cut short their trip, and stayed in the area, making day trips to places such as Mezouga, the top of the Sahara desert and the Todra Gorge. The journey north was, by comparison, rather uneventful, although visits to ancient Roman villages and French Foreign Legion forts were the order of the day.



This was an excellent and well presented talk which gave real insight into the fun, and drama of adventure riding in Morocco.

**Ciemon Dunville**

## Métisse Motorcycles visit



The visit to Métisse Motorcycles was a great experience for the half dozen or so members who attended.

We gathered at the factory which is just outside Faringdon in the grounds of a Golf Club.

We were met by Gerry the managing Director who took us around the factory. First we looked at the bikes on display in the company's fledgling museum where we saw some of the Steve McQueen Limited Edition Desert Racer bike that were awaiting boxing up, mainly for export.

We were then shown through the different departments; looking first at the fabrication show, past the state of the art CNC machine that automatically makes some of the smaller parts and seeing the original jigs that came from the original factory. Next we were taken through to the assembly area to see where the bikes are put together.

After being shown some of the company's new developments, some still under wraps,

we concluded the trip with a very welcome refreshing cold drink in the Golf Club bar.

**Kevin Stowe**





Thank you for organising a great visit to Métisse, I found it fascinating to think that the bikes manufactured there were from an original idea by the actor Steve McQueen, whose love of motorcycling is well known. His spirit still lives on in a little corner of Oxfordshire.

Special thanks to Gerry and Ray for their time and hospitality.

**Les Alley**



### **Speed Cushions Warning**

Speed Cushions that have been in place for some time are beginning to wear at the edges. Some are extremely rough and this is, in turn, damaging the inside tyre walls of vehicles (which is not easily seen). This could lead to a blow out particularly when travelling at speed. It is suggested that, when you go over them, you try to alternate between near side and offside wheels when conditions permit, this way it avoids this sort of damage and also may be better for shock absorbers.

## Merchandise

We now have a stock of merchandise that is available to purchase through the group. The following is a summary of the stock that we hold. For more information visit the Merchandise page of the web site at [www.northwiltsoadardar.co.uk](http://www.northwiltsoadardar.co.uk)

### Books

*These are available through the group at a reduced published price!*

**Roadcraft: £9.00**

**Motorcycle Roadcraft: £8.50**

**Highway Code: £2.00**

**Not the Blue Book: £6.50**

### Clothing



**Polo shirt** with RoSPA logo and Group name (available in XXL, XL, L and M sizes): **£7.50**

**High visibility jacket** with RoSPA logo and Group name (available in XXL, XL, L and M sizes): **New lower price! £12**



White cotton **T-Shirt** with RoSPA logo and Group name (available in M only): **Last few remaining! £5**