



THREE SPIRES

Lichfield Advanced Motorists

(Registered Charity 1027300)



Group Newsletter

Issue 47 Spring 2018

AGM - Notice

The AGM for Lichfield Advanced Motorists is at 7.30pm on Wed 23rd May 2018 at Fradley Village hall.

Guest speak: Steve Ellis the IAM RoadSmart Area Service Delivery Manager.

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Apologies.
3. Minutes of 2017 AGM
4. Chairman's report
5. Activities and events
6. Membership report
7. Financial report
8. Election of LAM Committee members
9. Neil Atkins award
10. AOB
11. Guest speaker

All Members/Associates welcome. Please confirm attendance to grahame@lamm.org.uk



Follow LAM on Twitter!

@AdvMotorists



Follow LAM ON Facebook!



Watch the IAM RoadSmart on
[Youtube.com/roadskillsuk](https://www.youtube.com/roadskillsuk)

"My aim is to make IAM RoadSmart a strong and sustainable organisation that is future focussed and a leader in UK road safety for many years to come"

Mike Quinton,
IAM RoadSmart CEO

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Chairman's Chat

By LAM Chairman, Nigel Rogers



Welcome to the Spring edition of our newsletter!

Inside you will see that our 2018 AGM is now in final planning and you are cordially invited to attend and hear how our Group has performed and what is in the pipeline for the next 12 months. The Officers and Committee of your Group respond to the requirements of IAM RoadSmart, but are also focused upon providing the best service to our diverse range of Associates and Members, who come to us to learn advanced driving skills for many personal reasons.

Please do put your name down and attend our AGM if you can. It is important that you are all involved in what we do, over and above the obvious.

My colleagues will be updating you upon our progress and plans regarding Events, Membership and Training. Our treasurer will keep those of you interested in numbers informed of our financial status, together with what we have spent and earned. Our Guest Speaker is a font of knowledge on all aspects of driving and provides a huge amount of interesting, relevant and entertaining information. We will also vote in the Officers and Committee of LAM for 2018/19. At the end, I am hopeful that my colleagues will once again provide us with an excellent light buffet, to round-off what I hope will be an informative and entertaining evening.

I am delighted to say that our group continues to excel in what it does and how it does it. This is recognised by IAM RoadSmart and by other local groups. That achievement is entirely due to the time and devotion afforded by our members, observers, committee and our team of helpers. My thanks to you all!

I suspect that very few of you will have any sympathy with me, when I mention that I am drafting my Chairman's Chat from my various hotels in Agra, Jaipur and Delhi in India, where the outside temperature is in the mid 30's and forces me to retire to the air conditioned comfort of the hotels business centre or shady pool side. Having experienced the Taj Mahal at sun-rise, I can tell you that the pictures you see fail to portray the peaceful ambience and majesty of this remarkable place.

The word "peaceful" does not extend to the roads over here and I could write chapters on this topic, but suffice it to say that whatever rules there may be here, you can forget them! Red traffic lights do



"3-roads into one junction. No give-way signs. No one stops unless forced to. A good lesson about how to merge into traffic?"

not mean stop, but are a sign that even more copious use of the horn is required to safely navigate the flow of traffic, whichever direction it may be coming from.

Apparently, the traffic does proceed on the left, as we do in the UK, but that means hogging the outside or centre area of the road, so obliging other traffic to pass either side and regardless of lane markings, if any.

In short, if there is a hint of a gap anywhere, sound your horn copiously and go for it! Having 2 taxi's, 3 Tuk-

Tuks and a few mopeds all abreast at the same time is perfectly normal on single and dual-carriageway roads. Most trucks and buses have "Sound Horn" written at the back. I conclude that a driver will only glance to the mirrors or to the side if compelled to do so by raucous noise of another road users horn, when the gap they forced themselves into starts to narrow alarmingly.



"Yes, we are overtaking in the left lane. Perfectly normal! Drivers only look if you Blow Your Horn!"

The wonder of it is that it all works! Vehicles do not wait at give-way signs at junctions or islands, because there are none, but immediately enter an already occupied space, merge and come out where they need to be.

There is no shouting, no fist waving or excessively aggressive driving. All you get is a heck of a lot of noise from horns and the traffic gets from A to B. Throw in a few sacred cows that decide the middle of the road is a great place for an afternoon nap, an endless number of wandering dogs and goats, vehicles with no lights (I mean physically, no lights), plus mopeds, buses and Tuk-Tuks's that appear to be held together mainly by string and you have a perfect recipe for a disaster, which I have not seen so far, fortunately.

Given that traffic does flow here and in very high volumes, thanks mainly to a lot of "give and take," one does wonder if we need all the rules and "automatic policing" we have to endure in the West? Do we make too big a deal about traffic law that effectively reduces the need and dependence upon the drivers common sense and self preservation? Are our lives so hectic and pressurised that without all the rules, our roads would grind to a halt in minutes under piles of bent metal and plastic, due to lack of consideration and planning?

Self preservation cannot be under estimated here. There appears to be very basic medical facilities unless you can afford private care. One often sees an entire family of 4 or even 5 on one moped, all negotiating roads full of speed ramps, parked vehicles, people working in the road (with no safety barriers), multiple vehicles abreast and the occasional vehicle travelling the wrong way. IPSGA is in constant use here, although I doubt that many realise it and it has adapted to the Indian style of driving. **Information** is about "peep-peep on the horn: I am here, so watch out for me" as well as planning progress on pretty much any part of the road.

My thanks for your interest in Advanced Driving and to all those who make our Group the success it is today!

Best regards

Nigel Rogers, Chairman



Fancy improving your driving skills from the comfort of your own armchair? Want to find out how even the smallest of distractions can cost you more than just a harmless prang?

The UK's biggest independent motoring charity IAM RoadSmart has devised a series of seven e-learning modules which will improve your knowledge and abilities before you even set foot outside your door.

Each e-learning module costs just £5 and offers up to 20 minutes of interactive tuition. Topics covered are:

- *Motorway driving*
- *Parking and manoeuvring*
- *Driving on country roads*
- *Driving in towns*
- *Managing distractions*
- *Managing speed*
- *Managing overtaking*

IAM RoadSmart says the e-learning modules focus on specific aspects of driving that many drivers find challenging, and the modules' interactive nature, with pictures and animations help make the key points easily memorable.

Sarah Sillars, IAM RoadSmart chief executive officer, said: "We believe that e-learning is a great accompaniment to actual road-based tuition, perfect for those who need to quickly update their skills or refresh their knowledge. The interactive quizzes and exercises provide a reminder of the most important driving rules and are a great help for those who need to boost their confidence behind the wheel."

Buying an e-learning module is simplicity itself. All you have to do is head over to iamroadsmart.com/e-learning, click on 'access modules' and follow the instructions.

E-learning modules are also available to business and fleet operators. For more information about these, please call the IAM RoadSmart customer care team on 0300 303 1134.



Mike Quinton to take up top job at UK's largest independent road safety charity IAM RoadSmart

Posted on 11/04/18 | 0 x

"I have been brought in to continue Sarah's good work, and that is what I intend to do"

Mike Quinton
IAM RoadSmart
CEO

IAM RoadSmart has named Mike Quinton, former Chief Executive of the National House Building Council (NHBC) as its new Chief Executive Officer effective from 23 April this year.

Mike, 56, was at the helm of the NHBC for more than four years and replaces Sarah Sillars at IAM RoadSmart, the UK's largest independent road safety charity. Sarah, having reached the end of her three-year contract with the organisation is relocating with her family to a new home in Hampshire.

Mike brings with him an impressive track record of organisational leadership gained from three decades in business. After training to be an accountant with Prudential, he undertook a variety of finance roles before heading up the company's motor and home insurance business. After steering the sale of this section of Prudential to Churchill and then RBS, he then moved on to Zurich Financial Services' European direct-to-consumer insurance operation.

The NHBC, where Mike has been most recently, is well known nationally as a non-profit distributing company with remit of helping to improve the construction quality of new homes. Ahead of his joining IAM RoadSmart, Mike said: "I was attracted to the role by the company's social purpose. All of us can buy in to the need to improve safety on our roads and I relish the opportunity to do my bit in that regard.

He added: "I have been brought in to continue Sarah's good work, and that is what I intend to do. I will be very much in listening mode initially, and will get out and about to talk to as many people as possible, both within and outside the business.

Mike also said: "The organisation has a long and enviable track record and is clearly highly regarded and authoritative. Recent changes have re-energised and re-positioned the business and my aim is to make IAM RoadSmart a strong and sustainable organisation that is future focussed and a leader in UK road safety for many years to come".

Ken Keir, IAM RoadSmart Chairman said: "The changes made in the last three years under the remarkable stewardship of Sarah Sillars have given us the opportunity of attracting someone of the calibre and experience of Mike who is looking for evolution, not revolution in the achievement of our future plans."

IAM NEWS IAM NEWS IAM NEWS IAM NEWS IAM NEWS

Events

(Grahame Ottewell)

Fradley Hall Meetings

We continue to have some interesting talks at the Fradley end of month drive meetings. Of late we have had several group members who have given us some very interesting talks. These have included talks on Vehicle Lighting Technology, Electric Vehicles, Tyres and the Tyre Industry, Health and Safety when Driving at Work, Drink Driving, Acceleration Sense, IPSGA, Motorway Driving to name just a few. Thank you to all of you who have contributed to those talks and for those of you who come along to support our end of month speakers. We are always planning these for the forthcoming year and we have some others including an Actor who will be doing a talk at the end of March and some of the Lichfield Advanced Motorcyclists who will be doing a talk at the end of April.

It would be very nice to make the end of month meeting an event where all members and friends can turn up for the morning and have a talk, a chat etc. If you can help to do something after we observers have gone out then please feel free to discuss your plans with our committee members. We need things for members to do once they have passed their advanced assessments.

Curborough Breakfast Meetings

We have managed to negotiate with Curborough Sprint Course to use their Breakfast Meetings for our Observer training sessions. In order to do training we do need Associates. Institute of Motor Industries (IMI) who govern our observer qualifications require Trainee Local Observers to use proper associates otherwise we cannot count that training session towards their portfolio which is submitted to IMI for verification.

Please try and support us if you can. The extra drive will help Associates progress quicker. Also due to the keenness of our Observer's we usually have a couple spare for a normal observed drive. Those spare Observer's can also be used for a normal observed drive with an Associate or for any full member wanting a drive check. We cannot of

course guarantee having spare Observer's but if we know in advance we can try to get more to come along.

At the last Breakfast Meetings on Saturday 10th March sadly we had no Lichfield Associates attend. Fortunately at the last moment I managed to get some Walsall car group Associates to attend. They enjoyed the event and the extra training drives. That meant that we were able to progress our trainee observers that bit further. Dates for future Breakfast Meetings are:

Saturday 12th May 2018 (Also a sprint meeting taking place).

Saturday 9th June (Also a motorcycle sprint meeting taking place)

Saturday 14th July 2018

Saturday 11th August 2018 (Also a sprint meeting taking place).

Anyone can come along to watch the sprint meetings, they are free; remember though if you are able to assist with our observer training at the same time then let me know. We cannot guarantee drives but I will try. If you join us please park near to the feather flag nearest to the entrance. We have to abide by that for safety reasons.

If you want to join the Shenstone Car Club who run the Curborough circuit then go to their website.

It is only £27 per year single membership or £32 per year joint membership and you get so many days per year to take your own car onto the circuit.

Amazon Fulfilment Centre Tour

On Monday 19th February our group had a free visit to the Amazon Fulfilment Centre at Rugeley. It is that huge building we see near to the power station. This was our second visit and very well supported. We managed to get some extra places tagged on but even then I still had a few people on the reserve list who could not get places. I still find it amazing to see millions of items on racks being collected (picked) and packed and somehow ending up ready for delivery all over the world. After the visit some of us went to the nearby pub for lunch! Had to be done!

LAM
Event Organisers:

Grahame Ottewell
Margaret Manuell

St George's Park National Football Centre - COMING UP

We are currently collecting names to see if there is sufficient interest to arrange a visit to the nearby St George's Park National Football Centre. It is situated on the outskirts of Burton upon Trent at Needwood.

The cost of the tour is about £9 per person. If we get enough names then I will arrange this for sometime during the summer months.

Young Drivers Event Tues 14th Aug 2018 - COMING UP

Our group is being given the opportunity to organise a young drivers event (under 26 years old) at the Curborough Sprint Circuit on Tuesday 14th August 2018.

The Shenstone Car Club who own Curborough Sprint Circuit have very kindly given us their circuit free of charge for this charity event. The normal cost is around £700 plus VAT per day.

We are putting together a subcommittee to sort out the event. We are hoping to obtain 3 cars for use within the grounds of Curborough. Subject to enough observers being available we might even do demonstration drives and possibly taster sessions on the surrounding roads.

Please help us support this event if you can. We need around 18 young drivers. Until our subcommittee is formed and holds its first meeting I will not have any more details. Should any of the young drivers then decide to join the IAM RoadSmart and our group we have a code to get them 10% off the Advanced Driving Course fee. We shall also be considering further financial refunds for them once they have passed their advanced assessment. We shall be using the circuit for this event, but not for racing to sprinting! Sorry. It is to help young drivers raise their standards and awareness of those hazards that are the causes of under 26 year olds being killed on our roads.

Let me know if you want to be involved or know of any under 26 year olds who may be interested.

Lichfield Advanced Motorists AGM - COMING UP

The AGM of the Group is taking place on 23rd May 2018 at Fradley Village Hall at 7.30pm. There will be the business of the AGM then a light buffet and social. If you are planning on attending please can you email grahame@lamm.org.uk as we need to do an estimate of numbers for the buffet.

ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME - BOTH FULL AND ASSOCIATE

Events continued

(Margaret Manuell)

Coventry Transport Museum



We have a group visit to the Coventry Transport Museum coming up very soon, and there is room for one or two more if anyone would like to join us. Please contact me to check asap: margaret@lamm.org.uk. There is no entrance charge, and we make our own way there.

We meet in the museum cafe at 11am **Thursday April 26th**. At 11.30 we will have a short introduction to the collection and its history. Then we will be touring the museum however we choose – on our own or in small groups. Some of us might join up for further refreshment when we're done.

Royal Shakespeare Company Stratford

Another group will be taking a backstage tour of the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford on May 18th – this group is complete. We will be sharing our experience in a later newsletter.

Black Country Open Air Museum

A trip to the Black Country Open Air Museum at Dudley is being arranged for June. The list for this is still open, so if you would like to join in that visit, get in touch: margaret@lamm.org.uk. Again, we will be making our own way there. I will know cost and other arrangements when I know how many I'm booking for because there are reductions for seniors and groups.

Do You Belong to a Group?

Lichfield Advanced Motorists offer FREE talks on topics such as

Motorway driving;
Vehicle technology;
Night driving;
Lone driving

Please contact secretary@lamm.org.uk for more information



AGM NOTICE

LICHFIELD ADVANCED MOTORISTS GROUP NUMBER 3053

AGM Notice

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by order of the Group Committee that the Annual General Meeting of "Lichfield Advanced Motorists" will be held at **7.30pm on Wednesday 23rd May 2018** at Fradley village hall to enable the Trustees of the Group (Registered Charity No. 1027300) to present their Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 2017/18 for approval by the Group Full Members and to conduct an election.

NB. All Group Full Members, Associates and Friends are invited to attend but only Group Full Members may vote. A Member entitled to vote at the General Meeting may appoint a proxy to vote in his stead. A proxy need not be a Group Full Member.

CURRENT OFFICERS

All Officers retire annually and may offer themselves for re-election

Chair. Nigel Rogers will stand for re-election.
Vice Chair. Sally Basketfield will stand for election.
Secretary. Grahame Ottewell will stand for re-election
Treasurer. John Russell will stand for re-election.

If interested in joining the committee or standing for any of the above officers positions please inform me as soon as possible. Nomination forms will be sent out by the group secretary to those requesting them. Nominations need to be lodged with the secretary at least 7 days before the AGM i.e. by 15th May 2018.

Grahame Ottewell
Secretary.
Lichfield Advanced Motorists.
Group Number 3053.
secretary@lamm.org.uk



OBSERVER NEWS

Grahame Ottewell - Chief Observer



(Looking for clues to pass that assessment?)

Observed Drives for Associates.

Our voluntary team of Observer's continue to support our group whenever they can. They attend training sessions and also put their names forward to do observed drives on the Sunday end of month and Wednesday midweek meetings. They also offer their free time to do observed drives at any time that is suitable to the observer and associate. Observers are all unpaid volunteers like all of our group but we all have a passion for driving and to help others get through their final advanced driving assessment and obtain that advanced driving certificate.

In respect of the Fradley drives of late we have had to cancel some of the observers who have volunteered to attend as there was no Associate for them to take out. There is no point in them giving up their time and travelling to Fradley if they are not required. Sometimes depending on individual requirements we are able to do some observer training or arrange a drive check for a member, but if it is a last minute cancellation then it can be difficult to do those things at short notice. We do of course realise that there are occasions when things suddenly happen and associates have to cancel at the last moment. But if you can let Pat Round know then we might be able to prevent that observer turning out to Fradley and having to go back home again with no drive.

Balancing the Associate and Observers attending is a difficult task for Pat Round who coordinates the Fradley drives. In the past we have had more associates than observers but now we seem to be pretty well balanced. Associates, please try to book for these drives in advance and if you have booked and cannot attend then please try and let Pat know.

CLUE....Having regular drives is key to making progress and getting that advanced car qualification. The IAM RoadSmart group handbook rules states...

"Group Associate Members may continue as such for a period of up to one year only, during which time they must endeavour to be accepted into full IAM Membership. In individual cases where there are special circumstances this period may be extended by specific decision of the Group Committee"

So it is important that Associates who join the IAM RoadSmart should take regular drives and qualify within their one year Associate membership. Failing to do that then it is up to the group Committee to decide on whether to renew that Associates membership of the group. Special reasons will always be considered but the committee will need to see the Associate is committed to qualifying and putting in the required drives.

If you cannot do drives for a while due to personal reasons please consider advising us if possible.

We can for some very difficult situations ask the IAM RoadSmart to put your membership on hold. These are rare occurrences and not the norm. Keeping our membership secretary Sally Basketfield up to date with any membership problems is important.

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Reference Points

On Sunday 25th February Sue White one of our observers gave us an insight into using reference points for manoeuvring. Using reference points can make such a difference especially for reversing. Manoeuvring is still one of the biggest claims problems for insurance companies. Being able to reverse a car safely and accurately is one of the requirements of the IAM RoadSmart Assessment and you need to get a 1 in that if you want a F1rst pass.

CLUE... All vehicles have different reference points so have a play with yours and see what works for you.
CLUE... Remember though observations is also key to safe reversing.

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Bob & Tom

Those Associates who have been out with me will be aware that I sometimes refer to those important external mirror checks as Bob and Tom. I picked up the phrase from a driving instructor.

The nearside mirror is Bob, bloke on a bike. The offside mirror is Tom, teenager on moped. Both could also relate to motorcycles who filter through traffic queues. Also remember to cover any blind spots you have with shoulder checks. Particularly useful when negotiating roundabouts or overtaking when changing lanes.

CLUE... Remember to combine Bob and Tom with your regular rear view interior mirror.
CLUE... Observations are important for the advanced driver.
CLUE... An examiner will be looking for you to check Bob and Tom regularly, plus blind spot checks particularly when moving away from a stop in the towns.

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Walsall Meet the Examiner Event

On Wednesday evening 7th March some of us took up the Walsall car group offer I circulated to everyone and attended the "Meet the Examiner " evening at Aldridge Community Centre.

Steve Tyler ex Police driving instructor and IAM RoadSmart examiner talked about using IPSGA for Spoken Thoughts. He explained what I thought was a very simple method of doing Spoken Thoughts. We all need to know what IPSGA is. It is that process (backbone) for safe advanced driving, i.e. INFORMATION, POSITION, SPEED, GEAR and ACCELERATION. (I.P.S.G.A.). Next time you try speaking thoughts start if with the "I" from IPSGA. Where are you, what can you see, what is happening around you and in the distance. It will work on any bit of road. Then use the remaining P.S.G.A to talk about what you are going to do or planning to do about it. If new "I" appears then start again. I have tried it and is a simple process that makes for interesting Spoken Thoughts and will compliment your driving. Give it a go!

CLUE... Remember to practice by speaking out loud.

CONGRATULATIONS...

Advanced Pass

Harry	SHEPPARD
Brendan	DWYER
Darren	ELLIS
Robert	WEALE



Darren Ellis - Advanced Test Pass



Michael Watson - Advanced Test Pass

New Members

Geoffrey	ELEY
Simon	JAMES
Jeff	BANKS
Paul	RILEY
Paul	NASH

Chris EPPS
Darren HOOD
Alan DANDY
Jack HUGHES
Andrew SWIFT



Paul Wilkinson - 1st Advanced Test Pass



Simon Best - Advanced Test Pass

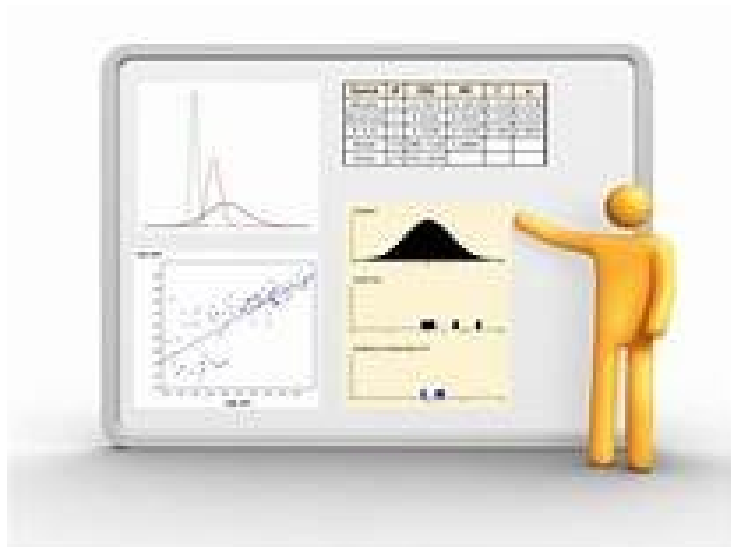


Sally Basketfield - National Observer

Feedback:

Thank you so much for the guidance received from both you and your colleagues - it's certainly paid off :-)

*Harry Sheppard
(achieved F1st Pass)*



LAM – Stats Online

Twitter:

We have 413 Followers

Retweets and replies from IAM RoadSmart, Lichfield Mercury and other IAM Groups

Facebook:

Our most popular posts have been about our events and monthly meetings

Flickr:

See our gallery of pics on Flickr. Search for Lichfield Advanced Motorists

Driving across East Africa part 2

[By Margaret Manuell](#)

Babati, Arusha, Nairobi...

At the end of the first instalment you left us sitting by the side of the deserted road, the flood waters behind us, waiting for our Volkswagen Beetle's distributor head to dry off in the sun, before we drove on to Arusha, our destination. It was our first safari across Tanzania, where we lived upcountry, teaching at Bwiru Government Secondary Schools. We had ignored wiser heads who had advised us of the folly of embarking on unmetalled roads in 'the little rains', not realising that 'little' was a comparative term, measuring not the abundance of the rainfall, but relative to 'the rainy season', which was the Big One! It was the greatest challenge to our sanity either of us had previously encountered. We were in our late twenties, and I was the sole driver. The African trucker who encouraged me to take the plunge and had waited to see us safely across the raging flood had gone and we were alone.

"There's no way I'm driving back on this road!" I said.

"Well, we'll see," said my husband, ever the voice of reason. "Just let's concentrate on getting to Arusha."

So we pressed on. The engine started first go, and we set off. At every turn and twist of the road, I anticipated more flooding, prepared myself for herds of cattle, goats, sheep, rock falls, a wrecked vehicle, more rain.... But no. The sun shone, we made good progress untroubled by traffic or obstacle other than the odd boulder on the murram road. An abiding memory of that particular stretch was of a statuesque lone herdsman in tribal dress in the near distance, standing on one leg in the traditional resting pose: quite still, the other leg bent and foot resting on the calf of the standing leg, his arms holding a staff across the shoulders. He raised one arm in greeting as we passed, and we waved back through the open windows.

We encountered no-one else on the road and no other vehicle, so while I drove, George studied the map to find an alternative route travel back to our school campus at Bwiru. There was only one, which would take us across the Serengeti plains. We had been warned off driving to the Serengeti, which begins only eighty miles from Mwanza, and told that while any safari in the 'little rains' was extremely foolhardy, traversing Serengeti was a definite no-no, to be tackled only by the hardened traveller, only in the dry season, and never without a roll of chicken wire and a shovel in the boot, the standard rescue kit for vehicles bogged down in *black cotton soil*. So that was ruled out.

When we had set out, we thought that Arusha would be a good place as a destination. Unlike up-country Mwanza, which was our nearest town and shopping centre, it was a cosmopolitan place, more westernised. It was, moreover, gateway to Mt Meru and the relatively small Arusha wildlife reservation, and only a short drive to catch breath-taking views of Mt Kilimanjaro. Could we not go on to Nairobi from Arusha? I wondered. Take the main road (apparently tarmacked, so relatively easy) across Kenya to Lake Victoria, put the car on the ferry, and dock at Mwanza, only a few miles to home? It was a mad scheme, but I was adamant. I wasn't driving back the way we'd come.

"We'll think about it," he said.

We arrived at Arusha in the early evening, having been on the road all day, and booked ourselves for a few nights into what looked like a decent hotel. It was – although the cuisine took a little getting used to. That evening I opted for fish and chips, which came looking reassuringly British, with

a crispy batter and perfectly cooked chips. It was delicious, my first and only meal of tilapia coated in a lightly curried batter!

That evening, the receptionist asked us where we were heading after our short stay in Arusha, and we tentatively suggested the Nairobi – Kisumu route followed by boat to Mwanza. He said there was an agency in Arusha and we would be able to book the ferry there, but hadn't we heard the news? Whilst we had been journeying, away from radio and 'bush telegraph', Kenya had, overnight, unilaterally withdrawn from the East African common currency agreement, issued brand new Kenyan notes and was no longer accepting the East African shilling which had been the common currency of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Banks in Arusha wouldn't be able to change our Tanzanian money, because, caught on the hop, they had yet to buy in the new Kenyan currency. This was 1966, before the electronic explosion of hands-free transfers and bank cards. We were carrying EA Shillings in notes and cheque book, now useless as soon as we crossed the border into Kenya. I was also carrying a cheque book on our UK bank account and a British £1 note tucked away somewhere, but no idea if they'd be any use.

We had been on the road for more than six hours and I should have been exhausted, but my head was spinning with the events of the day and the problem of how to get back to Bwiru. Would we press on to Nairobi, without any viable means of paying our way, or brave the return journey on the route we had come? There was nothing practical we could do until morning. We would sleep on it.

Fortunately sleep came easily and, with morning, a bright sunny day. Arusha, being relatively high, was pleasantly warm, with a cool breeze, a relief from the relentless heat on the road. It was the perfect climate for exploring the region and seeing our first real wildlife. Upcountry we had vervet monkeys playing and chattering around our bungalow all day. There were hyraxes and awe caught an occasional glimpse of small troupes of chimpanzees on our bush walks behind the bungalow, but they were small-fry. We had yet to encounter any of the big players.

Before we could relax and enjoy our sightseeing and mini wildlife safari, we had to settle the problem of the onward journey, so sought out the travel agency to see if we could book ourselves and the car in advance from the port of Kisumu a few days hence, at this distance and with no Kenyan currency. The agent was unfazed. Clearly a man used to conjuring rabbits from hats and moving mountains! A phone call to the Nairobi booking office and a cheque in East African shillings payable straight to the agent for the full amount and it was done. We were to claim the tickets in Nairobi by the stated deadline or the tickets would be resold. There was then just the small matter of getting from Nairobi to Lake Victoria, a mere 212 miles, six to seven hours on the road, without any means of paying our way.

But for now we could relax. There were sight to see. As we drove into the Meru protected wild life area we had the best view of Mt Meru itself, and encountered our first big beasts. First, two giraffes towering over us, looking down their noses, as they do, and saw no reason to move away. An elephant crossed the track ahead only feet away. It barely noted our presence. We were no threat, so it continued on its way. We passed through a small settlement of grass thatched mud cottages and

into the woods in the foreground of this image. There we came across ostriches and antelope grazing, mingling with a couple of rooting warthogs. Not the prettiest of sights!



Mt Meru from Arusha

[TripAdvisor](#)

Most breath-taking were the colobus monkeys, with their feathery tails and shoulders and striking black and white markings. Unusual for monkeys, the colobus has no thumb: just four fingers and a vestigial bump or nothing at all where a thumb would be.

The next day we travelled a little further to the east to get a closer look of the mighty Kilimanjaro – a volcanic mountain currently dormant. Because it has three volcanic domes, Kibo, Mawenzi and Shira, the view from every every vantage point is strikingly different. In this image from the Arusha side, you don't see any of the domes, but edge a little further in all directions and it is like looking at a different mountain. We set off up one to drive up one of the minor roads that would take us closer to the summit, but the engine began to feather, then splutter and I realised it couldn't cope with the change in the composition of the air as we got higher, so we had to turn back – a feat in itself given the narrowness of the road and the steepness of the incline.

The next day we set out for Nairobi, with further views of the summit and a glimpse of the volcanic cones from the road. That evening it started to rain again and persisted all night so we hardly slept, worrying about the state of the road for the next leg of our journey.

(Next time... trying to finance the journey from Nairobi.)

Margaret Manuell



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[Arusha National Park](#)

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Do you have an unlocked smart mobile phone that you don't need? Perhaps you would like to donate it to Lichfield Advanced Motorists? If so, please speak to Grahame Ottewell or Nigel Rogers?

Lichfield Advanced Motorists

Lichfield Advanced Motorists (LAM) is one of a network of over 200 local IAM RoadSmart groups across the UK.



The group is run by dedicated volunteers who give their time and expertise in an effort to improve driver skills.

In addition, the group is a place where full and associate members can share ideas and contribute to the IAM RoadSmart's work in developing and promoting innovative road safety strategies. It also provides a social focus where members can meet and enjoy the company of fellow driving enthusiasts.

IAM RoadSmart

At IAM RoadSmart we make better drivers and riders. As a registered UK charity formed in 1956, we've spent more than 60 years making our roads safer by improving driver and rider skills through coaching and education.



Our qualified experts, our network of thousands of volunteers and 200 local groups are our lifeblood. They champion our cause and help drive our vision – to be the best, most recognised provider of coaching and advice for all post-licence drivers and riders – and our mission is to make better drivers and riders.

We also help businesses to develop their staff to become more confident, skilled and responsible on the road. IAM RoadSmart provides a range of risk management and training services, include e-learning, on-road coaching and seminars. We are proud of our achievements but there's always more to do. In 2015 we welcomed 6,000 more people as full IAM RoadSmart members, helped 150 achieve Master driver or rider status and awarded our 1,000th F1RST Register membership.

We also helped Go Ahead London to win the Prince Michael International Road Safety Award. At any one time there are over 7,000 drivers and riders actively engaged with our courses, from members of the public to company drivers, while our Driver Retraining Academy has helped 2,500 drivers to shorten their bans through education and support programmes.

And, as the voice of advanced drivers and riders in the UK, last year we made 5,500 media appearances and had a place on 24 major transport and road safety panels. Everything we do is designed to inspire confidence, respond to individual driver and rider needs, make our courses and services enjoyable and drive progress

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