



MAMM summer newsletter July 2024

Welcome to the MAMM summer newsletter.

The MAMM Committee reconvened in June following the March AGM. We are looking forward to the year ahead and already the Car and Bike Observers are busy taking associates out for drives and rides.

It's the time of year when we all enjoy going out for drives and rides, taking in the lovely local scenery. Hopefully the weather will improve over the summer, so that we can make the most of the scenic views.

A MAMM newsletter has been suggested as an opportunity to keep in touch with our members, to provide updates and share information as a group, especially any memorable driving or motorcycling trips we have enjoyed.

Congratulations

Firstly, congratulations go to two of our members for their recent successes and we appreciate them sharing their good news via this newsletter.



Congratulations to Bradley Langley on passing his advanced car test.

Vincent Dobby, MAMM Car Chief Observer, congratulates Bradley.

Congratulations also to John Rees who has passed his advanced motorcycle test.

John is already a qualified DVLA CBT motorcycle instructor and he will now be commencing his National Observer training.



Great Road Trips

To start off the first in the series our Chairman, Tony Lunnon-Wood, a keen biker who also enjoys driving trips, has kindly provided summaries of his car trip to Shetland and also his bike trip to the Dolomites. We hope you find these interesting and it would be great if you might consider sharing some of your own memorable travels in our future newsletters.

Shetland car trip : Tony Lunnon-Wood

Closer to the Arctic Circle than it is to London, Shetland is a unique part of the UK. It's been on our "Bucket List" for years but waiting for a lengthy weather window to allow dry motorcycle touring was proving elusive. A dearth of ferry cabins makes booking well in advance essential, so we decided to book early and take the car. Ironically it was dry, but windy, the whole period of our visit.

The ferry crossing can be extremely uncomfortable if the weather is bad, but we were fortunate to have a smooth sailing in both directions. Disembarking starts at 07.30 hrs so it is an early start to the day.



We drove to Sumburgh airport for breakfast then proceeded to Sumburgh Head, the most southerly part of the "Mainland".

The roads are all in a very good condition and traffic relatively light. Vast vistas and sea views tend to dominate any drive on Shetland.

Sumburgh Head Lighthouse

Sumburgh Head is a major tourist hot spot, particularly for cruise ship passengers and, as such, can get very crowded at certain times. With only 2 toilets serving hundreds of visitors the queues can be mind boggling! A visit outside of midmorning hours is a much more pleasurable experience.

Huge colonies of sea birds including puffins and dolphin pods are part of the viewing experience, as well as a museum of the original lighthouse and the WW2 early warning radar station.

Driving on all roads on the “Mainland” is a pleasure. Smooth, well-maintained roads with light traffic and big vistas are the norm.

It became apparent how clever the producers of the “Shetland” series featuring Jimmy Perez have been. Many of the stunning locations used for filming are nowhere near Lerwick but have been filmed to utilise the outstanding rugged scenery in some locations, in particular, the iconic beaches with white sand and turquoise coloured clear water.



‘Jimmy Perez’ house



Tombolo at St Ninian's Beach

Beautiful unspoilt beaches and crystal-clear water surround the islands and you will most definitely not be surrounded by bathers and sun worshippers. The cliffs at Eshaness are truly spectacular with a scenic breezy walk along the tops, but not for the faint hearted.



Cliffs at Eschaness

The museum in Lerwick is well worth a visit and an easy place to kill time waiting to embark on the Ferry. It is free and has a café. It is well set out with exhibits on the early lives of Shetlanders, who were as hard as nails! There's a floor dedicated to wool and knitting displays as well as an overview of the oil industry and its impact on the Islands. Lerwick is extremely quiet on a Sunday and Monday, so plan your visit if you wish to shop!!

Despite their Viking Heritage the Shetlanders we met were warm, friendly and quietly spoken in a wonderful gentle dialect.

There is no doubt it is expensive to travel to the Islands, but definitely worth the effort. If you time your visit correctly you might even manage to see a rocket launch from Saxa Vord.

Dolomites motorcycle trip : Tony Lunnon-Wood

A trip abroad in any vehicle is always a challenge even more so on a motorbike. Different countries have different attitudes to the biker fraternity; fortunately, The Continent loves them.

The Alps are majestic, but the Dolomites have attitude. You can ride all day, never descending below 6000 feet. Tight, challenging hairpins and drivers in an environment they are not familiar with, can make riding a test of man and machine.



Planning an overtake of a cyclist climbing a steep mountain road at 2-3 mph needs to be well thought out. The hairpin is not the place to carry out the manoeuvre!!



Timmelsjoch high mountain Road Italy



Being an advanced rider ensures you have the skill set, confidence and road craft to deal with most eventualities. Locals overtaking at speed approaching blind hairpin bends make life extremely interesting.

Anticipating a potential hazard is key on mountain roads, be it wildlife or experienced local biker groups overtaking on very twisty alpine roads, which makes rear observation vital.

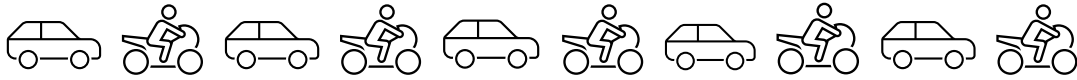
The riding / driving style of locals on Shetland is totally different to a large German biker group, intent on overtaking everything they can in the Dolomites. But, an Advanced Rider/ Driver will deal with any scenario as safely as possible.

That's why it's called a "Skills for Life" course.



Motorcycle museum on the mountain

I thoroughly recommend Shetland and the Dolomites for a trip on wheels, be it two or four. One can be completed in a weekend the other, allow a week minimum. Go for it have a great adventure!



Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our MAMM summer newsletter. Hope you have enjoyed reading it.

If you have a memorable driving or motorcycling trip you would like to share with MAMM members, please send your article to the MAMM Secretary at this e-mail address.

MAMMsecretary24@hotmail.com

Enjoy the rest of the summer

Happy driving and biking