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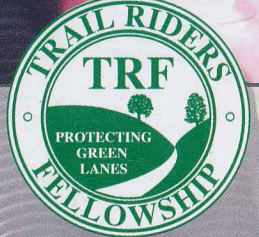


TRAIL



The magazine of the TRF, the National Club for all who wish to ride Legal Motorcycles on Legal Carriageways

OCTOBER 2011 No. 398 EDITOR: FRED ELLISON



Patron: Lord Fairfax

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STATIONERY & LEAFLETS

Keepers of Stationery:	Debbie Hutchinson	Leaflets & Membership Forms
	Fred Ellison	Letterheads & Compliments Slips
Display Equipment:	Leo Crone	01325 463815 (7a.m. - 5p.m.) Display boards held at Ut 10, Red Barnes Way, McMullen Road, Darlington DL1 2RR

REGIONAL RoW ADVISORS

Wales & West Midlands	Tim Stevens	01547 529946 Offa's Road, Knighton LD7 1ES
South & South West	Dave Tilbury	See above for contact details
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East Midlands	Robin Hickin	See above for contact details

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Display Ads: For Advertising Rates please contact Fred Ellison, 01254 823893 editor@trf.org.uk
Members Classifieds: Bikes, Riding Gear etc **FREE OF CHARGE** Enclose membership number.
ALL Commercial Advertising to be paid for - £1 per line, £5 minimum. Please send all classifieds with payment if applicable to THE EDITOR, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe BB7 9DG. Tel: 01254 823893 Fax: 01254 887999 editor@trf.org.uk

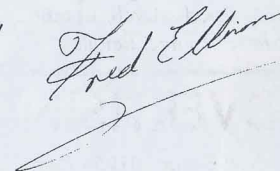
EDITOR

Last month it was the 'Four Seasons' in the South Pennines' photo competition that we were asking you to go for. I hope you did. Even just entering such a competition gives trail riding a chance of being featured on the Watershed Landscape 2013 calendar as well as your photographs being professionally mounted, curated and shown at the Manor House Museum, Ilkley. Closing date for Autumn entries is November 30th and Winter and all final entries, February 22nd 2012. For full details contact Anna Marshall at Anna.Marshall@pennineprospects.co.uk or direct on 07582 101321. For terms and conditions visit www.watershedlandscapes.co.uk. Do have a go at this, for trail riding to progress we must be part of the landscape.

TRF CALENDAR COMPETITION

I can't promise international recognition or to display your bits and pieces in a museum. What I can offer is a £25 voucher to spend at the TRF Shop. See yourself in one of those natty TRF polo shirts, using a TRF pen to write your Christmas Cards whilst drinking your coffee from a TRF branded, stainless steel travel mug? This can only happen if you enter the Calendar Competition. All photos submitted must of course conform to the TRF ethos of acceptability in the countryside and need not necessarily include a bike. All entries must be with the Editor by December 6th.

Yours in anticipation,



Please note the TRF reserves the right to use all entries in the furtherance of its objectives.

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WANTED:

RUN REPORTS
RIGHTS OF WAY • NOTICES
BIKE & RIDING GEAR REVIEWS
COVER PHOTOS
YOUR VIEWS ON TRAIL RIDING
RELATED TOPICS
or anything you feel would be interesting

COVER PHOTO:

From John Robinson.
Down among the overgrowth.
Stapes Lane, North Yorkshire.

COPY DEADLINE:
1st Tuesday of the Month

All contributions to THE EDITOR
Fred Ellison, Sheepcote Farm
Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe
BB7 9DG editor@trf.org.uk

BMF Discount Code: TRF11C774

TRF AGM

10.00 a.m.,
Sunday 20th November 2011

Lecture Room 2,
The Heritage Motor Centre,
Banbury Road, Gaydon,
Warwickshire CV35 0BJ.

Any agenda items must be notified to
The Secretary, Polly Cody,
52 Conway Drive, Flitwick,
Bedfordshire MK45 1ST,
secretary@trf.org.uk

NOTICE BOARD

SUSSEX GROUP TRF

Notice of
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Thursday 24th November 2011

Ashington Social Club (for directions see 'Groups' page 30 of TRAIL). 8 p.m. sharp.
Please ensure that nominations for the election of officers reach the
Chairman by the end of October.

Please attend: apart from the normal AGM business
there is a lot to discuss affecting the future of our branch.

Peter Fancourt

NORTH WALES CHANGE OF VENUE

1st Wednesday, 8.00 p.m.
at Potters Wheel, Precinct Way,
Buckley CH7 2EG. Ref SJ 279 637

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

TRF RoW TRAINING WORKSHOP October 23rd 2011
At Long Itchington, Warwickshire. Email row@trf.org.uk to book at place.

TRF AGM Sunday November 20th 2011
Heritage Motor Centre, Banbury Road, Gaydon, Warwickshire CV35 0BJ.

MAKE SURE YOUR EVENT IS LISTED

Send any details to The Editor editor@trf.org.uk,
Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe, BB7 9DG.

RoW UPDATE

TRF ROW Training Workshop 23

October 2011 Thanks to all that have booked a place at the Workshop, I look forward to an exciting day.

We have nearly reached our maximum numbers for the venue but a few places are still available.

All our national ROW advisers will be available to discuss any Local Group issues that you might have.

Email row@trf.org.uk to book a place on this event.

This month I want to raise a couple of significant issues that have been floated around on forums over the last month or so.

Firstly as a result of a genuine mistake by a small group of local riders (from the Peaks) they were stopped and quote from ktmforum "all 4 of us got a fixed penalty of £60.00". Yes it happens, I was recently caught speeding and got the same, sorry but like these four I was in the wrong place at the wrong time, live with it.

I was amazed at the follow up reaction from forum members who, as a result, were making comment and inciting others to become involved in a mass ride out to demonstrate their opposition to this enforcement of the LAW. The loss of routes to use as a result of tardy local authorities and recent legislation may have affected people's views and incitement to action, although laudable, was misplaced.

Yes it might have got press coverage, yes riders might have felt better by showing their defiance, and yes the police and the government would have pocketed a load more cash from the inevitable FPN's issued as a result. Sound bites would have likened those

taking part to the rioters we have seen on the streets of our cities and the public reaction would be similar.

If those who volunteered to ride for an hour, or a few hours, spent a few minutes to write to their local councillor, their local MP to air their views, that might have a greater affect. I sometimes dream of such things but to suggest such an idea is like asking most people to chop off their right hand. I hear them now, what would I write, well this particular thread has 111 posts on 12 pages so some protagonists obviously can and do write, so why not email it to your MP instead of whinging on a forum.

What do you think?

Quote from a TRF Member:

"Just clicked the link below, and what do I see? "What's New" "Report Illegal Offroading" - not impressed! No explanation of what is illegal, and that byways, unclassified county roads which may not have a tarmac surface and restricted byways where the main use in the 5 years prior to NERCA 2006 can be used by road legal vehicles."

www.breconbeacons.org

This is the kind of action that is now prevalent in our national parks and YES big brother is watching you while you are out and about. It's a shame they don't make it clear to the public that there are legal routes to use in National Parks. A link on the BBNPA takes you to this "Your chance to have your say" <http://www.breconbeacons.org/the-authority/planning-access-and-row/your-chance-to-have-a-say> but where do we motorised users have our say on access and use, you might want to ASK.

Robin Hickin,
National ROW Officer

Local Press

Hi all,

This month I was sent a copy of a press cutting from a local paper which warned that illegal off roaders could have their vehicles confiscated by the police. The warning came about because, as the paper reported,

"... officers spotted several motorbikes and four wheel drive vehicles heading across the fells and damaging the land. In the latest incident, two motorcycle riders were fined for riding down a bridleway"

The exact circumstances are not really material but illustrate how our lawful activity is tainted in the minds of those who don't know or can't be bothered to make the distinction.

So, if we had wanted to, what could have been the response to this article? Well, leaving aside the purists' view that we are not 'off-roaders', we could have countered this damaging PR with responses such as:

- *The two in question were not members of the TRF*
- *The local TRF group have been assisting the police in an ongoing operation to target those riders who ride illegal routes and unroadworthy bikes*
- *If they rode the bridleway in error, they should join the TRF which would enable them to find out which routes they can legally use*
- *TRF members sign up to a code of conduct to respect the countryside*

- *The TRF volunteers regularly help with maintenance of trails*
- *The TRF have worked with Park Authorities to erect fencing and signs to stop riders straying from the correct legal routes*

These are just examples - I am sure that you can think of others. The important thing, though, is to get a response in and get it in straightaway. No editor is going to publish a retraction or clarification 2 weeks after an article appeared so **time is of the essence!**

We must **all** be alert to anything that puts trail biking in a bad light and counter it whenever we can.

If you see or hear something that upsets you, is biased or simply wrong; try to write a short piece explaining why, which could be sent to the editor. Email it and a copy of the original article to me and to Richard Simpson, our PR officer (Both email addresses are shown in the front of TRAIL). Richard is normally very quick to respond to emails and I look at mine most evenings if I am at home so will try to get back to you the same day. If you don't hear from either Richard or me, then please don't wait - get your response in anyway to the paper or radio station the next day.

If we do this often enough, we will gradually get the message across and you never know we might eventually find that they check the facts with us first before publishing!

Thanks for your vigilance.

Jack Knight

Objections Needed

Are you feeling objectionable?

Proposed S-TRO Cradle Lane Hampshire

Can you please help by objecting to the proposed S-TRO on Cradle Lane this will effect all future LTD's and trail riding, unfortunately it's the number of objections that count in Surrey. Recently we had over 1,000 objections to a proposed TRO which had a positive result. Ps Buster Hill next.

Hampshire CC claim that a **9 month** S-TRO will allow the surface of the reworked ford to compact down and also avoid damage to the surface over the wet winter months. This water splash doesn't dry up in the summer months, water will always be carried out of the ford on to the entry/exit ramps by all users. The new ramps are very shallow compared to the steep exit of the old ford and do not have exposed tree roots to hold water.

It is some time since the work was completed and has had a long dry summer to consolidate. Low pressure motorcycle tyres will have less impact on the surface in the winter months than steel horse shoes, this TROY does not make sense, as can be seen by the youtube clip it was not motorcycles that caused the appalling damage at the old ford.

See photos of Cradle Lane, before and after repair, which shows the new ford. Does this level of repair really require a S-TRO or is it just to prepare it for part of the new Shipwrights Way?

Cradle Lane is a vital link on the Surrey/Hampshire border it is very important that we keep this link open 12 months of the year.

For those that have not seen the youtube clip of the culprits that caused all the damage at the old ford take a look at the evidence ~ <http://hk.youtube.com/wyrzk> (Polish Off Road

W UK) Cradle Lane Ford.

E-mail your objections to row.notices@hants.gov.uk before 28th October 2011.

PROHIBITION OF DRIVING IN KINGSLEY BOAT 29 AND HEADLEY BOAT 36 (CRADLE LANE)

Hampshire County Council proposes to make a traffic order as follows:

EFFECT OF ORDER: To prohibit any motor vehicle with two wheels from proceeding in Kingsley BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic) 29 from a point where it meets Binsted BOAT 75 at SU 8142 3955 to a point where it meets Headley BOAT 36 at SU 8170 3895, and in Headley



BOAT 36 from a point where it meets Kingsley BOAT 29 at SU 8170 3895 to its junction with Picketts Hill at SU 8152 3853, between 1 September and 31 May in any year.

To prohibit any motor vehicle with three or more wheels from proceeding in Kingsley BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic) 29 from a point where it meets Binsted BOAT 75 at SU 8142 3955 to a point where it meets Headley BOAT 36 at SU 8170 3895, and in Headley BOAT 36 from a point where it meets Kingsley BOAT 29 at SU 8170 3895 to its junction with Picketts Hill at SU 8152 3853, at any time.

FURTHER DETAILS: A copy of this notice, the proposed order, a map showing the location and effect of the proposal and a statement of reasons may be inspected during the usual office hours at the following places:

- (i) East Hampshire District Council, Penns Place, Petersfield (Opening hours : Mondays to Fridays 9am – 5pm).
- (ii) Information Centre, Mottisfont Court, High Street, Winchester (Opening hours : Mondays to

Fridays 8.30am – 4.30pm).

OBJECTIONS: All objections and other representations in respect of this proposal must be sent in writing to the Head of Countryside, Hampshire County Council, Room 200, Mottisfont Court, Winchester SO23 8ZF or via email to row.notices@hants.gov.uk no later than 28 October 2011. All objections must state the grounds on which they are made. Persons wishing to make objections or other representations are advised that in the order-making process, objections or other representations may become publicly available and therefore the names and addresses of those persons making objections or other representations may also be made publicly available.

TITLE: The order, if made, will be known as "The Hampshire (Kingsley BOAT 29 & Headley BOAT 36) (Prohibition of Driving) Order 2011".

DATED this 3rd day of October 2011.

KEVIN GARDNER, Head of Legal Services, The Castle, Winchester, SO23 8UJ.

FREE ENTRY TO

The TRF have taken a stand at **Motorcycle Live** which is being held at the **NEC, Birmingham** from **19th to 27th November**.

This is instead of our normal stand at the Dirt Bike Show.

We have a 6m x 3m shell stand in Hall 2 close to The **ACU Try a Trials** and the **Yamaha Off-Road Experience** areas so there should be lots of activity.

Volunteers are needed to help set up the stand on Friday 18th and of course to man it over the next 9 days that the show is on. It may be more difficult to find people for the 5 working days of 21st to 25th November so I am very anxious to hear from anyone who is available then. The plan is to have 3 or 4 people manning the stand each day which will allow



a bit of time for everyone to have a break for food and drink and a look around the show.

Entry will be free and you will be given a small expenses allowance of £5.00 to help with the cost of refreshments.

We have adverts in MCN for the 6 weeks leading up to the show with a voucher offer that goes out with their show guide so I hope the stand will be busy.

Please contact me directly on marketing@trf.org.uk if you can help.

Thank you, Jack Knight, Marketing Director

Stand and Deliver on a KTM 950

original setup, so the stand is retained in a virtually identical position.

Fitting it is quite easy, providing you follow the comprehensive instructions supplied, although I made two deviations to get the thing to fit my bike.

The first problem which I encountered is that the British importer sells the kit as being suitable only for Adventures and Super Enduros built from 2005 on, and my Adventure, although registered in 2005, is 2004 spec.

However the Black Dog Cycle Works home website explains that all you have to do to make the kit fit an 03-04 Adventure is to grind a few mm off a small web near the left-hand footrest, which I did using a Dremel.

The bike must be held upright, without using either stand (I put padding between it and the garage wall and secured it using a tie-down). Drop the skid plate and remove the left-hand centre stand bolt and rear engine-mounting bolt, then detach the side-stand bracket from the engine.

You then bolt the side-stand assembly to the supplied relocater plate using two countersunk screws that pass through the plate from the inside. The third bolt: which secures the stand on both the stock and modified version; is the rear engine-mounting bolt. To get all three holes to line up I deviated from the instructions by first putting a bolt through the rearmost hole, then fitting and torquing up the two front

bolts. I then removed the first bolt, and fitted the bracket onto the engine-mounting bolt (which is pushed through from the right-hand side of the bike). Without aligning the third hole first, I couldn't make the third bolt fit, and you can't tighten the first two bolts once the bracket is on the bike.

But that was the only glitch. The final step: fitting the replacement longer centrestand bolt supplied in the kit; is straightforward.

The kit comes with comprehensive instructions, including a list of all the tools you will need (most of which are in the KTM's stock tool kit), and all the necessary replacement nuts and bolts.

The instructions give torque figures for all the fasteners, and even tell you where to use red Loctite and where to use blue. I compromised,

by using the blue Loctite which comes in a red tube!

Once it is fitted, you wouldn't know it is there. The bike is held just as securely as ever, and you would only see the bracket if you looked for it.

The £55 kit is imported by Zen Overland: www.zenoverland.com

Zen Overland also imports Mefo Super Explorer tyres. I've got one waiting to be fitted to the 950, and I'll report on how it performs later. For the moment all that I can say is that it's got 11 mm of tread compared to about 7 mm on a new stock rear Pirelli Scorpion A/T, and the Mefo has a reputation for outlasting and outgripping the standard fitment tyre besides costing less.

Richard Simpson

A clever bolt-on addresses an inbuilt problem on the big KTM trail/adventure bikes.

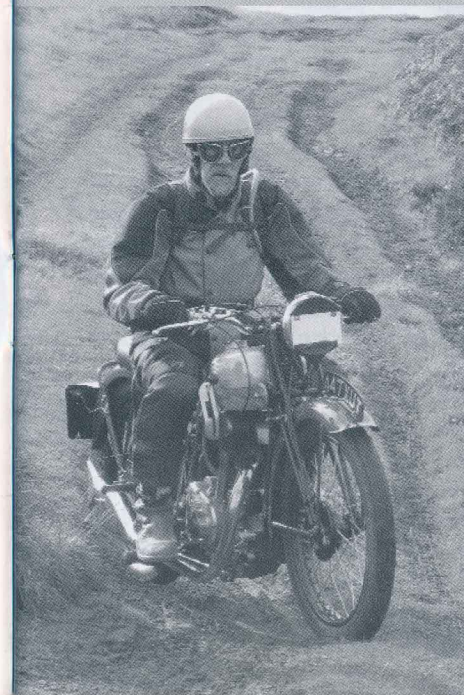
Owners of the KTM 950/990 family of bikes (Adventure, Super Enduro, Super Moto) may or may not realise this but their bikes' side-stands are bolted directly to the left-hand crankcase.

If you drop the bike hard on the left side, the stand can act as a lever and crack the crankcase. It can even do this if you clout the stand on a rock while trail riding.

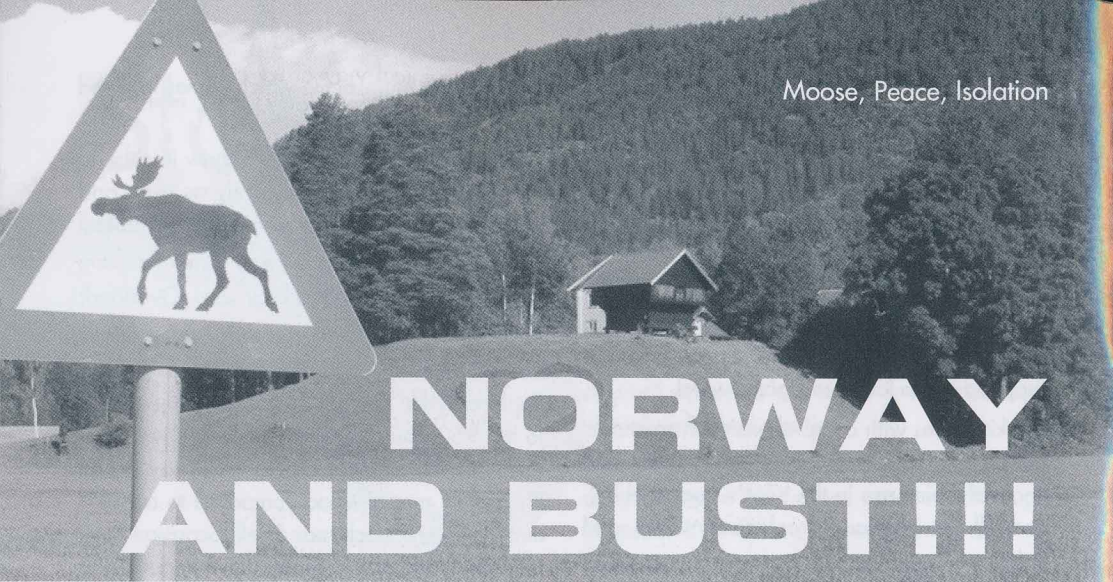
There are a number of cheap and simple solutions to this obvious potential problem: the first being don't drop the bike and the second being to remove the stand before trail riding; but those clever can-do Americans have come up with a small bolt-on that allows you to retain the stand but remove the risk by attaching it via a bracket to the frame.

The Black Dog Cycle Works side-stand mount basically consists of a sturdy pre-drilled 1/4 in ally bracket that you bolt to the bike's frame picking up the rear engine mounting bolt and the left-hand centre-stand mounting bolt. It has two holes at the front that align perfectly with the now unused tapped holes on the crankcase that accept the sidestand assembly on the

Can anyone identify these bikes?



Moose, Peace, Isolation



NORWAY AND BUST!!!

Unless you fly in, Norway is a long way off, as I found out. The ferry crossings into Esberg or Amsterdam are expensive and the chunnel route takes too long. Fortunately I found a crossing direct into Norway (Brevik: 60 miles South of Oslo) from Immingham on a Drive-on Freighter, courtesy of DSDF, Tor Line. They have twelve passenger spaces available on board. The only downside is they do not confirm your passage until one working day before your departure since priority is given to any drivers of commercial vehicles. I was lucky and boarded at 2.30 in the morning (the other down side) with my Tenere, for the twenty seven hour crossing. Smooth as silk, as we glided past the North Sea Gas and Oil fields. Excellent accommodation, on the top deck. Two of my fellow passengers were driving 200 miles up to Odda, in a transit, to pick up a church organ in order to restore the pipes back in Lincoln and then return it to Odda. Another chap was taking equipment out to his Brother-in-Laws Outward Bound School. "Public school children only, need apply" unless you fancy a second mortgage. An Irish couple had inherited a Hytter (cottage) and were going for the summer. A Norwegian woman had been teaching in Leeds and was returning home. An interesting bunch.

I planned this trip after reading "Great Motorcycle Journeys of the World", a christmas present from my daughter. Norway was the nearest.

Landing in Brevik I headed Northwest towards the fjords, fearful of any Traffic Police. I had heard the fines were horrendous. £250 "on the spot fines" for minor infringements such as doing 42kph in a 40 zone. The fines escalated with the speed; £13,000 if you are caught doing 160 kph on a Motorway and jail. Needless to say everyone was driving very carefully. Ever corner was "signed for speed", 40/50/60, some sections were 70kph if you were lucky. By the time I had spent ten days on these roads I had forgotten how to ride a bike. You never had to set up for a corner or even think about "am I going too fast". Talk about boring. Don't go if you want to ride your bike. Go if you want to tour by bike. I was prepared to sit it out. The only time I got any speed up was off-road on the few roads that were free of traffic and tolls. That's the other thing, there are a few major roads running through Norway, the side roads are all BOMVEG, Toll Roads. They are well kept, flat, greystone and hard packed, nothing difficult. That's the way they fund roads in Norway.

The national occupation is boring tunnels.

Then again they only have an open season of three months, what else do you do when the snows come and its dark. They even have a song about tunnel boring. No wonder the suicide rate is so high.

Fortunately they left the old roads in place when they built the tunnels so there are some beautiful old mountain roads to ride but you have to search them out.

My first hotel was at Rodal some 160 miles away. The ride up through Norway was pleasant, some lovely rolling countryside and after two weeks of rain, plenty of spectacular waterfalls.

I saw my first glacier near Odda, the meltwater from a glacier is turquoise due to the dissolved minerals and the rivers run turquoise too. Normal run-off water is clear or brown just like in Scotland.

The Trolls Tongue, a rock pinnacle near Tyssedal, and the 160m waterfall near Skare were outstanding. If you will forgive the pun.

I took the Ferry from Brimnes to Bruravik (£6), all part of the transport system. No need to book and headed to Voss via Ulvik not the tunnel.

From Voss to Vangsnes the scenery started to get interesting. Crossing the fjord to Dragsvik marked the start of the serious mountains with some excellent climbs.

Forde was my second overnight stop where I met six Polish motorcyclists, all spoke good English. They were touring using Youth Hostels and camping.

There should be a notice at each port into Norway reading, "Welcome to the Campsite that is Norway". Every piece of flat land in every fjord, not occupied by a town, is a campsite, full of tents and mobile homes. Out in the countryside are acres of Hytter sites. These are wooden huts, cabins and bungalows with grass/vegetation on their roofs, even bus shelters and post boxes have grass roofs. This way they blend into the countryside, unlike our stark white, caravan sites that litter our countryside and coastlines. Camping is the

only economical way of seeing Norway and you are well catered for. Unfortunately I am too old for Canvas.

By this time I had realised very few Norwegians ride motorcycles, they buy motorboats instead, which makes sense. The few motorcyclists I saw were mainly from Germany.

I felt riding in Norway was almost like one continuous Ocean Drive. There was always water on one side or the other unless you were crossing a mountain range. It was a real surprise to ride round a corner, sixty miles up a fjord, and see an Ocean Liner parked alongside a village. Amazing!

Heading North to Geiranger via the Old Mountain Road across Srynefjellet to Grotti was a spectacular off-road run, at over 5000 feet, across a desolate landscape, with a frozen lake and plenty of snow.

At Grotti I ate one of Santa's little Helpers, not an elf, Reindeer stew and very tasty it was too. This was in contrast to the "National dish" meatballs (like Irish Stew, they disguise a multitude of evils) on sale everywhere even at petrol stations. Once tried never forgotten. Never again. Yuk!!

I spotted six, supermoto, riders as I retraced the old mountain road back to Videsaeter, a fantastic run down a steep valley with terrific views.

The Hotel at Geiranger offered me a "reasonably priced", their words, evening buffet meal at £60 which I declined and settled for a bowl of soup £17 and half a glass of red wine £10. Eating out is like having a Birthday celebration everyday. A single occupancy room with buffet breakfast was £120, an average price in this oil rich country. Mind you the buffet breakfast could last you all day if you could stomach food so early in the day.

The Eagles Highway and the run up to the Trollstigen, a major tourist attraction, was very picturesque. Unfortunately there was low lying cloud that day which shrouded the summit of the Trolls Staircase. This tortuous series of

switchbacks on a near vertical descent was a joy to ride. I did it three times just for the fun of it before heading off to Oppdal via the coastline.

Next morning I set off for Trondheim, my most northerly port of call, picking out some off-road routes on the way before returning South to Hovringen in the heart of the countryside, up a 4500 foot mountain, five miles down a dirt road, in the middle of nowhere.

This is Hytter country. Wooden chalets, that are let out to tourists at £50 a night. More if you want one with a toilet and shower.

I did not see any wildlife in the whole of my ten days' holiday.

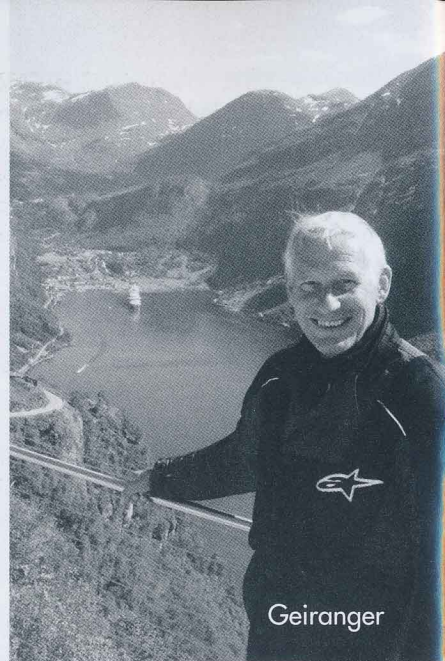
I remember camping in France, near Sables d'Olonne, many years ago and going down to the beach with my children, looking for crabs and sea creatures. Not a thing in sight. The campers had scoured the beach, collected and eaten everything.

My contention is food is so expensive, the locals have killed every living creature worth eating. There is no place for "Our Fat Lass" in Norway. The basics, food, petrol (£2/litre), housing are so expensive they do not have a disposable income to continually "feed their faces". *Ed: coming to GB soon!* The only overweight people are visitors. Maybe they have got it right. Ninety percent of our shops are full of (trash) unnecessary goods, we have a throw away society, they have a utilitarian approach. I saw no signs of waste or litter in Norway.

From Hovringen I followed the road to Vagamo and Lom.

From Lom down to Skolden was the route that made the trip. Riding past the highest mountain in Norway at 7500 feet, across a plateau at 6000 feet, with mountain scenery and a glacier you could almost touch, can only be described as Majestic. Sognefjord is a beautiful place, I stayed at Leikanger, with beautiful views all around.

Next stop Bergen, I picked a backroad route that had its moments but ended up approaching Bergen through ten miles of tunnels. Automatic Toll roads appeared on the outskirts of Bergen. I found out later that motorcycles were free, everyone else has to register a credit card or pay cash. They even send bills, with fines, out to other countries, for those who ignore the notices.

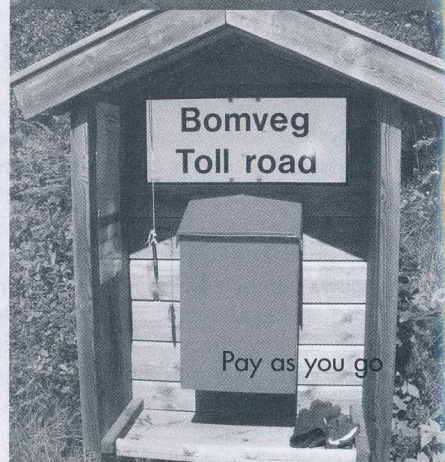


Geiranger



Sleeps Two.

Ed: looks like it needs a haircut!



Pay as you go

Bergen was a bustling city. The QE2 was in Port and had just disgorged its contents onto the Fishquay. A queue, a mile long, waited to ascend the mountain on the railway just for the view. I did it on foot wandering through the cobbled back streets and admiring the view as the panorama opened up before me.

I found a Pawn Brokers in a back street that was reminiscent of fifty years ago in England. It was stacked to the eaves with objet d'art from all over the world. I suspect an eccentric was running this shop as a hobby since the contents were more in keeping with that of a Museum. It looked as though nothing had been sold for a hundred years, absolutely fascinating.

The fishquay was heaving with tourists and Seafood stalls. The famous buildings were looking a little tired but the sun was shining.

Apparently it rains two days out of three in Bergen. I was lucky I had eight days of sunshine on my trip. One chap had been in a Hytter for six weeks and it had rained everyday, imagine that!!

From Bergen I ran down the Hardangerfjord to Geilo. Rumour had it that an Elk had been seen in the area two days before.

I had the Moose steak for my evening meal, my food theory was gaining credibility. Actually, it tasted more like beef, than a member of the Reindeer family.

I then took a convoluted route to Svene where I had to ring the Shipping company to find out

if I had a return berth, for the following day. Yes!! Thank Goodness!! I did not fancy the crossing into Denmark and then the six hundred mile run to Amsterdam.

With time to kill before boarding at 1.30 in the morning, I did a 250 mile circular route from Svene via Notodden, Svartdal, Eistod negotiating three hundred goats blocking the valley road, Oy, Gjerstad, Dalen, Kragero and followed the coast back to Brevik.

I felt that the Norwegians had surgically removed the lower half of my wallet (you know how tight Yorkshiremen are) every day for ten days.

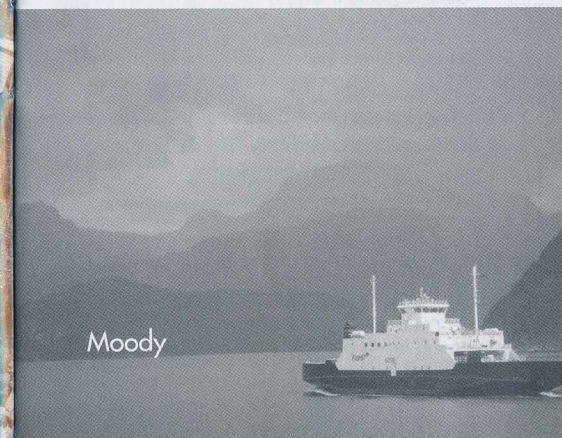
They had the shirt off my back but I managed to retain my underpants and my dignity.

Would I return? NO! The rewards were not commensurate with the expenditure, the landscape was too much like Scotland, given on a much grander scale, and everyone I met spoke English, even the TV programmes were 70% in English, I did not pick up any of the language and so it was not like a foreign holiday at all.

The other disappointment was I could not find a restaurant serving Muskox. I was informed it was a protected species. Shame they look like they would taste good.

As we set sail the News broke of the shootings and the bomb in Oslo. A sad ending to an unusual holiday.

Ride safely wherever you are,
John Robinson, T&NYTRF Group.



Moody



Muskox on the Menu

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A FEW TOP TIPS FOR NEWBIES

(based on experience, not training!)

By Alex Tooze

• Just as in road riding, look ahead when riding, not down at your front wheel. This allows you to anticipate what is coming and prepare for it. If you look down at the ground by your front wheel, chances are that's right where you'll end up!

• Also as in road riding, look where you WANT to go. You'll hit what you're looking at, so don't look at the tree, look at the gap next to it. This is based very much on painful experience!

• Relax. The bike is far more capable than you. If you fight it, you will often lose!

• On the rougher stuff, stand up (as per MB riding) and move your body to adjust balance and tyre grip accordingly.

• Keep the front wheel pointing in roughly the right direction. The back wheel will tend to follow, so don't worry if it slithers about a bit or skips sideways over a rock. That's normal and if you keep the front pointed, the bike will (normally) keep going where you want it.

• It can sometimes be easier to ride the rough(ish) stuff if you maintain a bit of speed to go over the top of it. Otherwise you'll be picking your way over every rock which can be exhausting.

• Don't be forced to ride faster than you're comfortable with. That's just asking for trouble! If the others won't wait, don't ride with them again. This is supposed to be fun and there are plenty of other riders who will be sympathetic. Even if they do laugh when you fall off. We all do it now and again.

• Ride the 'Lane of Pain'. Once. Avoid it for the rest of your riding career.

• Watch other people and learn from their good techniques as well as their mistakes. Most of us started where you are now, not very long ago.

• Don't be afraid of your front brake, even on

downhills. Obviously if it's particularly slippery, then you'll probably want to avoid it, but other than this, it can be the most effective way to slow down (or stop) on a hill.

• Try to keep both wheels rotating at all times when you are moving. If you e.g. lock the back wheel going downhill, you'll lose directional control from that wheel, and have reduced braking. In most cases, that is not the desired outcome.

• Give your bike a once-over before you start. Make sure your chain is not too loose (or tight) and is well lubed. Check your tyre pressures are OK. Depending on your tyres, you may want around 12 PSI (some have more, some less). This can make a huge difference to your ride. If you have 20+ psi in your tyres, you'll simply be providing entertainment for the other riders!

• Carry at least a basic toolkit - learn how to mend punctures with the tools you're carrying!!!

• Carry a drink, and keep hydrated as you ride. It can really take it out of you, especially if you get caught on a tricky part.

• Wear appropriate clothing (and protective gear) for the conditions and the temperature. You WILL fall off. More than once. Get used to it.

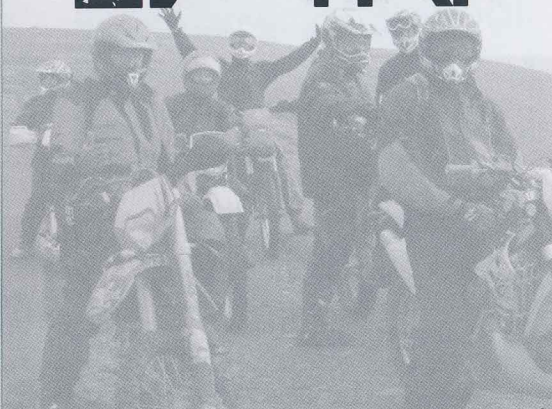
• Come along to the 'group' events such as Whiteway Barton, Haccadown and Hazelwood etc. They are great for trying things out, exchanging tips and tales and simply having a good time!

I will point out that much of the above may well be disputed by other members - this is only my own input based on my 3 years of TRF membership.

Come on chaps, do you have anything else to add?

Taken from the Devon Newsletter

LIV TRF Yorkshire Weekend



Richard arrived to drop off Phil. We arranged a 2pm ride from West Witton round the local lanes. Eddie had ridden a couple in the morning after arriving the night before with Matt and Gary and I picked a route I'd programmed into my GPS using a map kindly marked up by our own RoW officer Chris and Leo Crone of the N Yorkshire and Teesside TRF. We set off in the rain (typical!) and had a pleasant ride across the side of the hill towards Aysgarth, the beautiful dale obliterated by low cloud and driving rain, still it was great to be on the bike - beats working as they say.

We rode south west and picked up the trails across Stake Moss with a tricky climb at the start up some rocky boulder strewn slope, made slippery in the wet. Matt binned his 'Berg apparently in a similar place to he did in the morning, some people never learn! My DR350 plonked up and over with me clinging on in a rather ungainly fashion as usual. It was a lovely ride over the moors down into Bainbridge from where we rode up and out of Wensleydale and into Swaledale via Askrigg and up over the moors and down to the river at Low Row along a pleasant track to Grinton then up over Marrick Moor and on to Hurst Moor by which time the rain had eased to a light drizzle. Our next lane was a lovely UCR over Skelton Moor with a bit of a view as the cloud base lifted a little providing a tantalising glimpse of some of the beautiful scenery that we came to see. We enjoyed a couple of pretty fords swollen with the recent rains and quite slippery, particularly for throttle-happy Husaberg riders.... We rode one more lane near Bellerby across a ford and through a wood before the rain started hammering down

I am by nature a pretty easily spooked kind of person and when I hear quotes like "the next lane is a bit gnarly", "last time I took people out someone broke their collar bone", "the next ford is pretty deep", "mind the 30 metre deep potholes", my mouth goes dry, my buttocks clench, the hairs stand up on the back of my neck and I fret until I've survived the imminent peril. All of these dire forebodings were visited upon me on our Yorkshire weekend.....

For some months we planned a trip 'oop' north to ride in the Dales, another part of our beautiful country with legendary lanes. Ten of us signed up, me (Serow/DR350), John and Eddie (KTM 250s), Roberto (KTM 640), Laurence (KTM 450), Matt and Gary (Husaberg 450s), Simon (Honda XL200), Phil (GasGas 200) and Richard (Honda XR400). Seven booked into the Old Star in West Witton and three of us in Wensley House just down the road in Wensley. So 7.30am on Friday Simon picked me up in a humungous van which we filled with bikes, a main and spare, belt and braces given we were off for the weekend miles from home - well 250 miles to be precise. A painless ride up the M1 and A1 saw us in Wensley House at the same time and

and I decided enough was enough. We scuttled across the moor back to Leyburn to fuel up for a long day on Saturday. As the gloom set in and lights twinkled in windows of the hamlets we passed and smoke spiralled out of homely chimneys we pulled into the petrol station. Squeezing a few litres into the ever frugal DR350 a guy came over to Gary and asked if we were TRF members. It was only Paul Dearden, Chair of the West Yorkshire TRF group and upon hearing we were going to bumble around on our own he said he'd have none of that and would go home work late into the night getting 2 new tyres on his CRF450 Honda and see us in Kettlewell at 10am! Top bloke! We squelched our way home, parked the bikes up, had a quick reviving bath and were off to the pub for tea.

SATURDAY

Saturday we were up sharp with only a modicum of moaning from Simon about my snoring... something about trying to find something to shove in his ears at 2am in the morning... Straight downstairs for a monster fry up then squeezed into our gear and as we swung our legs over the bikes to ride the near 20 miles to Kettlewell the rain started! Phil (who had managed to sort a single room) fresh from a relaxing night's undisturbed sleep was concerned about his 200cc GasGas smoker running out of fuel, so decided to carry a can of unleaded in his rucksack. With a large carapace lump on his back, he looked to me a bit like an inflammable Ninja Turtle as we swung by West Witton to pick up the other seven campadres. We started splashing through the rain over the moors out of Wensleydale and into Wharfedale. The

intense recent rain had swollen all of the local streams, and waterfalls were all spewing torrents of water down over the hillsides in a very primeval way. Although, as the water trickled down my neck, it was hard to appreciate the view. On top of the pass we had to wade through two foot of water. By Kettlewell we were soaked through, but seeing Paul there waiting for us raised our spirits and whilst a few topped up with petrol, Bill Wilkinson, winner of the Scottish Six Day Trial in 1969 on a 250cc Greeves, showed us his fantastic collection of trials bikes in the back of the garage. After introductions Paul led us back up to Stake Moss and up Gilbert Lane and up over "Hell Gap" the short climb which Matt finally cleared on his Husaberg. We split into two groups to minimise any disturbance to other lane users, not that anyone would likely to be that mad. Half way across the moor we turned down left towards Stalling Busk down a steepish rocky lane with plenty of water running down the middle.

We crossed the road and rode a step lane towards Crooks Beck towards Marsett where several water crossings awaited us. The river, obviously swollen, was going to be challenging. The first crossing was via a concrete causeway, which although fast flowing, was not too deep. The second was another matter. Paul explained that in summer it is a cobbled causeway so keeping left would ensure a relatively dry passage but in such inclement weather I squirmed uncomfortably in my seat. Riding down river the water reached up to the crankcase but we ploughed through. Paul plunged into the next ford and drowned his bike. The Honda was dragged out,



opened and water drained from the exhaust. The air box was dry and soon the bike crackled back into life. With no way through the river I was faced with the daunting thought of riding against the current, back through the 80 metre long ford. Mentally I was beginning to wobble, seeing the high flow and knowing that for all the talk of "cobblestones" I had bounced off some rather larger stones riding down the stream, going back was going to be a different ball game. What was nagging at me was exactly how deep was the stream to the left of the causeway. Two or three others rode through without problems, but in order to get my little legs to reach the floor I have dropped the DR as low as it can go so I was sitting significantly lower than the Bergs and KTMs. A big breath and I plunged in, pushing a bit of a bow wave but struggling against the current and began to bounce off stones and small boulders. Before I knew it, I was wandering to the left towards the edge of the causeway then the bike dropped off the edge a few inches and my stomach leapt into my mouth. The engine stalled - was it flooded? I thought not and as Gary flew by, water everywhere, promising to come to my rescue when he'd reached the end I turned the engine over and

it started, ever grateful of the lecky start. I stepped off into the flow and man handled the bit back towards the bank, swung my leg over and chugged out of the ford. Wow that was pretty intense! Getting back up the steep descent to the river up through boulders and mud seems no problem at all compared with the possibility of drowning! We ran down the road past Semer Water and broke into two groups to ride along the 'Roman Road', roughly 5 miles along a rocky but not too taxing, straight - well it is a Roman Road road! I chose to go in the second group, giving me a chance to drain water from my boots.... The cloud had lifted a bit and we were afforded a few glimpses of the dales views back down the valley. We rode up to Oughtershaw Side part of the Pennine Way and prepared to ride down an UCR towards Hawes. Paul again, set the hairs on the back of my neck on end by using the words 'a bit gnarly' in describing the lane, but early on it was not too taxing looking down into Snaizholme Beck and Widdale. Half way along the 4 mile ish lane there was a steep drop down a washed out track which needed careful control to avoid dropping the bike into a large pothole. Simon carefully picked his way down, but Richard dropped the XR400 and rolled down the last bit to kickstart it on the flat. Forestry vehicles had chewed the lane up a bit so we had to negotiate some ruts near the woods. Right at the end, Phil managed to drop the GasGas and bend the brake lever, but not break it. Meeting the rest of the group we got our first decent view of the Dales looking down into Hawes with the cloud base finally rising above 1000 feet. We dropped into the town famous for its Wensleydale cheese for a bacon butty in the biker friendly café. They are very tolerant in the Penny Garth Café of bikers dripping on the floor drinking hot chocolate and wolfing down food.

A number of bikers arrived in the town as we ate so we had a wander amongst a couple of Serows and their riders ate fish and chips. They were part of an alternative trail riding

group based in Yorkshire, and as with all bikers, were a very friendly group. For the afternoon Paul decided to take us down towards Settle, so we had about a 15 mile ride south from Hawes down the B6255 in glorious sunshine past the Ribbleshead viaduct which I've never seen before and in the afternoon sunshine was absolutely magnificent, a real testament to our historical engineering prowess. Riding down the River Doe, however, provided a real eyeful of natural wonders, in a large bowl in the hillside three or four waterfalls were pouring into the ground with the majestic peak of Ingleborough behind. That ride down into Ingleton really made my weekend.

We rode a pleasant UCR past Pecca falls, seeing the only walkers of the day, then rode on to another lane Paul forewarned us about him being the only guy who normally reaches the top of. He also warned us about disappearing down potholes - again trying to scare us southern softies no doubt. The lane turned into something that will live long in the nightmares of Roberto, Eddie, Matt and Gary. The initial ride up over the boggy hillside was bad enough, but with a new tyre on the back of the DR350, low down grunt and sympathetic throttle usage, I carefully followed Paul, knowing he'd be able to pick his way through the more moist areas. First person I passed was John on his 250KTM with one throttle setting - 11! Passing him laughing insanely to myself and offering hand signals not strictly from the Highway Code, I chugged up the hill 'feeling' for grip, trying to maintain momentum whilst making sure not to break traction. I passed the others digging themselves into a hole and managed to make it to within a couple of metres of Paul before my momentum was lost and jumping off the bike I pushed her out of the rut and up to where Paul was and turned round to survey a scene of absolute carnage before us. Eddie, an enduroist, had skilfully managed to find a route up but the rest were strewn over the track. Laurence had ridden into an innocuous

looking stream which had entirely swallowed his bike and was trying to extricate it. The Husabergs were predictably bogged down and the others were in various other predicaments. Eventually everyone reached the top with the exception of Laurence's 450 KTM which had been hauled out but was drowned. As water was pumped out of the bike and the tank and seat taken off to get the spark plug out (what's that all about?), I took advantage to photograph the scenery which now was being illuminated in the afternoon sun.

With all the bikes now running we squeezed through the gate at the top of the field and into another slog through boggy ground. This is where things took a turn for the worst. Roberto's 640 KTM had repeatedly stalled and the battery had given out. Roberto, not being a big bloke, had exhausted himself trying to start it and now the big guns like Matt was making the most of the huge toad-in-the-hole he'd eaten for lunch to repeatedly kick the bike until it fired. Now, it is at this juncture I should mention that Roberto was not exactly Mr popular owing to his unbelievably loud snoring, something akin to a walrus mating with an inner tube apparently..... So John



and Laurence were already suffering sleep deprivation and were noticeably absent on the list of volunteers to flog away at Roberto's bike. The problem was that after 10 minutes of kicking, it started, only for Roberto to fall off or it stall a few hundred yards down the track. Eventually after the big guns (Gary and Matt) had exhausted themselves, it was decided to tow the bike with Gary's Berg. Eddie volunteered to ride Roberto's bike and he quite willingly (I noticed) jumped on the 250 KTM of Eddie's which weighs nothing in comparison. This led to the usual hilarious slapstick shenanigans of wheel spin, rope trapped in sprockets and Eddie getting 'filled' in by Gary when he hit a soft spot. All that could be seen was two mad glaring white eyes staring out from some form of Neanderthal mudman, oh how we laughed! Still it was a novel way of slowing up both Eddie and Gary! Eventually we dropped off the hill down a very washed out boulder strewn track where Matt came off

(again) and ran the KTM down to the road where it was finally running in a reasonably consistent way.

By now, I thought Paul had had enough of us namby pamby southerners faffing about, keeping him from his tea. But no, we weren't allowed to go back and have a bath until we'd finished another 3 lovely lanes travelling north east towards Littondale, which passed off surprisingly easily, thankfully not too taxing. At the end of Littondale we said our goodbyes and Paul broke south and we rode north home back via Kettlewell, with the rain again falling steadily. Thanks again, Paul, top bloke. Riding back up Wharfedale towards home through hamlets with smoke spiralling pub chimneys made me yearn for a hot bath, slippers and a warm fire..... Soft southerners indeed. Yet again back into the B&B dive in and out of bath and off to Pub. *To be continued...*

Sean Comber

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COPY DEADLINE: The first Tuesday of the month.

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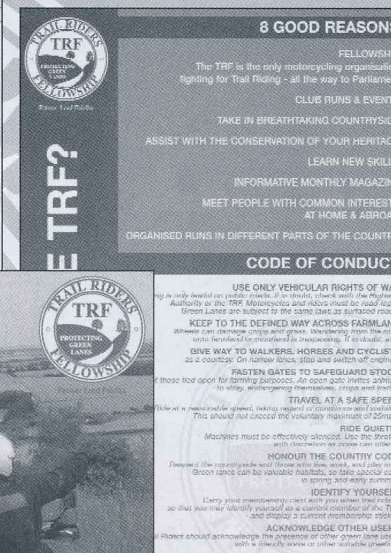
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Rod, Tom, Roy



TEAM BLUE

When Rod asked me to join him on a two day tour of the North I did not realise it would be the "Dream Team". Four, Blue, 250, four stroke, Yamahas (a KTM owner's nightmare). The only downside was the next few days were forecast as "Hurricane conditions" but at least it was warm air.

Besides, ever since 1987 and Mr Fish's forecast we have always had "worst case scenario forecasts".

We met up at the Bridge Cafe in Otley at 8.30 for a cup of tea, 35p!! A real Yorkshire welcome. We were joined by Roy and Tom and sallied forth into the countryside, in light winds and sunshine, using what lanes were still open on the way towards Ripon, Masham, Leyburn and ended up in a newly opened Biker Café on a farm just outside Bellerby. Very good too, the bacon and mushroom sarnies were delicious.

Tom had a friction puncture caused by running

too low a pressure in his tyres. That was soon fixed and was the only mechanical failure of the trip.

Heading North we passed Marske, Barnard Castle, Staindrop and entered Hamsterley Forest which was infested with Mountain Bikers but had some very interesting Lanes. Slaley Forest next, which has been repaired, almost sanitised, over the last couple of years. Shows what can be done with a little co-operation.

Then we headed for our overnight accommodation at The Cross Keys Inn, Eastgate, near Alston. We were put in a Family room, which had two separate linked double bedrooms and en-suite facilities. Very good. Fortunately the snorers had been left behind (two lads had dipped out) so we had a relatively peaceful night.

The second day welcomed the tail end of the hurricane with some driving rain as we

traversed the highest UCR in England. You certainly needed your helmet strap firmly down as we lent into the wind. As they say "If you can feel the pain you are still alive". I have always liked severe weather conditions, as long as they do not last for days. Some of my most memorable rides have been when it has been tanking down but I can do without the wind. Burp!!

Hartside was sparsely populated but the apple pie and custard was as good as ever. One chap said "we were brave being out in these condition", his bike was in the garage. I said motorcycles are no good parked up. Bikes are meant to be ridden. Two road bike men from Scotland, who were on tour in the area, asked how they could join the TRF because they fancied giving it a go. I gave them the web details and off they went. Six hours later they were in the Cafe at Hawes when we arrived. Small World!

There are some great lanes around Hartside and down towards Penrith. Shame about Greg's Hut but Tynehead is still a lovely run down the valley where we experienced some beautiful, almost ultra-violet, rainbows.

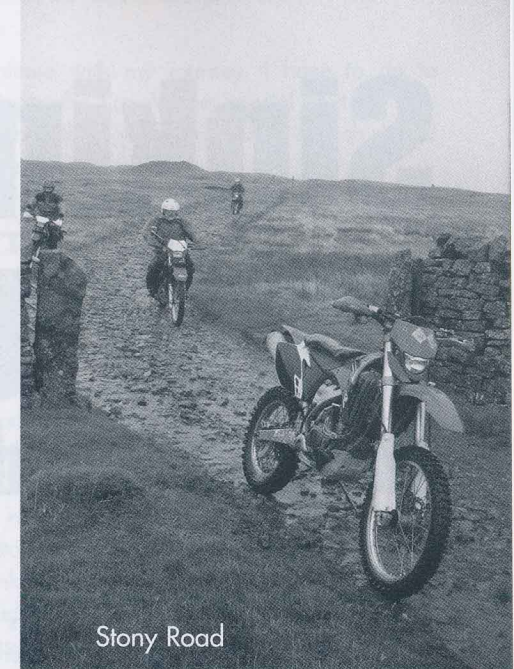
Heading South we followed trails to Kirby Stephen, onto Lady Anne Clifford's Highway and down to Hawes.

By this time the weather was turning nasty. The Tour of Britain Cycle Race had been cancelled for the day so after a cuppa I parted company with the group who headed back to Leeds via Kettlewell.

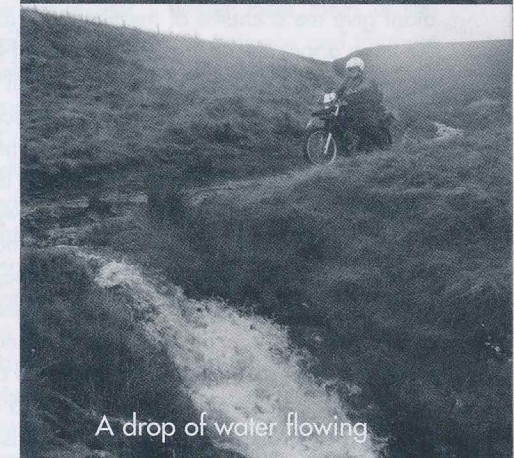
I had a tail wind all the way to Saltburn. I never knew a 250 could travel so fast, most exhilarating. Thanks to Rod for the guided tour and all his hours of planning and research. Thanks to Tom, Roy and Rod for the company.

The road work may have increased but there are still some lovely long lanes left up North that cross some beautiful countryside.

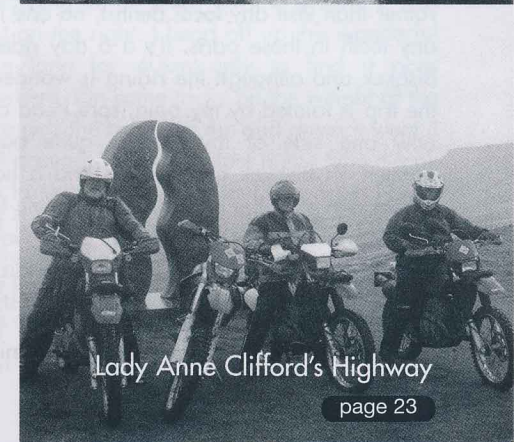
Happy Trail Riding wherever you are.
John Robinson,
T&NYTRF Group.



Stony Road



A drop of water flowing



Lady Anne Clifford's Highway

Sinking the Titanic

Rich "XR" Bond Heads East

Continued...

Years ago I had three appointments of dentistry for root canal surgery, the dentist didnt give me a choice of treatment but after the three appointments and £800 on the NHS he told me that he didn't manage to get all the root out and that this might be a problem some time in the future. I say he didn't give me a choice of treatment because a little later in a conversation with a friend, dentists were likened to estate agents in that they could have removed the tooth in the first place but it would have been much less work for them. So here I am in Tajikistan with chronic toothache and a thumping headache, the bike isn't quiet by any stretch of the imagination. I decide to hold out until I reach Bishkek, the capital of Kyrijistan rather than visit any local dentist, no one has any teeth in these parts. It's a 5 day ride to Bishkek and although the riding is wonderful the trip is tainted by my pain, sore head and now one side of my face is quite badly swollen. In Bishkek by chance I find a hotel with a dentist in the building. He tells me that my teeth are all sealed OK and that I would need a photo x-ray, and gives me an address. This second place is just like a good western dentist surgery and I'm very relieved. The dentist in the hotel was more than a little

suspect, one room and he was much more interested in flirting with the previous customer than he was in my teeth. The x-ray done and yes the earlier root canal surgery was infected. It was suggested that I have the tooth removed and I agree, I see no reason to try and save it I dont want any more problems further down the road. The catch is that no one at that surgery can do it until Saturday, it's Tuesday now. I'm given the address of the public dentist surgery, open 24hr from what I can tell. Christ, on arrival it does not give a good impression and I wish I had walked away. There are very sorry looking people with bandages or scarves around their faces and general jaw area. I'm seen quickly, novelty of a foreigner I think, by a big no nonsense type of man. After some talk in different languages some drawn diagrams and some prodding about in my mouth and we are agreed that the tooth should come out. We discuss the root, again more diagrams, and he assures me he will remove it. The surgery is a flat table, no reclining chair here, with a large lamp with only two of the eight bulbs working. The only concession to hygiene is that I have to take my shoes off before lying on the table. It's that thing about shoes again, like China, no one in the

countries I've visited has an aversion to spitting in the street or on café floors, when you eat in cafés you sit up on a bed like platform and take your shoes off. I'm ok with dentist jabs but the guy stabs at me with the needle I fight back, and the nurse holds my hands down. They use a pretty strong anaesthetic cause I'm numb in a moment, he is clamping down with tools inside my mouth and out comes a tooth and I didn't feel a thing. After hes plugged the hole with a tampon I sit up and he puts the tooth in my hand. Its the wrong tooth. Not the troublesome capped infected root, root canal tooth but the perfectly healthy one next to it, I'm dumb struck. This guy isn't going to put it back. What can I do, I'm given instructions to rinse my mouth with salt water and not to eat for 24hr. I go back to the posh dentist and explain what has happened, blank faces meet me. Now I'm angry and return to the butcher at the hospital and start an argument. I'm more than a little annoyed off. The big guy is convinced he has removed the offending tooth and says there is nothing wrong with the root infected one. Now I'm at fall down stage, I haven't eaten much in the last month, less in the last week and my rage only exhausts me. I collapse into sleep at the hotel after shouting at the taxi driver because the fare was double back as it was there, I split the difference with him. In the morning I have the x-ray printed. The posh dentist gave it to me on disk but the hospital doesn't even have light bulbs let alone a computer. I ride to the hospital to show it to the tooth removal man, he's not around. I go to the bank and return to the removal man, I'm going to show him he's an idiot. Again he's not around, I draw diagrams on the print showing the infection, the good but now removed tooth and the infected root canal one, I write in large print you are an idiot and leave it in his desk. The posh dentist now says they can care for the root tooth in three days time. I'm going to hope the antibiotics I've now got stop the infection. I think I will ride on tomorrow and

continue with my journey. I have to go to Astana, the Kazakhstan capital next for bike bits and there will no doubt be a posh dentist there if I need one.

7TH JULY

It seems I'm destined to ride this trip solo.

Out of Kazakhstan and my god what an immediate difference. Packed the bike early, I had to be at the border for my ten o'clock appointment. Ten Swiss had arrived at the hotel on TTR600s and a Japanese on a BMW 800. I didn't meet the Japanese but arranged to ride with the Swiss. The young night watchman for the car park had pinched my penknife but one of the Swiss, on hearing that I didn't have a map, promptly gave me one. (easy come, easy go). I left before the ten Swiss confident I would meet them at the border, but my own impatience and the heat made me decide to ride around a bit and then come back for them. Of course I missed them, not only that but I got lost, fell over and got stuck in the mud, all for around 4 hours. I can read a map but can never seem to find the right road or pick the right landmark to gauge things by. This time there was a huge three tier reservoir and dam system. Was it on the map, was it ****. I even got chased away by a soldier for taking a photo of the first flowing water I'd seen in weeks. Never mind, the road I want is second on the right after the border, according to the map. On the ground it was first on the right. I head off up this wonderful little lane for 40km only to find it goes nowhere. On some tricky bit the weight of the bike gets the better off me and down it went, I lost around a gallon of fuel in the time it took me to strip it down and get it upright. Next I got it completely stuck in deep sticky mud (is there another kind). Some locals came to help but four of us couldn't free it. My bike was at risk of becoming a fossil if it hadn't have been for a donkey that hee-awed in the face of stuck

BMW's, I call it super donkey and it pulled the bike out backwards via the luggage rack, nice one gas chief. There is no point in asking directions here, no one knows where they are nor where anywhere else is and if they do, they don't want you to go there and especially not by the route you want to go by. If you show them the map it's probably the first one they've ever seen and they spend half an hour deciding that it's the right country but to be fair the map probably isn't even in the right language. On top of all of that half the locals are drunk and just want to talk to you about football. They're also not keen to help and prefer just to look at you. One guy expected payment for directions I knew I couldn't understand or would turn out to be useless, I told him, I'm not American. Again I didn't change enough money at the border, it seems arrogant or foolish to change 100 dollar notes at these scabby looking kiosks with lots of people around so I just changed the Tenga Kazak currency I had left. Nowhere near enough but will get me by for a while and I have dollars if I get in a jam.

On the right mountain pass now. And wow, it is wonderful. I'm camped up near the snow. I continued until my fingers, in fingerless gloves, could take no more. And to think that in the desert I'd been cursing myself for carrying the extra weight of a fleece and warm shirts and damn near gave them away. I'm cold, it's gonna be a cold night and it's very refreshing. The riding is fantastic and the bike is doing not too bad. I was stopped at a military checkpoint, there I think, to stop people going up the mountain if the weather is bad. They wanted to see my papers but after a friendly handshake settled for a look at the map. Everyone shakes hands with everyone else here at any occasion. There are lots of tailless rodents running around, I don't know one rodent from another but they were also in the desert. I leave some pasta and salmon dinner at the entrance to their burrows, might keep

'em out of my stuff in the night.

8TH JULY

Woke up to patient shepherd waiting outside the tent, he wants to say hello, I give him tea. I say that I saw his yurt last night and he says that he saw me looking for somewhere to put my tent. Again I could have camped next to him but I wanted privacy. He makes a sign as if to cut his throat and gets up to leave. I don't know if he was inviting me to drink cattle blood with him or if he was saying that he was now going to slaughter an animal and that I should come. I settle on the action meaning that he doesn't like my tea and I don't go to join him.

The mountains flatten out and just as I'm praising the bike, it dies suddenly as if it has an electrical fault, **** I think, never mind out in the mountains, nowhere in this country has a hope of fixing it. Imagine my relief when I get off the bike and see petrol everywhere, this at least I can fix. It's just the fuel line and before I have time to strip the luggage off to inspect it, a father and son in a passing car stop. Thankfully non-smokers. I put the fuel line back with a jubilee clip but rush the job because the father wants to push at every connection on the bike as hard as he can, if he had had a hammer he would have found something to hit with it. Never mind the bike, yes it's fixed now so come to my house for tea. Honestly they couldn't get the luggage back on the bike fast enough, such was the urgency to get a traveller back to show some hospitality, nice but very annoying. I have lunch with them, turns out he's an engineer, that explains his need for a hammer and the roads and bridges round here. He wants me to stay the night and makes an action as if to cut his throat, two invitations that don't go well together if you're a westerner. I ask about drinking blood and they don't do it, just slaughter the animal for a feast. Incidentally this action to cut your throat

also means, fill it up at fuel stations and a few other things I haven't deciphered yet

Camping that night I take the time to check the bike over. Seems the fuel line came off because one subframe bolt had vibrated out and the others were all loose. I take the jubilee clip I'd put on the fuel line off, thinking that it acted as a good warning, tighten the bolts and covered every bolt with gaffa tape. The fuel line also gets covered in gaffa, it is abrading on the mounting for the long range tank.

Next day more mountains, beautiful but I'm starting to think about fuel now. I had lost some when I dropped the bike and again with the pipe coming off. Pay tourist price for some out of a shed but no worries.

Meet 2 *****s by the river, no-one can leave you in peace here. Some bolts on the luggage rack had come out, a luggage strip down, more bolts and gaffa tape. And have to leave this beautiful spot before tempers fray.

Later in the day swim in another river with some children and cattle. A bit of offloading over hill sized hard compacted dunes to sleep out, no tent.

Wonderful but short ride over the dunes back to the road heading for Osh for no better reason than to get Internet to work out my route. I chew on shoe leather at this point cause it's the first time I've been relieved to be on a modern road, the black stuff. I had wondered when this moment would come. Stop for another swim in a lake. After Osh I'm heading south for the Pamer Highway, the roof of the world, 4000 meters high. It's the part of the journey I was looking forward to the most and it is wilderness and beautiful. The lakes are salty and rivers fast flowing, both way too cold to swim in. My tyres are down to their last few hundred km but have to last at least two thousand more until the first chance to get some more. I'm riding trying not to use the brakes to stretch tyre life as much as possible. I'll get down to 1000km of where I would have

been if I had come through Uzbekistan, only missing out on Dushanbe and of course riding back partly the way I came.

Tajikistan and the Pamer are a harsh place. In the places we stayed homestays people live without water or electricity or candles. There are massive lakes but they're salty and from what I understood they're empty of fish. There are no boats. At our first homestay there was a German film crew doing a documentary on the nearby lake. They explain that there is no reason for the lake to exist other than a meteor strike that formed the basin that held all the water that absorbed the salt from the land. It's an extreme and hard life here with a diet of potatoes, bread, biscuits and sweets. Milk rice was a luxury for breakfast one morning but wasn't nice on account of the sour milk, no pasteurization, straight from the cow and not fresh for long. People have skin like leather and my hands are going that way from the simultaneous combination of sun, wind and cold with no water to wash. Strangely you don't feel dirty even though you haven't washed in a week. It's the air the wind and no humidity, you don't sweat or if you do it doesn't become sticky. People become less Asian and more Arabic looking the further South we go and there are rivers again. On my last day in Tajikistan I really became exhausted, a combination of tooth infection the altitude and poor diet, my MS kicks in and I spend a night shivering with a fever.

To be continued...

THE FORUM

NORTH AMERICA

We are in the preliminary stages of planning a long trail ride in North America in Summer/Autumn 2013. We propose to follow a route south parallel with the Rockies and to take in a section of the Trans American Trail. Could go as far south as Panama. At this planning stage we would be pleased to hear from TRF members who have trod this path before and would be willing to share their experiences of shipping bikes, recommended trails, accommodation etc etc. All help and suggestions welcomed!

Keith Johnston & Richard Metcalfe,
Wiltshire TRF. keith.johnston@hotmail.co.uk
richard.metcalfe@giscool.ltd.uk

JUST A SUGGESTION

Can we encourage members to send in photographs without helmets being worn. People are just anonymous when wearing helmets.

Peter Cross, Lancs TRF
now living in the Isle of Man

THE EU PETITION

Right ho you lot, ATTENTION.

If you have not seen, heard or just not got around to it yet, there is a petition that we, as motorcyclists, MUST sign. It is to stop that bunch of morons in Brussels from stopping us doing what we have always done, I.E. enjoying bikes.

They want, among other things, full hi viz jackets at all times, not tampering with your bikes from factory spec, so no more after market exhausts etc, only to be serviced by the dealer and so it goes on. PLEASE PLEASE sign and send on.

The website is
epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/16322

Get signing,
John Grew

A BIG THANK YOU

Thanks for the ad in Trail to sell Karen's Serrow - it sold straightaway!

Peter Fancourt

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Contact Fred Ellison on 01254 823893 editor@trf.org.uk

MEMBERS CLASSIFIEDS

2008 YAMAHA WR250F Aluminium frame model, fat bars, hand guards, aluminium bash plate. Taxed until March next year. Only been used for trail riding. First to see will buy. £3200 ono. Tel: 01524 735322 or email cj_we@talktalk.net

FOR SALE Buell Ulysses XT1200 25th Anniversary Signature Model. 17,000 miles. Full Buell luggage. FSH. T&T May 2012. £4500. For more info call Chris. Tel: 01254 601974/07774 226837.

WANTED Bash plate & frame heel guards for TTR250. Contact colin.brunt761@btinternet.com Tel: 01524 863487.

WANTED Disc brake front to fit monoshock XL125 (wheel, forks, master cyl. etc) or rolling chassis if cheap enough. Tel Dave Barker 01772 617941 (Lancs) or barker24anchor@talktalk.net

HUSQVARNA TE310 for sale, 2009 on a 60 plate. Bash plate, acerbis handguards, rad guards & many extras. 950 miles green lane use only, immaculate condition. Call 07792 564221.

FOR SALE Beta Alp 200 2004 on 05 plate. Cared for but ridden & enjoyed. On nobbly's but trials tyres included along with the usual box of bits. 10 mths Tax & MOT. Sale due to move to 2 stroke power & lack of garage space. £1750. Lichfield, Staffs. Tel: 07967 605806 pete@rsenterprises.co.uk

Members Classifieds: Bikes, Riding Gear etc FREE OF CHARGE Enclose membership number. **ALL Commercial Advertising to be paid for** - £1 per line, £5 minimum. Please send all classifieds with payment if applicable to THE EDITOR, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe BB7 9DG. Tel: 01254 823893 Fax: 01254 887999 editor@trf.org.uk

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ACCOMMODATION

BRENDAN CHASE B&B Windermere village centre location so close to pubs and restaurants, from £25 per night bed and breakfast. Off street parking for bikes. Tel: 015394 45638. Email brendan.chase@aol.com, website: www.placetostaywindermere.co.uk

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GROUPS

AXE VALE David Clegg, Tel: 01275 373652 (Home),
Mob: 0793 1220895. dccje@talktalk.net 2nd Tues, 8pm,
Windmill Inn, Nore Road, Portishead.

BLACK COUNTRY John Oseland, Tel: 01902 656011
1st Tues, 9pm, The Longford House, Waiting Street, Cannock.

BRISTOL Glenn Summers, Tel: 01454 619246
4th Mon, 8pm, The Midland Spinner, Warmley, Bristol.

CAMBRIDGE Tony Lacey, Tel: 07753 820520
1st Thurs, 8.00 p.m., The White Swan, Elsworth Road,
Conington, Cambridge CB23 4LN.

CORNWALL Adam Hedley, Tel: 01579 349217
3rd Thurs, 7.30 - 8.00 p.m., The Borough Arms, Bodmin.

CUMBRIA & CRAVEN Roger Harris, Tel: 01539 725198
2nd Tues, 7.30pm, The Gilpin Bridge Hotel & Inn, Bridge
End, Levens, Nr. Kendal LA8 8EP (on A5074 at junction with
A590).

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Mick Ellison, Tel: 07780 674192
2nd Tues, The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington,
Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

DEVON John Heal, Tel: 01626 366860
2nd Tues, 8pm, The Dolphin Hotel, Station Road, Bovey
Tracey, TQ13 9AL.

DORSET W. John Williamson, Tel: 01929 553640,
Mob: 07850 727873 1st Tues, 8pm, Greyhound Inn,
Winterbourne, Kingston, Nr. Bere Regis.

EAST MIDLANDS Graham Chinnery, Tel: 01332 863433
2nd Wed, The Clock Warehouse, London Road, Shardlow,
just off the A50.

EAST YORKSHIRE Simon Garthwaite, Tel: 07980 680026
2nd Tues, 8pm, Londesborough Arms, Market Weighton,
York.

ESSEX Cliff eaves, Tel: 07515 330423
2nd Wed, The Cross Keys, The Green,
Hatfield Peverel, Essex CM3 2JQ.

GLOUCESTER Richard Simpson, Tel: 07812 402021
1st Wed, 8pm, Wagonworks Club, Tuffley Ave., Gloucester.

HERTFORDSHIRE John Fox, Tel: 01462 811654
2nd Wed, 8.30pm, Shire Park Social Club, Shire Park,
Central Drive, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1AB.

HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES

Graham Till, Tel: 01782 510533/07971 477024
2nd Tues, 8.30 - 9.00pm, The Stafford Arms, Bagnall.
(2 miles out of Leek).

ISLE OF WIGHT 1st Wed, 8pm, The Eight Bells Inn,
Carisbrooke, Newport, IOW.

KENT Steve Neville Tel: 01474 742705
2nd Tues, 8.30p.m. for 9pm,
The Moat Pub, Wrotham, near Brands Hatch.

LANCASHIRE Tony Davenport, Tel: 07538 195212
1st Tues, Black Bull, Hall Lane, Mawdesley.

LINCOLNSHIRE Paul Vernon, Tel: 01522 889079
4th Thurs, 8pm, Lincolnshire Poacher, Bunkers Hill, Lincoln.

LODDON VALE Sean Comber, Tel: 07763 870244
2nd Thurs, Inn on the Park, Woodley, Reading.

MANCHESTER Phil Kinder, Tel: 07809 647293
2nd & 4th Mon, 9pm, The Fletcher's Arms, Denton.

MID WALES Tony Rooney, Tel: 01239 698349
Last Thurs, 7.30pm, The Crown Inn, Rhayader
except July & December.

NORTHUMBRIA Nic Gilbert, Tel: 07940 133871
1st Wed, 8pm, The Staffs Club, Blaydon, NE21 4JB.

NORTH WALES Neil "Timpo" Thompson, Tel: 07980 555874
1st Wed, 8pm, Potters Wheel, Precinct Way, Buckley CH7 2EG.
Ref SJ 279637.

NORWICH Jeremy McNulty, Tel: 07786 426055
2nd Wed, 7.30pm, White Horse, Trowse, Norwich.

OXFORDSHIRE Peter Cole, Tel: 01844 214075
3rd Thurs, 8pm, The Gladiator Sport & Social Club, 263 Iffley
Road, Oxford, OX4 1SJ, next to Ridgeway VW Garage.

PEAK DISTRICT Alan Gilmore, Tel: 01332 553246
1st Thurs, 8pm, The Joiner's Arms, Church Road, Quarndon,
Derby.

RIBBLE VALLEY Peter Ashurst, Tel: 07817 928329
2nd Tues, 8.30pm, Brown Cow, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59).

SOMERSET Fran Bunce, Tel: 01278 662605
2nd Thurs, 8pm, The Old Pound Inn, High Street,
Aller Langport.

SOUTHERN Colin Lindstrom Tel: 07818 404240
3rd Thurs, 8pm, Southampton & District MCC, Woodside Ave.,
Eastleigh, (opposite Halfords).

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY Steve Sharp, 0208 773 4204
8.30pm, 4th Wed, Nescot Centre for Sports Development,
Banstead Road, Ewell, Surrey.

SOUTH NORTHANTS Andy Gerrard, Tel: 07803 600571
2nd Monday, 9pm, The Old Sun, 10 Middle Street, Nether
Heyford, Northampton NN7 3LL.

SOUTH WALES Christian James, Tel: 01446 410073
1st Thurs, 8pm, Ty Nant Inn, Morganstown, Nr Radyr CF15 8LB.

SOUTH WEST WALES Terry Brooks, Tel: 07910 050001
Last Tues, Corner House Pub, Commercial Street, Ystalyfera,
Swansea.

SUFFOLK Richard May, Tel: 01787 374073
Last Wed, Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd, Bury-St-Ed.

SUSSEX Julian Flack, Tel: 01306 740586
Last Thurs, Ashington Social Club, Rear of Red Lion, A24,
9 miles North of Worthing.

TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS

Leo Crone, Tel: 01325 463815 (8am to 4pm only).
3rd Tues, The Ranch House, Thoraldby Farm, Nr Stokesley, map
ref 93...493074.

VIRTUAL PEAK GROUP

Paul King, kingy@virtualpeaks.co.uk Tel: 07966 289778.
This is a virtual group at www.virtualpeaks.co.uk

WEST ANGLIA Mark Andrew, Tel: 01933 413458
1st & 3rd Thurs, Scott Bader Social Club, opp. Parish Church,
Wollaston, Wellingborough.

WEST MIDLANDS David Chamberlain, Tel: 0121 783 3438
1st & 3rd Wed, Wilmcote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon.

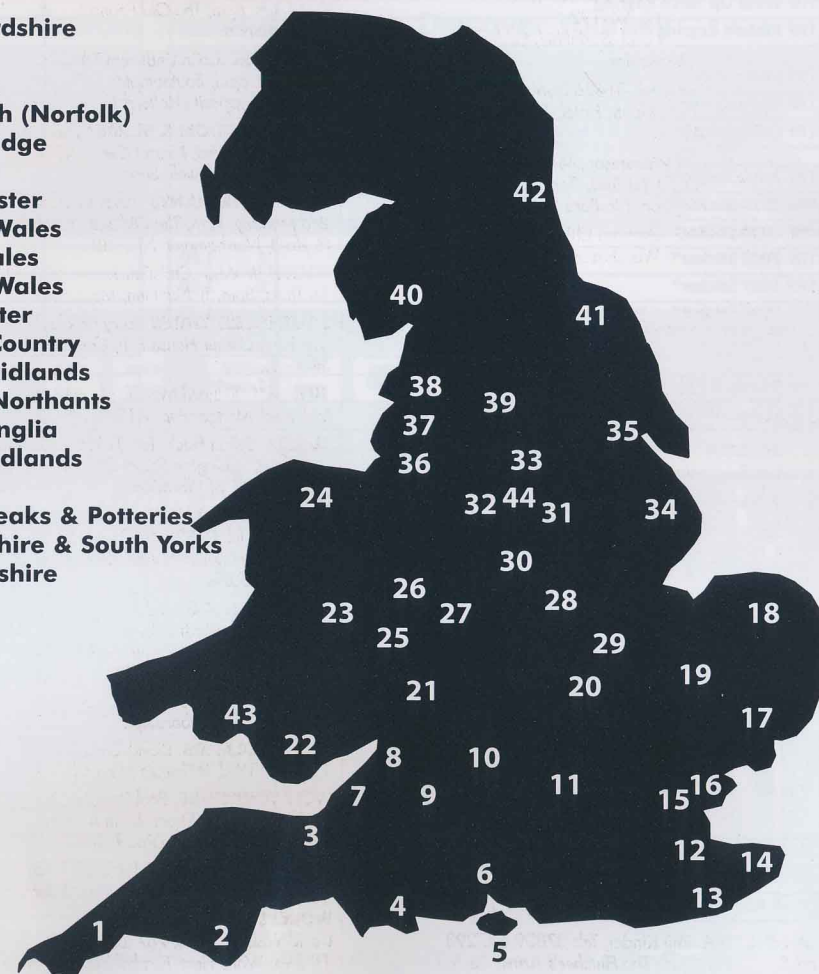
WEST YORKSHIRE Paul Dearden, Tel: 07901 381629
1st Thurs RoW 7.30 pm, Main Meeting 8.00pm, Cue Gardens,
Stadium Mills, Stadium Road, Bradford BD6 1BJ.

WILTSHIRE Vic Price, Tel: 01380 724651
1st Tues, The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford SN12 8LX.

WORCESTERSHIRE
David Walters, Tel: 07767 204730
1st Tues, White Hart, Fernhill Heath, Worcs.

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