

GROUPS

CHESHIRE
 J. Johnson, Tel: 061 427 6963
 2 & 4 Monday, The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane,
 Hazel Grove, Stockport

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE
 David Bonsall, Tel: 0742 748688
 2 & 4 Tuesday, The Victoria Hotel, 248 Neepsend Lane,
 Sheffield

EAST MIDLANDS
 Graham Chinnery Tel: 0332 882602
 2 Wednesday, Three Horseshoes, Hemmington, Nr. M1
 Junct. 24

NORTH MIDLANDS
 Ray Morse, Tel: 0785 661543
 1st Tuesday, Leek Area - Contact group rep (above)

SHROPSHIRE
 Steve Rawlings, . Tel: 0952 244161
 2nd & last Wednesday, The Bell, Crosshouses, Shrewsbury

WEST ANGLIA
 David Knight, Tel: 0933 313816
 1 & 3 Thursday, Scott Bader Clubhouse, Opp. Parish
 Church, Woolaston, Wellingborough

WEST MIDLANDS
 Dennis Hayter, Tel: 0527 23550
 1 & 3 Thursday, Wilmcote Mens Club, Wilmcote Nr.
 Stratford on Avon

WEST YORKSHIRE
 Charles King, Tel: 0484 686383
 1 & 3 Monday, Frizinghall Con. Club, Lynthorn Road,
 Frizinghall, Bradford

WYVERN
 Gwyn James, Tel: 0902 763824
 Every Thursday, Hill & Cakemore Ex-Servicemen's Club,
 Victoria Road, Blackheath

CUMBRIA
 Colin Thompson, Tel: 09666 494
 2nd Wednesday, every other month, Albert Hotel, Bowness
 on Windemere

LANCASHIRE
 Keith Westley, Tel: 0704 893215
 1st Tuesday, Hindshead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard

NORTHUMBERLAND
 Dave Vaughan, Tel: 091 529 3202
 3rd Tuesday, Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton

TEESIDE & NORTH YORKS
 Leo Crone, Tel: 0325 380117
 1st & 3rd Wednesday, Station Hotel, Stokesley

CAMBRIDGE
 Howard Biddle, Tel: 0223 232879
 1st Thursday, Golden Ball, Boxworth.

NORFOLK & SUFFOLK
 To be Advised

LINCOLNSHIRE
 Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 0529 60793
 4th Thursday, The Mall, Woodhall, Spar

LODDON VALE
 Don Lewis, Tel: 0252 616359
 2nd Thursday, The Lamb, Theale, Berkshire

SOUTHERN

Pete Wildsmith, . Tel: 0703 617582
 3rd Wednesday, The Priory Inn, Bishops Waltham,
 Hampshire

N. W. LONDON & HERTS
 Roger Newark, Tel: 081 959 2386
 1st Thursday, Cotton Social Club, Cotton Mill Lane, St.
 Albans

KENT
 Nick Moon, Tel: 0322 862855
 2nd Tuesday, Pied Bull, Farningham, Nr. Brands Hatch

ESSEX
 Neil Gamble, Tel: 0245 461643
 4th Tuesday, The White Bear, Stanford Rivers, Nr. Ongar

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY
 Brian Wright, Tel: 081 669 4214
 9pm Every Wednesday, Epsom & Ewell F.c., West Street,
 Ewell

SUSSEX
 Bevis Billingham, Tel: 0243 585128
 Last Thursday of every month, Selsey Arms, Coolham,
 junction A272, B2193

THAMES VALLEY
 Bob Williams, Tel: 0990 24958
 3rd Monday, District Arms, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford,
 Middlesex

BRISTOL
 Richard Tallon, Tel: 0249 715426
 2nd Monday, Tennis Court Inn, Deanery Road (A420),
 Kingswood

CORNWALL
 Roger Fogg, Tel: 0726 67198
 3rd Tuesday, London Inn, Summercourt (A30)

DEVON
 Martin Cooper, Tel: 0752 337491
 2nd Tuesday, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr.
 Newton Abbott

DORSET
 Norman Howard, Tel: 074788 615
 1st Tuesday, The Royal Oak Bere Regis

GLOUCESTER
 Ron Carter, Tel: 045 382 2707
 1st Tuesday, Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.

SOMERSET
 Nick Crocker, Tel: 093589 261
 Last Thursday, The Ruishton Inn, Ruishton, Taunton

WILTSHIRE
 Bill Riley, Tel: 02216 3811
 1st Tuesday, The Toll House, Holt, Trowbridge

NORTH WALES
 John Mills, Tel: 0477 34425
 1st Wednesday, Hope & Anchor, Ewloe Place, Buckley,
 Clwydd

WEST WALES
 G. Jones, 0239 810255
 Meetings to be arranged

EAST SCOTLAND
 Les Mollison, Tel: 0382 738530
 2nd Wednesday, Glencarse Hotel, A85, Perth to Dundee
 Road



TRAIL

OCT. 1990

No. 147

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

EDITOR: Mike "Nettlebed" Pedley - Lancs. Group



Providence Heath, Nr. Harwood Dale

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Try to make it interesting!

All contributions to the Editor

NOTICES

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

All entries for this year's competition **MUST** be in by the end of October.

All entries to :
All entries to :
All entries to :

MIKE COWLING 23 WHITEHALL ST. WAKEFIELD W.YORKS WF2 9BG
(Chief Photographer Yorks. Evening Post)



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EDITOR

Whatever our Bulletin has or has not been in the past, no one could ever accuse us of being political.

It is with some reluctance therefore, that I now draw your attention to an article in the Guardian on 31st August, 1990 based on a statement from Brian Gould, Shadow Environmental Secretary for the Labour Party.

If elected, a Labour Government would seek to give walkers and horse riders new legal rights of access to 'common land, mountains, moors and heathland'. The present law of trespass would be altered by granting a right to 'walk freely' in the Countryside on uncultivated land. Great! - there must be some spin-off here for us, even if its only less walkers on 'our' lanes. My expectations were soon shattered, however, by the next paragraph, where all so called 'disruptive activities' and all-terrain vehicle driving is specifically mentioned, would receive lighter controls.

A Labour government would also create more National Parks - in itself not a bad thing until I picked up the Independent the following week to be informed that the Council for National Parks has decided that 'noisy high-tech leisure activities' such as microlight aircraft, jet skis and 'all other motorised mechanical sports' should be banned from National Parks.

So, Labour 'mop-up' the few remaining areas of open countryside, call them National Parks and then ban all motorised activities therein!

All our Political parties seem strong on the freedom and rights of the individual, but who is this individual?

Lets hope that those individuals who wish to continue to enjoy their motorised hobbies put their cross in the right place when the next General Election comes around.

(Photocopies of press cuttings available on request).

To finish on a lighter note - thanks to all who have wished us well with the Bulletin and particularly to those who sent us contributions - keep 'em coming!

NETTLEBED

TRF OFFICERS

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Fress Officer: Gwyn Thomas, Minories Cottage, Priddy, Wells BA5 3AU Tel: 0749 75294

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING - WALSALL - 8TH SEPTEMBER 1990.

Chairman **Dave Giles** opened the meeting with apologies for absence. We learned of the sudden death of the son of Bill Kershaw of the Welsh trail Riders Association.

There was much work still continuing from the previous meeting. The Green Lane Survey was almost complete and a synopsis should be available for the coming Sports Council meeting.

The South Downs Way case had been wound up. It had been expensive but essential. Membership fees of the Motoring Organisations Land Access and Rights Association (MOLARA) had been agreed in the light of TRF rights of way work. The All Wheel Drive Club had made a donation to MOLARA funds in recognition of this work. Three national co-ordinators were to be appointed by MOLARA to receive legal notices of lane closures, etc. Brian Wright was elected as TRF representative to MOLARA, since Richard Marshall was standing down due to pressure of work.

The Devon TRF had formed the Devon green Lanes Group with other local rights of way workers in the county.

A first draft of the Information Pack was presented by the Secretary, **Ian Thompson**. A display of this would be prepared for the AGM.

Membership Secretary, **Peter Clark**, had analysed our membership since the formation of the TRF in 1970, showing our steady growth from very small beginnings.

Treasurer, **Tim Ley**, discussed VAT registration, reported in Bulletin 146.

Press Officer, **Gwyn Thomas**, would advertise the TRF in Motor Cycle news, Trials and motorcross News and Motorcycle Sport.

Editorship of the Bulletin would be discussed at the AGM. It was proposed that the job be split in two - a news editor and a features editor, publishing a Bulletin every two months with a news sheet in the intervening month.

Rights of Way Officer, **Tim Stevens**, gave the bulk of his report in Bulletin 146.

There were five motions for the AGM. Two proposing changes to the wording of the Constitution, one concerned with limited company status, one proposing life membership for a rights of way worker and one about minor changes to the Code of Conduct

The merger of the Hertfordshire Group and the North West London Group was announced.

It was proposed that a vice chairman be elected at the AGM

The next meeting would be on Saturday 24th November at 11.00am

The Meeting closed at 5.30pm.

D.C. of Darlington writes:

I'm a little confused about the current debate in the TRF concerning membership.

My brother is secretary of the Teeside and North Yorks branch, so I get to read a lot of literature passed around the TRF branches as well as hearing about executive meetings, coupled with the debate at the '89 AGM, I begin to wonder if some members have lost sight of what the TRF is all about.

I thought the TRF existed to encourage the use and upkeep of green lanes in a responsible manner, I can see little advantage to restricting membership or introducing a probationary period of membership when our objective should be to educate whenever and wherever possible.

Surely the larger the membership the more representative we are seen to be by the people wielding power in government, recreational organisations, national Parks etc. Trying to make the TRF an exclusive restricted membership club would lead to a stagnation of ideas and enthusiasm vital to the life of the TRF.

Rather than a probationary membership, what about a stepped map marking system. Year one, easy lanes, year two, harder lanes, year three, lanes used through local knowledge.

I enjoy the company of other like minded motorcyclists the TRF offers but have no desire to be involved in ROW work nor do I wish to help run a group. I will help lead or back up on a run, but wish no deeper level of involvement. Taking one of the ideas expressed at the '89 AGM to its extreme, I would always remain almost an outsider in the TRF, hardly a situation I am likely to pay to be in. Any suggestions ?

Yours on a DR 200 and a member since 1983.

David Crowe

Aunt Marys Reply

First, some news. The idea of two levels of membership was abandoned at the last executive meeting and Tim Stevens has therefore put Map marking on the back Burner for a bit. I thought the idea was to stop sensitive information falling into the wrong hands.

You will have seen a piece last month on the VAT threshold - once this is exceeded we could usefully increase our membership, I agree. However, if our new members "have no desire to become involved in ROW work or help run a group" I wonder what real benefit the TRF will gain from their membership? The subs only allow us to break even at present levels after all.

If these new members bring extra problems but no extra help the existing officers may decide that their time is better spent riding the lanes we have left rather than fighting to preserve them and to reveal new ones for others, and why not!

You are right about our objective being to educate, but how can we do it, if offers of help are not taken up?

Keep at it

Mary

We have all been watched enjoying our trail riding. I have noticed that they often fall into distinct classes, identified by their utterances and body language.

Below, I have suggested a few from only my couple of year's trail riding - there must be a lot more. I will start with the worst to end on a high note.

The Aggressive : This is the type who goes on the offensive from the start with lots of obscene language and threats of violence and attempted obstruction. We've all met the odd farmer or land owner who questions the right of access, maybe holding the gate shut.

We usually get blamed for the damage caused by the more reckless 4x4 boys and field "scramblers", but in nearly all cases a negotiated retreat will work if advance causes excessive trouble.

Whilst out with my wife and another lad (?...SCG), we were confronted by a very aggressive farmer. (No names or details yet, but beware at Hawes Foot near the A6 at the West end of Borrowdale.) We were threatened with a swinging chain, nearly had our bikes chained up unless we paid £10 each, threatened with serious violence and subjected to a string of really foul language.

A negotiated retreat and a trip to the local boys in blue was the name of the game.

The Strong Silent type : You know the type who stand there with hands on hips, feet apart and a fixed stare on the face. If they could speak they would claim to own the countryside and nobody else besides walkers should use it.

A comment like, "Come on, smile, you're supposed to enjoy the countryside" from the trail rider can sometimes break the ice. Indeed, once the ice is broken, they can sometimes be made to see the light.

The Snide Remarkers : These are the ones who try to ignore you but say things just loud enough for you to hear, but not in a way that is directly at you. Typical comments like (a) "It's adisgrace that you dare ride up here" (b) "The authorities ought to do something about about you" or (c) "What do you think YOU'RE doing"

These comments are very difficult to deal with since eye contact has not been made and no dialogue has really been started.

Either ride far enough away from walkers to avoid this, ignore them or think of some suitably witty response to hit back with - in same order as above - (a) "It's a disgrace that

roads are allowed to get into such poor condition" (b) "But the authorities allow us to use this road" or (c) "About 10mph usually".

The Comics : These are those who seem to think that it is easier to ride a bike up a tough trail than it is to walk. After looking at the state of Fred (The Printer) (*Not to be confused with the typesetter...SCG*) when he reached the top of Walna Scar with his Honda Enduro, I'm convinced that walking would have been easier !

Often they put their thumbs out to pretend to hitch a lift or ask us to order the teas for them at the cafe at the bottom. This light hearted approach is what it's all about, the enjoyment of our roads heritage and the countryside.

The Caring / Interested : These are those who actually show an interest in our activities and / or bikes. Often initiated by other ex-motorcyclists showing an interest in the latest Japanese Technology or a genuine interest in our trail riding.

These people are usually very receptive of the information we hold on the history of the lanes etc. and are often of the educated type who are keen to learn but are usually totally ignorant of our right to ride the lanes. Educate them ! Get them on our side and they will spread the word with us.

In conclusion. The damage done by an offensive response to a remark from another road user can NEVER be repaired.

If you cannot think of a witty or informative reply then bite your lip. Then prepare one for the next time !

Once we are recognised as responsible human beings who are riding within the law and enjoying the countryside along with the walkers and horse riders then we will make progress.

It is very interesting to note that I have never received anything but pleasantries from a horse rider who I have stopped for, even on questionable rights of vehicular way ! I am sure this is typical, but some walkers even manage to offer an insult when allowed past with an engine cut.

When in Lancashire, do as the locals do : offer a quick " 'ow doo" and touch your peak or even an "all reet". In fact occasionally I have put on my best educated Essex accent and offered a "Good afternoon, what a splendid day !", just to see the effect. !

Remember, we are all delegates of our sport.

Peter Ballard. Lancs

Annual General Meeting

This will have taken place by the time you read this. I hope more than the usual fifty turned up to discuss the major policy changes which were on the agenda. Amendments to the TRF Constitution have been proposed, as well as the possibility of actively encouraging non-motorcyclists to join the TRF.

New Members' Pack

Many thanks to all those who have contributed ideas for an information pack. I plan to have a final first version to show at the AGM on October 7th. The format will be about twelve sheets of A4 with a common style, from which appropriate sheets can be selected to present to new members, prospective members, passing ramblers, interested county councillors, motor cycle show visitors, etc.

France

I took time off from the TRF business to have a family holiday on the Continent in August. The Renault 5 did stumble across a few green lanes, but we did not explore far from the tarmac. I talked to some interesting people, though. The threat to french trail riding is real. The French government are actively exploring ways to impose Traffic Bans on specific green lanes which are abused or over-used. This is no more than we already have in this country, and will require the clear signing of closed lanes. We wait to see if the legislation goes through. Meanwhile, French riders are lobbying hard against it.

Devon Green Lanes Group

I was invited to the inaugural meeting of a new action group in Exeter at the end of August. There have been an amazing series of U-turns by Devon county council in their 'policy' on green county roads. The user groups realised that they were all talking independently to the Council but saying the same thing. This allowed the Council's officers to play one user off against another.

Not any more! The TRF has joined forces with local subscribers to the British Horse Society, the Byways and Bridleways Trust, the British Carriage Drivers Association, the Ramblers Association, the All Wheel Drive Club and, by the time you read this, several other user bodies, to present a united voice on matters concerning green lanes.

Pooling resources maximises the efforts of rights of way researchers, lane clearance team and committee meeting representatives. Led by people of the calibre of Martin Cooper and Alec Morley, the TRF will certainly pull its weight within the Devon Green Lanes Group. I wish them all the best and look forward to a progress report in the near future.

Green Bikes

Everyone is so green now that trail riding must project as green an image as possible in order to survive. The TRF always has, of course. Our Code of Conduct was years ahead of the Green Movement. We ride quiet, lead-free machines, ridden with respect for the environment. We help to maintain lanes and we educate those who will follow us in the right way to use our heritage.

Hardcore greenies (There is a trail riding pun in that!) don't want any internal combustion anywhere. Even bicycles are frowned upon. Their arguments do need to be handled with moderation.

Modern life would grind to a halt without the internal combustion engine for goods transport, public transport and business. Its use in recreation needs consideration, but to outlaw motorcycles from green lanes while allowing farmers tractors is definitely putting the telescope to your blind eye.

Minimal Motorcycling

Our use of the countryside is "Minimalist". We cause minimal disruption in our efforts to take fresh air and exercise, and we concentrate our efforts on protecting and enhancing the green lanes we use. We need to publicise our minimalist approach so that the maximum number know about it, but we don't want everyone puttering up and down the lanes we publicise or these lanes will be ruined. This is an almost impossible juggling act, but we are trying to get it right.

The Minimal Motorcycle

Can a motorcycle ever be "green"? Isn't it just a throw away toy, a consumer durable, a waste of the Earth's resources from its manufacture to its scrapyards resting place five years later?

I don't think so. I have used a Yamaha XT250 since 1981, not just because it is adequately silenced and does 90 plus miles to a gallon of green petrol. Its major energy consumption was in its manufacture. If we really want to reduce our energy demands we should keep our vehicles for longer. Building a new vehicle takes massive quantities of petrochemical energy, as well as consuming petrochemicals in paint and plastic parts.

Yet at least twice a year for the past five years I seem to have been on the point of replacing my old 250 with something newer, something "better". I am tempted by the new models, by the glossy "road tests" in the magazines, by the smooth talk of the salesman at Damerells, but, so far, my minimal bank balance has kept me trail riding without recycling!

So you ride a Doctor Big or a World Twin or whatever the latest monster will be called and don't agree with a word I have said. You have missed your chance to have YOUR say at the AGM, but you can still write to the editor

Ian Thompson

Responding to the Challenge

Do you ever get stopped and challenged about what you are doing? Yes, don't we all, but do you know how to respond? Once you have stated that you are on a legal road, the next step is either offensive, or might run like this:

"To my own personal knowledge nobody has been down there for two hundred years. You hold on there, and I'll get the Police, that will put a stop to all this, it's ever week the same".

Try not to fall about laughing. The best answer to this is:

"Please do, we know we will win, and then everyone will know about it".

Unless of course you have a Cellphone in your bag and you can add:

"Use my phone".

Seriously, you may get into conversation with someone who is prepared to listen to your side of the story. You can make the best use of these chats by having your responses ready; fortunately most people come out with the same points quite frequently. If you have met different challenges, or have alternatives to these responses, please let us all know.

"These old routes were not intended for motor vehicles".

None of them were, not even trunk roads like the A5 or the A6. Only the modern bypasses and motorways were built for motors. When mechanical propulsion first started to become popular, in about 1860, Parliament considered how vehicles could be adapted to suit the roads, and, much later, how the roads could be adapted to suit vehicles. The decisions were made that motors were carriages and could continue to use carriageways on certain conditions, one of the first of which, introduced in 1865, became notorious as the Red Flag Act. In 1903 the Motor Car Act insisted on driving licenses, vehicle registration and number plates, in 1909 they imposed a special fuel tax and a license duty on motor vehicles, eventually called the Road Fund, and intended for the maintenance of the

roads. Even so, in 1909 there was still rather less than 2000 miles of English road with a tarred waterproof surface. All country roads then were what we would now call dirt roads, and the great majority of them were green lanes.

"If we allow you to open up these old lanes we will be overwhelmed by hordes of motorcyclists".

The only group within the BMF which is seriously interested in motorcycles on green lanes is the Trail Riders Fellowship, with around 1500 members throughout the U.K. To put this in perspective, the Ramblers Association is only one of many groups of walkers using rights of way, and they have around 65,000 members. Even the British Driving Society whose members use horse drawn vehicles on our carriageway network has 7,000 members.

The problem is really the other way round - if vehicles don't use these lanes they get overgrown and impassable to everyone. (give an example if you can).

"What about those who aren't in the clubs, the under-age riders, and those on illegal or stolen machines?"

We are powerless to control these riders because we have not rights even to stop them to explain that they are doing wrong. When we report riders to the police we find that they will not prosecute. Ending our legal rights to use an old road will not stop the hooligans, any more than closing a pedestrian crossing will prevent jaywalking. For another comparison, ask the Ramblers what they can do about the hordes of football hooligans who walk through our towns.

"Wouldn't it be more reasonable to share out these old highways, so that all users could be catered for?"

Yes, and the sharing out has already been done! Of the 140,000 mile network of footpaths, bridleways and other tracks in

Contd.

England and Wales only about 6,000 miles of green lanes are available for motorcycling. The sharing out has been done indeed, and we got less than 5% all of which, we are happy to acknowledge, is also available for walkers and riders. New footpaths and bridleways are being created all the time (and we welcome this as it provides more alternatives for others so they can more easily avoid our 5% should they wish) but there is no active mechanism to create new green lanes with Vehicular rights. They are part of our dwindling heritage, the ancient carriageway network of England, a threadbare heritage but one which we treasure and rightly defend.

"But you only use the old roads for recreation; that's not what the highway system was created for".

Yes, we enjoy using ancient highways for exactly the same purposes that walkers, horse riders and carriage drivers do. Even back in the seventeenth century it was recognised that roads were there for "Profit, conveniency, and Pleasure to the Whole Nation". But the law has never concerned itself with the reason why people used the highway except in so far as they were bona fide travelers, going, as they say, from A to B. The reason for the going may be to mourn a death or celebrate a birth, to elope with the Duke's daughter or to establish an alibi after robbing him of his purse, in law it is only the journey itself that is important. Perhaps this is what Parliament had in mind when seeking to remind Highway Authorities of their duty to assert and protect our use and enjoyment of highways. (Highways Act 1980) If you really think that our highway system should not be used for recreation, perhaps you should try and get the Sports Council to endorse your views. Or try the Central Council for Physical Recreation.

"What about the damage being caused by vehicles in the countryside? There has been a surge in the use of 4 x 4 vehicles in particular"

Undoubtedly registrations of four wheel drive vehicles have increased significantly. Remember though, that the description also covers the saloon cars now bought by farmers, country vets and doctors, as well as by the many other country dwellers they serve. Cars like the 4 x 4 Ford Sierra and Subaru Just, as well as the occasional Range Rover.

Motorcycle registrations have not risen significantly over the last few years, and we would claim that any reported increase in use in the countryside has been stirred up at least in part by the recent adverse publicity given to damage blamed on recreational users, combined with an increase in the numbers of the other country users who do the complaining.

Motorcyclists have been using the green lanes of this country ever since motorcycles have existed; they have been paying extra taxes for road maintenance for eighty years. In that time, many lanes have been covered with tar or concrete, but many of those, our members find most interesting have not been maintained from 1909 to the present day. When roads have been neglected for so long it is not surprising that one or two of them become rutted by wheels. We are not asking for tarmac or concrete to be used on green lanes, all we ask is not to be blamed for damage caused, not by our use, but by the lack of the maintenance we have been paying for. We hear of millions of pounds being spent on maintaining footpaths, and yet even our members' offers to do maintenance work ourselves in some Counties and National Parks are turned down. Even the damage which does exist is rarely caused by motorcycle use. Tests have shown that the ground pressure from an ordinary trail motorcycle is the same as that from a walker's boot, and much less than the hoof of a horse. Claims that a surface is unsuitable

CONTD.

for motorcycle traffic whilst being suitable for traffic on horseback or on foot will be strenuously resisted and we have the evidence to back this up. Exaggerated claims of recreational damage simply do not stand up to rigorous analysis. Show us a patch where a motorcycle will leave a deep rut and we will show you a walker to to his ankles in it. Show us a patch where there are ruts more than eight inches deep and we will show you the agricultural vehicles which caused them. Where recreational damage is proved to cause a problem, we ask that before the expense and hassle of a TRO is contemplated, consideration should be given to asking vehicle users for voluntary restraint at problem times, and for assistance to help rectify the problem. LARS would be pleased to co-ordinate any such requests, and has Road Signs available to Highway Authorities to show users where Voluntary Restraint is in force. Such signs are well respected by vehicle users. We would all much rather spend our time and money helping to reduce our impact than fighting Country Hall for the rights we pay for.

"Why don't you ride in quarries or on old slag heaps, instead of in the countryside?"

Old quarries and slag heaps are no more attractive to trail riders than they are to rambblers, or anyone else. Like rambblers, we seek to preserve our rights of access in interesting places and on interesting routes. We also seek to preserve the character of these roads for all users, and we believe that roads, like woodlands and canals, are best preserved by regular use.

"Even when all is said and done, motorcycles are still noisy vehicles, and their riders have no thought for other highway users".

Perhaps this is best answered by a couple of quotations from horse riders on combined rides down the Pennines:

"Hey mum, that bike is ever so quiet; your horse farts louder than that!"

"I honestly don't think we could have done it without your lads on motor bikes - they opened all the gates, and guided us wherever we could have gone astray, and they were just so quiet. It was wonderful; we must do it again".

We would like to, but we only can if our rights on ancient carriageways are preserved.

GROUP NEWS

LINCOLNSHIRE GROUP REPORT

September's Group run was held on the 30th, the only wet day of the month. Starting from "The Mucky Duck" at Woolsthorpe, a group of 10 were led by Graham and Darren MacKinder on an interesting mix of lanes in the Vale of Belvoir, Waltham-on-the-Wolds area during the morning, terminating at Buckminster on Sewstern Lane.

At this point, those with decorating and family commitments departed, and a group reduced to 5 continued for an afternoon's ride through Irnham, Polkingham and Osbournby to Sleaford for a 3.30pm finish. **Future events:**

21st October - Derbyshire Run, from swimming pool car park, Hathersdale 10am

25th October - Club Night, The Mall, Woodhall Spa

22nd November - Club Night, The Mall, Woodhall Spa.

24th and 25th November - Yorkshire Dales weekend. Contact Group Rep. for details.

13th December - Club night, The Mall, Woodhall Spa.

Alan Wilkinson, Group representative.

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Dear Sir

After writing my first letter to the TRF about the virtues of a geared up TY 250 Trials bike for Trail riding, I was contacted by two 'midweek' riders, one Alf Harrison, a veterans member of 12 years in the TRF who took me on a superb 100 mile or so trip around Derbyshire and into Staffordshire, and a day out on the Nottinghamshire lanes led by Tony Robinson. Many Thanks.

The Yamaha continues to perform well, the midrange flat spot has been alleviated with a further one millimetre being taken from the throttle slide cutaway. The bike now pulls 5th gear easily. It seems to be a problem with TYs that when the oilpump is removed in order to make the throttle action lighter for Trials riding, the carburation suffers. I have found that reducing the main jet from 150 to 140 and removing a total of 2.25 millimetres from the slide does the trick. The petrol/oil ratio is 32:1.

One problem not overcome as yet is the rate at which the bike uses spark plugs. The recommended plug is an NGK B7ES. The engine stops when ticking over i.e. when opening a gate, or, when the machine has been stood for a few minutes, say a fuel stop. It just refuses to start. Out from the Bumbag comes the Elora Nutmaster 7/16ths Whit. and a new plug, and she's away again (spark plug hole threads permitting!) In my garage is a tray with at least 30 spark plugs in...NGK's, Champion, Bosch, SU Butec, ranging from B9ES...8..7..6..5..some having only given 15 minutes or less service.

The plug I have most luck with is a Champion N12Y or YC as it is now. I am told this is the hottest running plug Champion make and is used in Bultaco Trials bikes. Using a hot running plug such as the N12Y, when flat out on the road seems to have no detrimental effect. No melted pistons yet.

Any thoughts on the subject would be most welcome. Comments such as 'Get a proper Trail Bike!' would be construed as defeatist!

The petrol tank which replaces the old 5 litre one is from a Kawasaki KE 125/175 Dave from Mansfield Motor Bike Breakers tells me. It is basically rectangular with a hump on top, about as slim as the TY tank and it fits without major modification. It holds, I think, about 11 litres, and gives the bike much greater range, ideal when out in the middle of nowhere. The tank fittings on the KE are the opposite way round to the Yamaha; the round rubber blocks need to be fitted to the KE tank and the mounting cups removed from it. Fitting the blocks necessitates two stubs being brazed to the inner front of the tank to fit into the cups in the frame.

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The tab at the rear of the tank traps under the original seat, but the seat does have to be moved rearward 1/2 inch. The bolts holding the stanchion to the top yoke have to be turned round so that the nuts face forward, so as not to foul the tank on full lock.

I hope this helps the member who wrote in the June issue. Sorry I didn't spot the letter until yesterday (Aug 9th)

You say you have a seat with more comfortable padding. Is this from another machine or is it homemade?

Steven Staley Notts.

Dear Mike

A quote from a Wiltshire policeman I spoke to a couple of weekends ago. We were marshalling at a large Horse Enduro which at one point was receiving problems from a bunch of local 'tearabouts' on motocross bikes, frightening the horses and generally being a nuisance. I asked if he could make his presence seen in the vicinity the complaints were coming from. His reply in front of witnesses 'Well they are on a Byway therefore they are not doing anything illegal, they don't need tax, insurance or anything else'..... when I pushed the point he informs me that his superiors had told him this, they couldn't be wrong!! You may like to print this. I am taking it further therefore I will not at this point put in print his rank and name or quite senior position!!

Norman S Howard Dorset

Sir

Re.LANCASHIRE GROUP - RIBBLE VALLEY AREA

There are several very keen riders in this area, several of whom have agreed to look after the local lanes, by riding them every year and reporting on any changes as necessary. Research is also being carried out into several lesser known lanes in order to establish their true status with a view to expanding our network. This is a very beautiful part of the country with some very pleasant views and has lanes which are not ridden that often, due to the short length of some of them and the necessary roadwork between. If our research proves productive this should be improved.

One thing that we must be aware of, especially on lanes which have been used very little in the past and where conflict may occur, is our perceived image by other people. That is : We should take a very professional attitude to our pastime and attempt to create harmony everywhere, by sensible behaviour and reasoned arguments. One of the best things we can do is to keep our bikes quiet, since noise to most people equates with speed and damage to the ground - although we know that this is not necessarily the case. Another thing we could do

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is to take time to speak to other users of the trails as a public relations exercise, even if it is only 'hello'.

I ride a Suzuki DR 200 which is a fabulous bike and is about the quietest bike around, even at speed, and is magic to ride with incredible suspension and extreme comfort. It is very forgiving on the rough and is remarkably good on fuel at 60 to 70 to the gallon. the bike is very light to handle and does not tire you out with a days hard ride and is capable of being extricated from bogs on ones own. Although I have been known to require assistance on blubberhouses Moor once when I hopped into a bottomless rather aromatic, bog with only the tank and seat showing. it took four of us a 1/2 hour to dig it out with our hands and pulling on a rope. Followed by the statement: "What an original perfume".

Baldrick

Sir

Re.GREENLANING IN TRANSYLVANIA 4 X 4

Recently I had the good fortune to spend a few months working in Romania, at a town called Onesti in Moldavia. Although i had little opportunity to ride motorcycles seriously, I did have access to a Nissan Patrol 4WD thingey, and I was able to form an impression of green lanes there, even though it was in a vehicle with a wheel at each corner.

Onesti is a small town in the Carpathian foothills, its the third most polluted town in Romania thanks to the petro chemical factory which is the raison d'etre for the towns existence. its also a market town and the countryside is still much in evidence - - cows graze in the parks, peasants sell fruit and vegetables in the market and the ironmonger sells brand new horse drawn ploughs. The road system in Romania consists of tarred main roads which are similar to our pre-motorway A roads. Two lane, twisting, passing through towns and villages and not terribly well maintained. Whilst the town roads and some secondary roads are tarred paths, very much in the manner of a mechanical horse.

There were problems of course - petrol, food rationing. exchange rates, accomodation, general shortages of practically everything. Romania is about 2000 miles from U.K., about 3 days by road. If you're determined enough then in theory they welcome tourists, and in practise you will have a most interesting time. I could go on waxing lyrical about the place, but if you want to know more, give me a ring (TRF Cornwall Rep) and I may be able to help. And if anyone is thinking of raising money for the orphanages I would be interested to hear from them as well.

Roger Fogg Cornwall