

SUSSEX

John Penfold, 'Mariners'
Nyton Road, Aldingbourne
Chichester. Tel: 024368

TEESIDE

Leo Crone, 35 Flamingo Close
Darlington. Tel: Darlington 282671

THAMES VALLEY

Terry Jolley, 4 Halley's Walk, Addlestone
Surrey. Tel: Weybridge 42935

WEST ANGLIA

David Knight, 89 Blackfriars
Rushden, Northamptonshire
Tel: Rushden 313816

WEST MIDLANDS

Albert Billington, 171 Valley Road
Solihull, W.Midlands B92 9AY
Tel: 021-743 5801

WEST YORKSHIRE

W. John Netherwood, The Barn
Fulstone New Mill, Huddersfield
Tel: 0484 685492

WEST WILTSHIRE

Bill Riley, 141 Bath Road
Bradford on Avon. Tel: 3811

WYVERN

Gwyn James, 18 The Spinney
Wolverhampton WV3 9EU
Tel: 0902 763824

YORKSHIRE COAST (SCARBOROUGH)

Simon Alport, Prospect Villa
Castle Lane, E.Ayton, Scarborough
Tel: 0723 864388

Contact John (every other month — 4th
Wednesday — i.e. Feb., April, June, etc.)
Hassocks Hotel, Hassocks, Mid Sussex

1st Wednesday — The Station Hotel
Kirby, near Stokesley

3rd Monday — District Arms
Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middlesex

1st & 3rd Thursday —
Scott Bader Club House (opp.Parish
Church), Wollaston, near Wellingborough

1st & 3rd Wednesdays —
King George V Memorial Hall, Stratford
Road, Hockley Heath, Solihull

1st & 3rd Mondays —
Frizinghall Conservative Club
Off Manningham Lane, Bradford

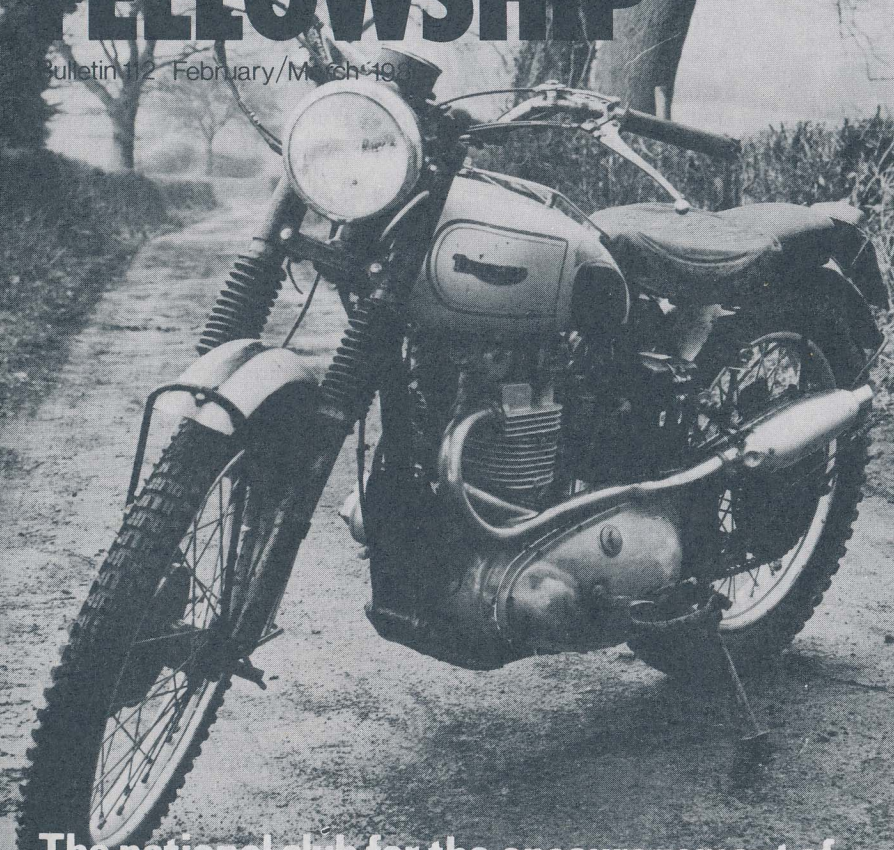
1st Tuesday in month — The Old Bear
Staverton, Near Trowbridge, Wilts.

Every Thursday 9.30 p.m.
Hill & Cakemore Ex-Servicemen's Club
Victoria Road, Blackheath, W.Midlands

1st Wednesday
Wykeham (ring first)

TREE TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

Bulletin 112 February/March 1988



The national club for the encouragement of
non-competitive green roads motorcycling
and maintenance of rights of way



TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

BULLETIN No. 112

February/March 1986

FUTURE EVENTS

FEBRUARY

- 9th East Yorks Group Run. Helmsley. Contact: Don Burt (0977) 612258
- 15th/16th Trail Run — Northamptonshire area. Maximum number of riders catered for — 10. Contact Dave Knight for details. Tel: (0933) 313816.
- 23rd East Yorks Group Run. Boothferry. Contact: Don Burt.

MARCH

- 9th East Yorks Run. Settle. Contact: Don Burt.
- 15th/16th Trail Run — Cambridgeshire and surrounding counties. Contact: Hugh Mason for details, 3 The Green, Haddenham, Ely, Cambs. Tel: (0353) 740534.
- 23rd East Yorks Group Run. Baslow. Contact: Don Burt.

APRIL

- 4th/6th Rights of Way Seminar, The Hollowford Centre, Castleton, Derbyshire. THIS IS NOT A TRAIL RIDING WEEKEND. Further details from Brian Thompson. Tel: (0405) 814389 AFTER 7.00pm
- 6th East Yorks Group Run. Kettlewell. Contact: Don Burt.
- 19th/20th Trail Run — Warwickshire and Worcestershire. Maximum number of riders catered for — 16. For details contact Peter Cookson Tel: (021 745) 6129 (after 6.00 pm before 7.30 pm) or Donald Hubble, Tel: (0527) 46308 (after 6.00 pm).
- 20th East Yorks Group Run. Chirk. Contact: Don Burt.
- 27th Road Bike Run. Start from Baslow Main Car Park (10 miles west of Sheffield, 5 miles east of Bakewell on A619). Start time 11.00 am. Open to any type of road bike, though preferably not over 500 cc., classic trials, converted green laner, etc. NO ENDURO BIKES and a limit of five trail bikes. Details from Brian Thompson.

MAY

- 4th East Yorks Group Run. Pateley Bridge. Contact: Don Burt.
- 10th/11th John Ebrell Memorial Run. Details from Ken Canham. Tel: Hexham 602553.
- 18th BMF Rally, East of England Showground, Peterborough.

For members with the not-so-modern type of trail bike who fancy a leisurely ride in the Northumberland area either for a day or weekend, please contact: Ken Dickson, 1 Huntington Drive, Cramlington NE23 9FA. Tel: (0670) 737047.

ANYONE ENQUIRING BY LETTER TO ANY OF THE RUNS AVAILABLE, PLEASE REMEMBER TO ENCLOSE A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

Cover Photo : Courtesy David Price, Swanwick, Derby

Pictured is Roger Gagg's hardworking 1949 Triumph Trophy on a green lane at Hartsay near Ripley, Derbyshire called — ironically enough — Bridle Lane. The machine itself is used regularly in long distance trials and green lane runs.

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EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

Trail riding and trail bikes (well, some pass for that description) have featured quite prominently in the motorcycle press over the past couple of months. As far as new machines are concerned, the trend is still very much towards the moto-cross look-alike. Kawasaki are bringing out a new 125 c.c. model — the KMX — in learner and non-learner classes (12bhp and 24bhp respectively). The single cylinder machine is based on the KX competition motor and features water cooling reed valve induction and the KIPS power valve system. This 6-speed machine weighs in at 218 lbs with disc brakes front and rear and a 34" seat height. Cost? Well, it is expected to retail at around £1,100.

At the other end of the scale (the non-practical trail end, I call it!) are the 1986 thumpers from Cagiva, the 650 c.c. Elephant, Honda's 600 c.c. XL-LM and BMW's 800 c.c. Paris-Dakar clones. These two grand+ price tag machines really don't in my opinion fill the need of the greater part of the British trail bike market. When are we going to see a return to normality, my old KE175 is getting rather tired and there's precious little on the market to replace her.

But onto trail riding; *Performance Bikes* magazine ran a very good article in November, combining a very witty trail riding piece with test reports on a range of machinery — Suzuki DR125, TS250, Yamaha XT350 and Kawasaki KLR600. After the trouble with the weekly press test riders in the Peak District, thankfully *Performance Bikes* took the trouble to contact the local South Yorks group and were led round by TRF member Dave Swindells who, no doubt, introduced them to the gentler lanes!!?

"One Track" in *Motorcycle Sport* praised the TRF on its attempts to kerb would-be hooligans on the lanes; mentioning our Code of Conduct and the brief offer by Honda to all new purchasers of XL trail bikes to free TRF membership. Both these are good publicity for the TRF, or should I say Trail Riders Fellowship, as I feel we should publicise our full name more. After all, you can't expect to gain new members if they don't know what the letters 'TRF' stand for? It's obvious to us, but there are a great many people out there who don't know what our initials stand for. However, judging by the number of new members gained at the Bike Show at the NEC in October, hopefully many more people now know what the TRF is all about and are 'enjoying' the winter lanes.

Trevor Compton, Editor of the SW *ACU Gazette* gives the TRF a good plug and says "Funds must be made available to enable Brian to take on Rights of Way work full time." He proposes a raise in the ACU licence fee to help cover the cost as well as a possible levy not only on the sale of new trail bikes, but on the sale of accessories as well. These measures alone he estimates would bring in around £80,000 per annum. Whilst these moves may not be practical in all cases, it is good to see other club magazines passing on to members the need for such action if we are to save green lanes for the future.

Moving on, apologies to new TRF Tim Ley who has been called everything from MAY to LAY! in the *Bulletin* and press. Hopefully this now puts the record straight. So, finally, after failing to wish you a Merry Christmas in the last issue (well, it seems a bit forward when I'm writing my 'Ramblings' in October), I'll wish you all a belated Happy New Year now!!

LETTERS

The new cards to hand out to walkers, riders and others to explain our existence are an excellent idea. Just one point though; would it not be better to give a national address for queries? Local group reps may well be outside their territory for one thing, and also I think telephone numbers are a bad idea since my wife has been exposed to abuse up to the point of death threats after a Guardian letter I wrote allowed, with my distinctive surname, the lunatic fringe to trace us.

Thanks for an excellent magazine.

Steve Pighills, Wyvern TRF

It must be some letter you wrote, Steve! However, I agree with your comments; it is surprising just where people can find your address and phone number and I would say it is very much up to the individual how much or little info he gives away on these handout cards. As to a national address, who is going to be the lucky Executive Committee member to draw the short straw! — Rosie

Having purchased one of Colin Appleyard's bargain TY250Es, I recently joined the North Lancs. Motor Club to enable me to try trials riding. This is a long established (1937) club covering most aspects of motorcycling, and I have been asked to form a trail riding section. I have agreed to do this, on condition that riders who take up regular trail riding are strongly encouraged to join the TRF. Until they do so, I intend to extract a £1 run fee from them, all proceeds will go to the TRF Fighting Fund.

On certain vital issues such as machine noise, group size and speed, we intend to be stricter than is often the case on TRF runs. I have produced a handout for NLMC members who are interested which includes information on what they should wear, the legal state of their machines (and our right to turn away any unsuitable machines, e.g. no enduro bikes) and what useful tools to bring with them.

We hope to contribute to the effort to prevent closure of Rights of Way and promote the responsible use of green lanes by interested members.

Chris Wright, Halton, Lancaster

Shell "Better Britain" Campaign

Bristol TRF have received a £350 cheque from Shell to purchase tools for lane clearance projects. I have to submit a report to them on how we have used the money on our project(s) in due course.

Gwyn Thomas, Bristol TRF

Well done! It's good to see a big concern like Shell taking an interest in green lanes, and surely a good benefactor for the future? — Rosie

Quote of the Month

From East Herefordshire farmer during exchange of opinions on whether county highways were for motorcycles or cereal crops: "You must be some activist from the Ramblers Association".

Geoff Ragg, Harlow, Essex

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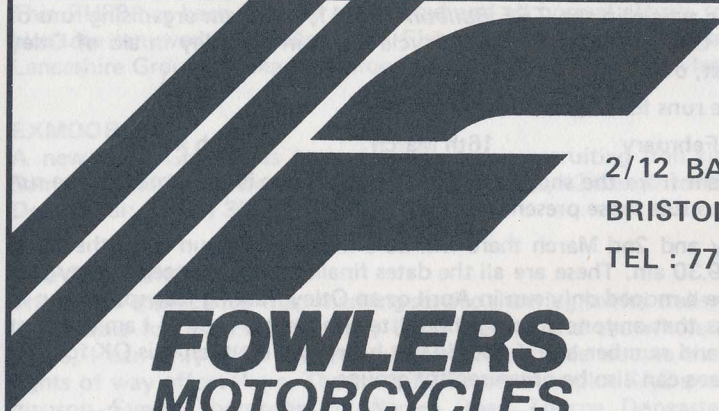
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HUGE STOCK OF ACCESSORIES FOR THE OFF ROAD RIDER IT'S WORTH A VISIT

It seems that the idea of organising trail rides for unattached-to-Group members is gathering momentum. As well as the runs co-ordinated by Ken Canham, we have two more members willing to organise events; rides on a more national basis and, in the first instance, international basis!

Having crossed the Sahara solo last spring, I wish to assist any TRF members who want to go to this very interesting part of the world. I know many people are interested in this kind of trip, so I have compiled a fact sheet which I can pass on for the sum of £1 plus stamped addressed envelope.

Also, I am planning another trip there next autumn which will be covering 6,000 miles of desert, some of which has never been done by bike before to my knowledge. I need volunteers to come along to assist on this journey: 4 or 5 riders making a full team of 6. There must be at least one outfit in this team. Everyone will get a chance to lead as it will be run on a similar basis to the Everest climbs.

I am also trying to arrange a fun weekend in the early spring which will be a camp bar-b-que and soccer match between Yorkshire TRF and Lancashire TRF members. I have a few sites in mind where this event can be held; most are only accessible by trail bike. However, as with all such ventures, I need help from others plus, of course, two teams to come forward.

Please contact: David McWhinney, 44 Walverden Road, Brierfield, Nelson, Lancs.

And if the football match is a success, I hope to hold a cricket match in the summer.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Further to Allan's article in the *TRF Bulletin* No.111, I too am organising runs of this nature from Colin Appleyard's Motorcycle Shop in Keighley in aid of Otle Talking Newspaper, of which I am co-editor.

The dates of these runs for anyone interested are:

16th February 16th March 20th April

All start at 9.30 am from the shop in Worth Way. Anyone is welcome and the run will be organised to suit those present.

On 2nd February and 2nd March there will be a moped only run from the shop, again starting at 9.30 am. These are all the dates finalised so far, except to say that there will NOT be a moped only run in April or an Otle Talking Newspaper run in May. I must stress that anyone coming should telephone me first. If I am out, just leave your name and number and if you do not hear from me then it is OK for you to come along. Runs can also be organised for groups.

Any run can be made into a weekend for 2-5 persons (maximum for Saturday). Easier runs can be organised on request for older bikes/riders.

Finally, please retain the runs list in the front of the *Bulletin*. It can be very useful. And badger other groups to put theirs in too. We like to know what is going on, not only to join in but also to avoid clashing.

Gordon Thackeray, 105 The Oval, Otle
Tel: (0943) 466901

RIGHTS OF WAY NEWS — Brian Thompson

LOST ROADS

There are hundreds of lost and forgotten green lanes throughout the UK just waiting to be discovered and opened up. Alan Kind, Bill Riley and myself have opened up about 600 green lanes between us.

But how do I go about this, you ask? To start with you need maps. Start with the current Ordnance Survey Landranger 1:50,000 series. Then send for a copy of the original one inch to the mile Victorian Ordnance Survey Map for your area. A bargain at £2.25 or £4.20 for two from David & Charles, Newton Abbot, Devon (post free). If you don't know the map number simply state the nearest large town and county. Surveyed between 1805, starting in the south and ending up in the north by 1875, they are useful evidence because, if they show a green lane existing, especially if the map is pre-1835, the law says this must be presumed a public highway.

This is just the start of a voyage of discovery with the next step a visit to the County archives to see if the lanes are shown on other pre-1835 maps and enclosure awards. The old maps are a record of what the careful and thorough surveyors found in past times. Sorry, but the 1st edition OS maps are not available for Scotland.

LANCASHIRE

Rapes Highway — odd name to be sure, but this is a very ancient green lane on the edge of the West Pennines near Rochdale, not far from the M62 at Piethorn Reservoir. This RUPP has been wilfully obstructed and all normal efforts to get the unlawful blockage removed have failed. TRF Fighting Fund money has been allocated to the Lancashire Group to take legal proceedings to restore the green lane to public use.

EXMOOR

A new TRF Group has been formed and is recruiting trail riders from Devon, Somerset and North Dorset. Leader is John Gibbs, 42 Langlands Road, Cullompton, Devon. Tel: (0884) 32781.

MAP MARKING

The much appreciated map marking service showing lawful trails for TRF members is available for the Peak District, Lake District and the whole of Yorkshire. For Wales, I can only offer an 'at your own risk' guide due to the appalling lack of rights of way effort there. The fee is £2.50 per map plus SAE and should be sent to my son, Steven Thompson, 39 Warren Road, Thorne, Doncaster. Only Ordnance Survey maps 1:50,000 series; Bartholomew and other maps are unsuitable.

SOUTH WEST

This is a very busy area lately and Gwyn Thomas of the TRF Bristol Group has a lot of work on his plate. Apart from the Wood Lane case, Somerset County Council for a RUPP (Shepton Montague to Stoney Stoke) to be downgraded to footpath, Gwyn says he is disgusted as this follows his ploughed out complaint made last year. In Devon, County Hall are trying to downgrade a County Road at Manaton.

NORTHANTS

A review of green lane status under the 1968 Countryside Act is now complete and Definitive Maps showing the new situation in Northants can be seen at the County Surveyors Office, Floor 6, Northampton House, Wood Street, Northampton. I would appreciate a report.

PRAISE FROM THE FARMERS

Gaining respect from the National Farmers Union with 850 full time staff, the most powerful pressure group in the UK, is not easy. A circular from the NFU's legal expert, Dr Bell, contained the following "... Members of the TRF tend to be well briefed on the legal side and are the only people likely to be riding a footpath or bridleway armed with evidence of higher status ..." Details of the TRF officials are provided in an effort to resolve problems by negotiation rather than by going to law. The NFU's statement is fair, accurate and unbiased and the NFU deserve our thanks.

MORE BIAS

I have sent a strong letter of complaint to the Countryside Commission who list some 30 bodies EXCEPT the ACU, BMF or TRF in their free countryside information booklets *Out in the Country* and *Waymarking*.

LARKHILL RANGES, WILTSHIRE

The loss of 30 RUPPs at last year's Public Inquiry may yet be overturned thanks mainly to hard work by Bill Riley (for the Byways and Bridleways Trust). Wiltshire County Council may appeal to the High Court.

WALES

The county of Dyfed has 630 miles of lanes – more than any other county in England or Wales and twice as many as popular Derbyshire or the Lakes. Mid Wales neighbour, Powys, has the second largest number with 600 miles. No wonder the area attracts trail riders and enduro riders in large numbers!

My comments about the lack of Byway effort resulted in the lines from Wales to Yorkshire running hot. I should have acknowledged the hard work over many years of Simon Cleeve, Bill Kershaw and Bob James of the Welsh Trail Riders Association, and Adrian Walls of the TRF in Clwyd.

There is some resentment by local riders at the invasion by weekend English riders from the South and Midlands for which Mid Wales offers the nearest really good trails. I appreciate that the odd careless English riders have upset a few farmers, but keeping lanes the wrong status in order to deter visiting riders is as selfish as the RA policy to seek exclusive rights on all green lanes.

In Gwynedd, being a National Park, the problems are largely from the pro RA "ban 'em" policy which all national parks share. Not one volunteer has offered to take over my half completed byway claims. I have also been advised that a Welsh speaker is essential!

The Welsh Water Authority who own most of the Claerwen Dam region tell me they don't mind riders using Monks Trod, the 8 mile romp from Claerwen Reservoir to Pont ar Elan, one of the most challenging trail rides in Britain.

DERBYSHIRE GREEN LANE DAY OUT

We had two days out in 1985 mainly for road bikes, vintage bikes and similar. Catering for a few trail bikes on the October run brought trouble and complaints with a clash of interests between road and trail bike riders.

10th August

We begin with the 10th August run which we shall quickly pass over as a day best forgotten. The rain poured down all day turning what were easy lanes into a challenge and a trial of ability not originally planned. My usually trusty Hondamatic 400 developed a misfire on the run down the M1 which bugged me all day and defied hasty attempts to find a cure. As organiser and leader of a party one is supposed to have a very reliable machine. This was embarrassing, especially as the three £40 CZ or Jawas cheerfully chugged and smoked their way around the muddy lanes without missing a beat. I was also trying to impress Geoff Wilson of the BMF riding his BMW R80 with wife Jenny on the back. Geoff was, of course, able to cope with the rain and everything the tough conditions under his road tyres could throw at him.

At Ensor I suffered another humiliation on top of the misfire when the Honda spluttered to a halt. After some fiddling, Geoff casually enquired if I had any petrol in the tank. Turning onto reserve the twin burst into life! What a relief and how shamefaced I felt.

Half the party departed home after the lunch break but the wet day did not break the spirit and all expressed a wish for more.

Derbyshire Road Bike Trail Run – 27th October

Mercifully, a dry warm day with the lanes in the dried out condition they ought to have been in August. In the car park at Baslow a large contingent gathered, including many just to watch us set off and admire the variety of bikes on display.

A nervous rider on his 1925 Sunbeam enquired about the suitability of the lanes for his pride and joy. No such fears for Tony Leedle from Leeds, busy unloading his 1927 flat tank TT Special 3-speed close ratio box 500 exposed valve Norton. I immediately bagged the Norton for my group of eight and collected a V50 Moto Guzzi, three Jawa/CZ Owners Club riders on 350s and my son, Steven, on his Kawasaki AE80 on his first ever trail run. I could not get the Sunbeam to join us but gave him a map of the area and invited him along on the next Derbyshire run.

The Norton was the centre of attraction; 100 per cent original this machine is worth £5,000! My admiration for man and machine grew throughout the day. With one bang every other tree, I was sure it was about to stall on the steepest hills, but the Norton handled well and never missed a beat.

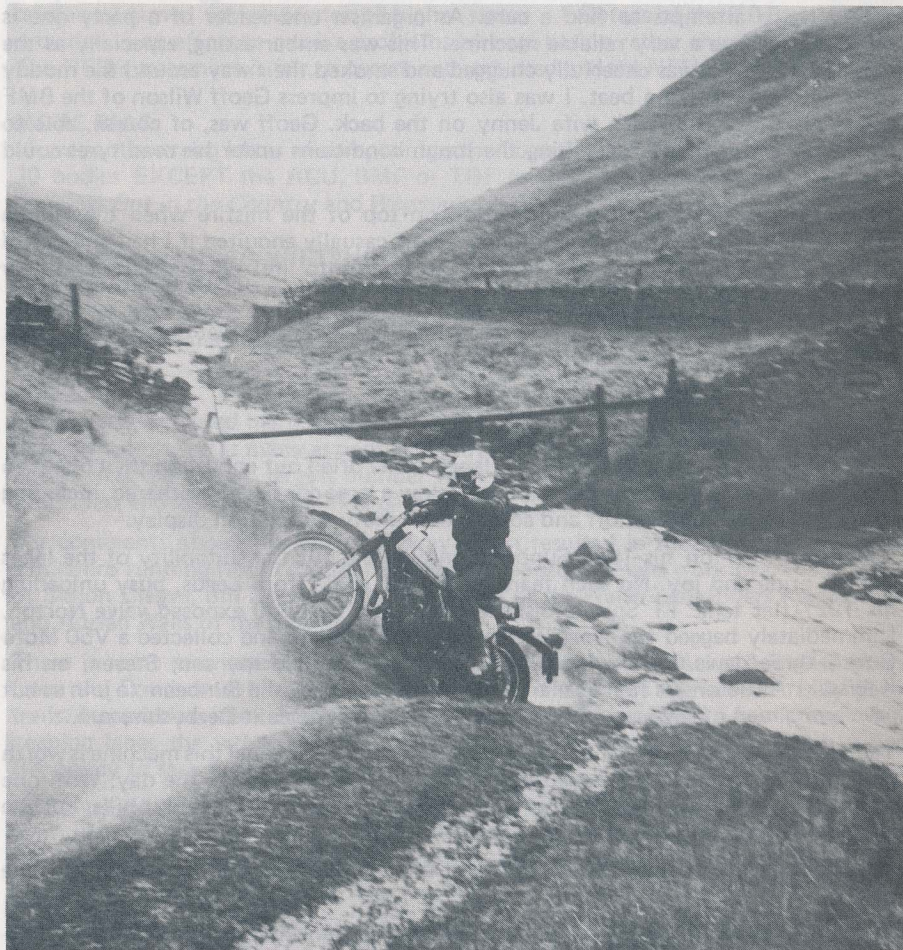
Paul Fairbrother on his V50 complained of weaving downhill, caused by torque reaction.

In the afternoon, Mike Edwards joined us with an amazing outfit. Fancy a Volkswagen engined 1951 Sunbeam! The overworked clutch of an MZ250 outfit expired on Dirlow Rake and was towed back to Derby by Mike Edwards.

My party had a good day out but from another party came complaints from roadsters that some lanes were too severe. What may be a suitable green lane for road bikes to some may be a mighty struggle for others.

More road bike runs are planned for 1986 and, in future, I promise to keep road bikes separate from trail bikes. I apologise to the three riders who complained.

(Whilst appreciating the limitations of 'road bikes' over their road legal 'trail bike' counterparts, I do hope we are not going to see too much separatism creeping in. After all, many trail bike riders who are maybe a little rusty, or beginners, or prefer the less demanding type of ride would be offended at being unable to join in. — Rosie)



TRF's mad solicitor! 60 year old Basil Mellor on his TS250. Weardale

WELSH TRAIL RIDING — But not like the Welsh Trail Riders

Bob Rowley and his wife Eunice, my wife, Norma, and I chose a perfect weekend for some autumn trail riding.

Just over two hours from the Midlands to Bob's caravan between Machynlleth and Aberdovey; my Honda XL500 off the trailer, Bob's BMW GS80 out of the shed, very early lunch and away in warm clear weather up Happy Valley. Off to the right along the slightly tough track over the shoulder to Rhyd-yr-onnen. We're definitely warm by now but the views are fabulous.

A short road ride across the Dyffryn Valley then up onto the Old Coach Road over the western flank of Cader Idris; a long, easy ride which would be practical on a road bike.

Then it's along the south side of the Mawddach Estuary and over a rickety toll bridge (10p per bike) down the Bontddu before turning up a hidden valley to the track which heads west and over Bwch Rhiwgyt. This route has some interesting hairpins in the first couple of hundred yards which require solo riding, but after that there's nothing that superhuman skill and strength can't cope with.

We then go inland to Pont Seethin before hunger and common sense start us back to the coast. A cup of tea at Barmouth, then a road ride back as the sun sets. Just beginning to get cool.

Now the good bit. Bob has access to a nearby holiday complex; so evening is spent with a swim, sauna, jacuzzi, a few drinks and a meal, then a few more drinks and a good night's sleep.

Sunday: a ten-thirty start, along past Machynlleth, off the main A487 up a beautiful valley with sun coming through trees onto dew-covered fields, silver streams — worth at least a morning and a couple of rolls of film — then high up through the forest towards Angler's Retreat. It's a different world up there, remote, with fabulous views.

Just like the anglers, we retreat by a different route back to Machynlleth. A road ride over the pass towards Dolgellau. We were then going to look at some trails just to the north, but chicken out at the sight of a roadside pub. Some crisps and a pint later, we opt for a quick lane through the forest then the high road under the north slope of Cader Idris to the very pretty Llynau Cregennen. All that is left is the Old Coach Road in reverse.

This last trail gives us one of the highlights of the weekend — a pair of red kites circling over the hillside close to us; very easy to tell from the buzzards which are a much more common, but just as beautiful spectacle over these hills.

Back to the caravan for a very late lunch, load up, and drive back home. Which all goes to prove that there is an alternative to the rocks, mud and thin cold rain which are the classic trail riding speciality. Also that there is a place for big heavy trail bikes; two-up on my normal XR200 mount would not have been fun.

Steve Pighills, Wyvern TRF

REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL BIKE SHOW, NEC by John Higgin

It was early October that Andy Foulkes rang to ask if the TRF would like to have a stand at the Bike Show, just as I was preparing for the AGM and sending the *Bulletin* out for Rosie, so it was into top gear and book some holiday from work (that is the day job that helps to pay the bills and gets in the way of TRF activities!)

Firstly, could we get a display and secondly could we get members to man the stand for ten days? Alan Kind came up trumps with some terrific display boards that he brought to the AGM and Albert Billington helped with his garage to store them in until the day of the Show. I rang round and contacted the local group leaders for volunteers but at such short notice they could only be vague and evasive about their members' availability.

I rang the NEC for details of what we would actually have on site, and it was arranged that we would have a carpeted stand with two walls, lighting and a night cover with locks. However, we still needed somewhere to sit, a display table and a cupboard to tidy away stock, sandwiches, etc. A change of Membership Secretary at the AGM the Sunday before the Friday opening meant that all the literature had to be reprinted with the correct name and address.

Opening day came and I discovered that I had been optimistic in the time it takes to get from Reading to Birmingham, plus a late start, and we finally made it about 11.15 a.m. Tony Rose and son, Hugh Mason and Albert Billington all got to the Show before me but did not have anything to pin up! After a frantic half hour we could see the shape of a display. Hugh had brought a large name board that we later put on the corner of the stand to stop people using it as a short cut.

The first day was Press Day, but even without the huge numbers that were to come later, a steady flow of enquiries kept us busy all day. By about 5.00 p.m. the rush died down and by six it was nearly deserted. Time to look around ourselves. The Show closed at 7.00 p.m. and, after giving Albert a lift home, I finally arrived home at 10.00 p.m. shattered and went straight to bed after setting the alarm for 6.30 a.m.

Saturday was a better journey with no display equipment to take and no weekday traffic, but today there were no helpers and I was thankful for the sandwiches and coffee I'd taken with me as I could not leave the stand. From 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. it was all go — answering questions all the time, signing on new members, explaining that the Blue Book was not a list of Rights of Way where young spotty could take his YZ490 for a quiet bit of moto-cross practice, and occasionally grabbing a sandwich. Some members from the North East came on the stand and helped out for several hours; this was a great help and very much appreciated.

Sunday was very similar to Saturday and I was slipping into a routine, finding a pattern to the questions and a routine answer. I had taken a copy of Harry Ball's map of rights of way in Warwickshire and this proved an excellent illustration of how to find rights of way that aren't marked on the map, in any form with County Roads drawn on, and many remarks that the farmers say, e.g. "This is a private road", etc.

Monday to Wednesday were taken care of by Richard Marshall and Graham Chinnery, Ron Carter and the Wyvern TRF Group, respectively, with me, aided by Don Lewis back there again on the Thursday, with Albert Billington taking on yet another session on the Friday due to a hiccup in Brian Smith's transport arrangements.

Saturday, and I was by myself again for a very busy day which only tailed off towards the last half hour of the day. I stayed overnight in Coventry with some other staff holders who were looking forward to the last day, and getting home.

Sunday, the last day, and even with early closing at 6.00 p.m. it was a very busy day, after which the stall had to be dismantled and transported back. I was very grateful for the help from the Hertfordshire member (sorry, but I don't remember your name). Finally we got packed up and the Show closed, but what had ten days of very hard work achieved? I hope that our presence had enlightened a few non-members as to what we do and don't do. We did enrol 40 members and I understand that nearly 100 membership forms can be traced back to the Show. We sold a few Rights of Way books and a few magazine binders.

The main effect of the Show was to get our name before a vast public. There were 100,000 people through the doors, including fellow stallholders, and a large proportion of them came on our stand, so that even if they haven't the slightest interest in trail riding at present, they know where to come in future if they do become interested. I hope that we managed to dispel a few myths about the Fellowship for the people we talked to, like the large areas where people believe there aren't any rights of way or green lanes — Yorkshire, Berkshire, Shropshire, etc. The most unlikely looking people when asked if they would like to join said "yes" and the obvious looking ones said "No", it was totally unpredictable who would join.

Since the Show closed the display boards have been used at the Trentham Gardens Dirty Bike Show and the Bristol Dirt Bike Show, so we certainly got our money's worth out of them. Maybe we can manage some more without mud for the next International Bike Show in October 1986 where, with your permission, I will ask if we can have a stand.

See you there, and any volunteers for a free pass please let me know.

Contact the Editor For Details



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COMPETITION

The young man featured here was taking part in a beginners run in Avon, near Bath, with the Bristol Club last autumn.

Has he lost his contact lens? Is he a microbiologist? Are those tracks he's looking so closely at those of the latest megga-size trail bike?

What do *you* think the young man is saying/thinking?

Let me know (by 1st April). A prize of £2 will be sent to the sender of the most witty caption.

Entries to the Editor. (Thanks to Dave Giles for the photo)



BOOK REVIEWS by Rosemary Swindells

For anyone left with any Christmas money on their hands, what better than to treat yourself with a motorcycle book? Just the thing when the weather is too good for trail riding!

BRITISH TRIALS MOTORCYCLES – “The Men and Their Machines”

Archive photographs by arrangement with *The Classic Motorcycle* with captions by Ralph Venables.

Published by: Bruce Main Smith Retail Ltd. Price: £7.95

This A4 size paperback book contains over 220 black and white photographs, featuring over 158 famous trials riders and their machines from the 1950s and 1960s. Anyone interested in the ‘old men of trials’, when trials bikes looked like road bikes and Barbour jackets and flat caps were the order of the day, will enjoy reminiscing as they flick through the pages of this book.

Being a pictorial publication, it is very much like browsing through someone’s old photo album with just brief captions/descriptions of each photograph.

In the foreword, Ralph Venables states that well over fifty years as a motorcycle journalist and trials organiser brought him into contact with a great many photographers and concocting captions for the top 200 was a job that brought great pleasure. “Here was a portrait gallery of old friends riding the bikes with which their names will always be coupled, here on my table was unfolded the ‘Golden Age’ of motorcycle trials.”

Considering the age of some of these photographs and the equipment that was around at the time, these photographs are of excellent quality and give an insight into what trials was all about in those days – fun. My only complaint being that the copy I had seemed to have been rather mixed up with the page numbers not running consecutively. Hopefully this is just a one-off instance.

Separated into different categories, Ralph has chosen shots from the Scottish Six Days Trial, Welsh Three Days, International Six Days Trial, and other well known trials, plus several sections covering specific marques, i.e. DOT, BSA, Greeves and Triumph. Together with some more fun sections, “Mud Glorious Mud” and “Wandering Wheels” to name but two, which need no further description once you’ve seen the photographs! And names that crop up, such as Arthur, Martin and Alan Lampkin, Sammy Miller, Don Smith and even road racer Geoff Duke (when they was all but lads!)

In these modern days it is good to look back to the men and machines of the 50s and 60s which, although not that long ago in real terms, are a lifetime ago in terms of motorcycles and motorcycle technology, and it is difficult to believe that some of these photographs were only taken about twenty years ago. To see familiar sections from the Scottish tackled on something not far removed from a road bike shows the skill of some of these riders. So, although I think this book will appeal more to the older motorcyclist who can remember these faces and events, it offers a good photographic history of trials and a good ‘read’ for any off-road enthusiast but at a price!

V-TWIN – THE CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE – 1903 to the Present

Author: Roger W. Hicks
Publisher: Blandford Press
ISBN: 0-7137-1502-2
Price: £10.95

The v-twin has always been popular with makers in America and Europe and more recently regained popularity with the major Japanese companies; and, as the author states, there can be no doubt that in most motorcyclists' 'Top 10' of bikes there will feature at least one v-twin. Such is the appeal of this engine configuration. It may be a Brough, a Vincent, a Harley Davidson, a Ducati, or one of the many others past and present, but there is something about the looks and performance of these machines that epitomises the classic motorcycle. You will find amongst the 160 pages of (virtually) unadulterated v-twins mention, at least, of them all!

The book is broken down into 13 chapters, the obvious start being "The Lure of the Vee" in which Roger looks at the engine design and tries to explain just why these machines have captured the imagination of so many motorcyclists past and present. Is it the sheer heritage? the elegance? the engine simplicity? or is it that they look and sound just right? In Roger's usual style, he doesn't consider everyone to be an expert nor totally without knowledge, and in this introduction explains the v-twin to the beginner and tries to answer various questions posed, and also manages to give food for thought for the already converted or expert in this field. In perverse fashion he even notes BMW which, although strictly speaking are flat twins, can also be classified as 180° v-twins; and, let's face it, we've had all angles of V from 26° in the 1929 Matchless Silver Arrow to 120° in the Moto Guzzi Bicilindrica racer of 1935.

I tend to be a little wary of 'all embracing' books as it is not an easy task covering a large topic and condensing it down to manageable size. Detail is usually forfeit, leaving the reader with only a sketchy outline of the subject; however, in covering the many v-twin marques Roger has managed to include an amazing amount of information and succeeds in mentioning, at the very least, all of the classic v-twins we all know and love, together with some of the lesser known marques and the modern Japanese models.

Marques are then covered in chapters, loosely by country, starting with America who ruled the world in the early part of this century. For speed, technical innovation and handling they could compete with anyone and beat most! And where better to start then with the "love 'em or hate 'em" Harley Davidsons; the family business that started in a 10' x 15' shed. Indian, another American marque, one of the most technically advanced machines on the road in the first ten years of this century, suffered from bad cash flow/accounting decisions which spelled disaster for the company. Each manufacture is surprisingly well documented, given the space available. But even so, the author, aware of the shortcomings of having to pack so much into so little space, makes reference where possible to further books on a particular make of bike.

Chapter 4 finally crosses the water to Europe where, in contrast to the 1000 c.c. plus vees of the USA, where anything under 750 c.c. is considered a "boys bike",

we see smaller, more compact machines more suited to the twistier, narrower but better surfaced European roads with such machines as the 346 c.c. Royal Enfield and the many 500 c.c. vees. It is such as this chapter that will make many a v-twin lover stand up and take notice as many see no further than Vincent when looking for a British v-twin. You'd be surprised just how many of the manufacturers did turn out v-twins, to a greater or lesser degree of success. Yes, once upon a time BSA were famous for their v-twins.

The 180° flat twin Douglas, BMW and other now extinct manufacturers are given a chapter to themselves, although rather stretching the imagination, I feel, to call them v-twins. Three-wheelers too are covered with such classic machines as the Morgans and the more recent and still manufactured 'Triking' with its Moto Guzzi engine.

We see our first Italian v-twin in the chapter entitled "The Wrong Way" which will, no doubt, upset many a Guzzi owner who feels his engine is the 'right way'. The chapter covering Vincents is likely to be well thumbed. As Roger Hicks says, "When you look at a Vincent v-twin it is hard not to see it as a huge beautiful engine to which someone has bolted the minimum number of components necessary to turn it into a motorcycle.

Chapter 10 again comes back to Italy, for many the 'home' of the v-twin, covering Ducati and – to show how up to date this book is – the Ducati engined Cagivas. The photos are a little sketchy in this chapter and, where in most of the book the photos match up with the text, you'll have to turn to the last chapter to find a beautiful sunset shot of the Ducati Darmah, a truly handsome machine. Morini, too, are only given a couple of pages with only photos of their later models, no 'Camel' or 'Kangaroo' nor even earlier roadsters. More space, actually, is given to the ill-fated Hesketh, although I suppose we must be loyal to our own country's efforts.

Taking us from the classic to the present we go to Japan, who have recently re-entered the v-twin market. Japan first made v-twins, surprisingly, as early as the 1930s but they must surely be better known for such models as the CX500 and its 400–650 c.c. variants. Although, for all its popularity and undoubted success, no photograph appears of the original CX500. Reading the chapter on Japanese v-twins it is surprising just how many models the 'Big Four' have produced over the last few years: Yamaha's TR1, Honda's brace of VT250 and 500, the mighty XLV 'trail' bike, together with some Harley Davidson look-a-likes.

So finally to Chapter 13 in which Roger looks to the future of the v-twin motor, making reference to the future of motorcycling generally. The recession, anti-motorcycling legislation, etc. all give a rather gloomy note to the end of this book. However, all in all, a well written and very readable book that will enhance anyone's knowledge of the classic v-twin without bogging the reader down with endless facts and figures. It is more of a good factual read rather than a reference book.

The overall quality of the book is excellent with over 100 black and white photos of good clarity which, together with many line drawings and exploded engine diagrams of various engines, offers excellent mechanical and detail design information. Best of all are the superb colour shots, 38 in all, which really bring the subject to life. Initially, I thought it expensive at £10.95 but, considering the content, quality and clarity of photograph, it does offer value for money.

GROUP NEWS

EAST YORKSHIRE GROUP

The East Yorkshire Group is alive and well despite all rumours to the contrary! We have been riding every other weekend throughout the last nine months, raising between three and twelve riders with an average of five. Runs have covered North Wales, Derbyshire, Lake District, Yorkshire Dales, North Yorkshire Moors, Wykeham Forest, East Yorkshire Wolds and the annual Askern Mud Bath (only the mud was frozen solid and we bounced our way round, and our Christmas food down!)

Members from other areas are always welcome and arrangements can be made to cover weekends as long as the normal run forms part of the weekend.

Don Burt

CUMBRIA GROUP

The Cumbria Group now has a 'Runs Co-ordinator'. The idea behind this was to have someone who could organise not only our local runs but also to bring some kind of order into a situation that has been causing us some worry in the past; namely, outside groups visiting the Lakes. We live and ride in a very sensitive area and one of my personal nightmares has always been the situation of four or five other groups all riding in the Lakes at the same time, each one having no idea that the others are there until they all meet at the top of Walna, or wherever. Not good for public relations! Could I therefore, please, ask any Group who are thinking of coming to the Lakes to contact Colin Thompson, Crag Cottage, Colthouse, Hawkshead, Cumbria. Tel: Hawkshead 494.

If they contact him in good time I am sure that it might go some way to avoid potential overcrowding. If there are any critics of this request I would remind them that we have the threat of TROs (Traffic Restriction Orders) hanging over us here in Cumbria and the less adverse criticism we receive the better. And, after all, it's only good manners, isn't it?

Pete Deeley, Cumbria Group Rep.

DERBYSHIRE AND SOUTH YORKSHIRE GROUP

The D&SY Group has a stock of sew-on TRF badges. These are of the old style — the green bar and 'Saving Green Lanes' logo. The price is £1.50 and anyone wishing to purchase the patches should contact David Bonsall, the Group Rep. They also have a new RoW Officer for Derbyshire — Phil Hudson — now that John Blackburn has moved to Liverpool.

SCARBOROUGH GROUP

I understand that Simon Alport has been in hospital seriously ill. The TRF send his wife Rhona our deepest sympathy. Group meetings are cancelled until further notice.

NORTH WALES GROUP

John Blackburn, 429 West Derby Road, Liverpool L6 4BL is keen to get in touch with local members; this group seemingly having disappeared without trace. John would like to do something to rescue the appalling RoW situation in North Wales.



David Bonsall, Derbyshire and South Yorkshire Group Rep. demonstrating his expertise over the trials course at the Group's annual trials evening

THE RUN THAT NEVER WAS

XR1 : "Finished the extension yet?"

XR2 : "Yeah."

XR1 : "There's a run on Sunday."

XR2 : "Haven't been out for six months. Haven't seen the XR in the garage lately either!"

XR1 : "Do you want to go?"

XR2 : "OK, I'll meet you at your house."

Bike hunt the XR. "Oh, there it is." Extricate a bike from a pretend builders' yard. Dust it off. Check oil — OK. Doesn't start first time! Unusual. Petrol? Magic! Check everything; getting excited now. Back brake seized on. "Always intended to change the shoes." Easy.

Bed late, up early — 6.30! Panic. Set off late. Central motorway closed — find another route. Getting later. Arrive five minutes late. Load up and go.

Run into fog, out of fog, going up a hill — wheelspin. Black ice? Going down a hill — wheels locked.

XR1 : "They've only gritted the uphill side!"

XR2 : "Better go down the up then!" Later —

XR1 : "There's Weardale."

XR2 : "Has it always been full of fog?"

The two intrepid explorers gingerly descend into the all-enveloping mist.

XR1 : "There's the Market Place."
 XR2 : "First here again."
 Several arrivals later —
 FL : "Fearless Leader's car won't start — so I'm leading!"
 Much unloading and firing up of recalcitrant beasts.
 FL leaves, not everyone is ready. No-one else moves.
 XL : "Follow FL."
 RMXL departs into the fog. Hesitation — XL nods. XR1 and XR2 depart.
 Fog is bad. Uphill all the way. Out of fog into wintry sunlight.
 XR2 : "Why is XR1 weaving?"
 "Why am I weaving?"
 XR1 pulls in. XR2 does a speedway impression.
 XR2 : "This ice doesn't look black to me."
 XR1 : "This is where we normally turn off the main road."
 XR3 pulls up. XT pulls up.
 XT : "I've been skating on my bum" (points to bum). Car passes slowly, driver
 shaking his head in wonderment. XT proceeds to strip bike to do tappets.
 Four intrepid adventurers watch a succession of cars skidding down the hill.
 XR1 : "I'm not bothered about continuing, are you?"
 XR2 : "We've lost the leader anyway."
 XR3 : "No-one else has turned up so we may as well go back; we'll meet you in
 the car park, XT."
 Three XRs burst into song.
 Three frightened explorers gingerly descend an icy hill into the welcoming
 fog. No-one at the car park!
 XR1 : "OK, we've missed the others, let's go home."
 XR2 : "Let's eat our sandwiches first."
 Local people gaze in wonderment at the sight of strangely dressed beings
 eating sandwiches at 10 o'clock on a foggy Sunday morning in the Market
 Place. The beings actually seem to be enjoying themselves! Must be
 escaped loonies.
 Later, unloading the trailer —
 XR1 : "Why is smoke coming out of the side of your silencer?"
 XR2 : "Dunno." Blips the throttle. Clouds emanate from where they shouldn't.
 XR1 : "Oh look, yours has gone in the same place mine did!"
 XR2 : "How much is a new one?"
 XR1 : "Fifty quid from Sammy Miller (tee-hee!)"
 XR2 rides off into the noonday sun, deafening all and sundry.

Signed: XR2

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE TRF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on 20th October 1985

1. The Minutes of the 1984 Meeting as reported in the *Bulletin* were approved as a correct record.
2. The Chairman proposed that the meeting formally adopt Lord Strathcarron as Patron and this was accepted unanimously.
3. The Secretary thanked all officers for their work and support, especially those who were retiring this year.
 He reported that no progress had been made with the MCA. However, Honda UK had offered free TRF membership to any purchasers of their XL range.
 Sadly we are missing two keen members, Harry Ball and John Holloway, both having died in the last year.
 The Secretary reported that we had been successful in having a full page article in the *Sunday Times* Magazine which had put our point of view on the Ridgeway, and an introductory ride with the Patron had been followed by an article in *The Field* magazine.
 We have been offered stand space at the NEC Bike Show.
4. Ian Thompson, retiring Membership Secretary, reported that we had 951 members at 1st October 1985 and 32 since then. This was not quite as good as our best year but still up on the last two years. He felt the increase in subscriptions had deterred some older members from renewing.
5. Richard Marshall, retiring Treasurer, reported a surplus of income over expenditure for the past year. A question was asked about the cost of printing the magazine, but it was said that it was up to the Editor to use her discretion to get the best price for the most convenient method.
6. Alan Kind, Press Officer, reported continuing good publicity in *Motorcycle News*, *The Sunday Times*, *Motorcycle Sport* and *The Field*. Bad publicity in *Motorcycling Weekly* with articles upsetting the ACU and BMF and a bad bike test in the Peak District had done trail riding no good.
 Locally, he reported that there were possibilities of permitted trail riding on private land owned by the Forestry Commission and others. He now had a seat on the Byways and Bridleways Trust and he hoped to get legislation for byways claims simplified in relation to notification to landowners.
Dirt Bike Rider magazine hoped to do a trail riding feature in the New Year. The British Horse Society are to do a survey of 'clear horse roads' in 1986 and the exercise may help the TRF who will help them with local knowledge.
7. Brian Thompson, National RoW Officer, reported that claiming lanes in the name of the Byways and Bridleways Trust was twice as successful as claiming them in the name of the Fellowship.

Mention was made of the 59 per cent of rights of way ploughed out with 80 per cent in Lincolnshire. Even the RA with a claimed seven million participants admit that they were ineffective in fighting farmers ploughing up lanes. Riders should notify the Highway Authority if any right of way is ploughed and (if relevant) obstructed.

8. The Editor reported that the biggest change in the *Bulletin* had been the front cover which appears to have been well received. She apologised for any late replies to letters or appearance of articles in the *Bulletin* due to changing her address.
9. Brian Thompson proposed a motion that if a full time Rights of Way Officer is appointed by the ACU/BMF Countryside Committee and funded by the ACU/BMF/RAC then the Fellowship agree in principle to a commitment that it will contribute £1,500 towards the cost for a period of not less than five years. After discussion, Kate Clow proposed an amendment, seconded by Hugh Mason, to add the words "or by Byways and Bridleways Trust" after ACU/BMF Countryside Committee and after the ACU/BMF/RAC. The motion was agreed.
10. The matter of communication with the Ramblers Association, The Countryside Commission and the National Parks Board was discussed and the Chairman pointed out that members of these bodies could be nominated by our members to the Minister of State for the Environment but would not represent a specific sectional interest.



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COD

LAST OF THE SUMMER WINE

Having recently started in business along with my wife and family, I have had to alter my time off to Thursdays and Fridays, plus the odd Sunday morning (if I'm lucky!) I am in my mid-forties and really enjoy my trail riding; I find it very relaxing, and it's better than working. I own two bikes: a Honda XL185S and a recently acquired XL125S Pro-link into which I have fitted a standard XL185S motor.

My problem was not having someone to ride with on Thursdays, so I decided I would go it alone - pick a sensible route, start about 10 a.m., take it steady, aim to do about 80 to 90 miles, and be home for tea.

On one of my particular Thursday solo runs, I set off from Redcar at 10 a.m., into Guisborough, over Hutton Low Cross, down into Battersby, up to Bank Foot and onto Rudland Rigg; on course for my lunch stop at the White Horse, Nawton, where the landlord welcomes trail riders. Having reached the top of the Rigg, I was riding happily along, singing - back in the saddle again (you tend to do this when riding alone) - when I spotted a group of stationary riders and bikes. As I approached, one of them waved me to stop. "Now then, grand day?" I looked to see if I could recognise anyone among them. "Aye, lad", came the reply, "We are the geriatric group. Where's thee off to?" Having explained my route plan, they were curious to know where Pockley Moor was, and would I mind if they followed along. 'They' were Ken, Alf, Jim and David (Ken's son who lives and works in Liverpool as a college lecturer, and frequents Glaisdale, his father's home, where he keeps his Honda TL125 to ride from time to time). Not being too sure what I had let myself in for, I agreed to take them across Pockley Moor. As we talked, Ken told me they have ridden for a lot of years and meet at Westerdale crossroads every Thursday at 11 a.m. He was 69 years of age it turned out; Alf and Jim were both 67. David pointed out he would be unable to come along as he had arranged for his wife to meet him at the 'Faversham Arms' with the car and bike-bar at 12.30. He had an appointment to keep during the afternoon. Ken, who had overlooked this, asked me if it would be possible for me to take them the following Thursday if I met them at the crossroads at 11 a.m. "Okay", I said, "but why don't I come along with you all now, have lunch with you at Faversham, return up Monket Bank onto the Rigg, then on to Pockley Moor via Nawton?"

Agreed, we set off for the 'Faversham Arms' and lunch. We parked up at the pub and removed our riding gear. Ken said to me, "Jim's leaving me 'is tweed jacket, tha knows, when he pops off." I looked at Jim, who resembled a character from "The Last of the Summer Wine" in tweed jacket, collar and tie, plus tweed cloth cap. "Keeps 'is wallet in t'inside pocket; first thing he looks for when he comes off t'bike", said Ken, laughing. We all disappeared into the pub, where the landlady said, "You're early today?" "Aye well, we met new lad - takes a bit of keepin' pace with", said Ken. This type of banter carried on through lunch, after which we said our farewells to David and his wife, then we set off en route. I slowed the pace a bit but we made good time. Monket Bank was a bit greasy. I was very impressed by the riding ability of my new-found friends, their machines being two Yam 175s and Alf's Suzuki 185. We stopped to replenish the Yams' thirsts at a small filling-station on the Pickering-Helmsley road, then we proceeded onto the top of Pockley Moor, having negotiated a short, greasy lane just out of Nawton.

As I closed the second gate on top of the Moor they said, "Time for brew!" To my amazement, they produced from among the three of them a stove, kettle, cups, water, teabags, milk and sugar. Alf even had three squares of hardboard to fit around the stove so it wouldn't blow out. It being a fine day, I enjoyed the tea, the excellent view and the grand company. We stopped a while – the chat was good. They told me they had ridden bikes most of their lives. Ken had done a bit of road racing in his younger days. Alf had done trials and grasstrack racing. Jim had also done some trials riding. Unfortunately they didn't know many trails and usually rode the same route every week apart from the odd lane of which they weren't sure of the legality. Ken told me of old Tom who normally rides with them and is 74 years of age. He was unable to be with them today as he is bad on his legs and was considering a bike with an electric starter as he was having a problem kicking the bike over. I have since met and ridden with Tom; a lovely gentleman and a first class rider. He has ridden in most motorcycle sports and has even raced alongside Geoff Duke at Scarborough; until recent years he has helped mark out the Cleveland trials course on a Battaco. We packed away our tea utensils and continued on our way. I was late home that day; as I related the story of my day out to my wife my sides ached with laughing.

We all meet every Thursday now – I am just about running out of fresh trails to show them, but I'm sure they will enjoy doing them all again.

Ken, by the way, is waiting for a call from the hospital to go in to have a pace-maker fitted; he suffered a heart attack ten years ago. He gets a bit breathless at times, he reckons. They have certainly made my trail riding more interesting, plus I still get the odd Sunday morning ride on the more difficult lanes with John Bloomfield. I even managed a Lakes weekend.

Cyril Thorpe, Redcar, Cleveland

LANCS GROUP RUN – Saturday 14th December

Meet at Nelson, Lancs, because if I am leading every run starts from there so I can get up later! There was Eric the famous (front cover of December's *Bulletin*) XR200, Julian with his XL125 and shaky back wheel with not a tight spoke in it, Lesley on her TY250 Yam, Alec the mighty and his BMW 800, and myself on an XR200.

First lane was to be Gisburn Old Road. At the first gate the new owner of the farmhouse was wished a good morning, to which he replied, "Going breaking the law again are we?" He was politely told that it was a public road, but said he would check anyway. The lane was very boggy after all the rain and I got stuck but was helped out by Lesley.

On to Hellifield and Langber Lane where wet grass and a hill meant that some bikes needed pushing, and some pushers got plastered with mud. A quick rethink of the routes to be used was called for here in order to avoid any more pushing.

Next on to Austwick and Thwaite Lane, stony and with plenty of puddles but easy enough. A slight wait for Eric who stops to chat with an ex-neighbour he used to

live next door to in Cheshire (small world isn't it?) Then it was Twistleton Lane at Ingleton; with plenty of rain there should be enough water in the ford to make it interesting. I am first through and the water is two feet deep in places with a good current flowing. I congratulate myself on getting through with only a slightly damp foot. Lesley is next, but halfway across she decides to give us one of her famous mermaid impressions, with only one handlebar and a helmet to be seen, and a TY250 that clearly was not meant to be ridden totally submerged. Ah well, it's back into the ford to assist her in dragging her bike out, and the horrible feeling as water seeps up the inside of your waterproofs and tops up your wellies. Next is Eric and Julian, almost followed by Alec who's BMW decides that it likes it in the water and stops to enjoy it. Julian is despatched back in the water to assist (well, he is the youngest); Eric gets the job of wringing out Lesley's socks while they are still on her feet.

When both bikes are running again we head for Monkey Beck grains above Dent Head station and then along this lovely green lane to join up with the Arten Gill to Widdale Foot track. Where is Eric? After a long wait he appears, freewheeling down the hill with a broken chain and no split link. It was a newish chain and the cellophane packet which was assumed to contain a split link did, in fact, hold a rivetting link. Where do you find two hammers in the middle of nowhere? Out with the tow rope and a five mile tow into Hawes for dinner. With two borrowed hammers, a temporary repair was made and Alec went back to Nelson by road.

The three remaining riders set off for Semer Water and Lesley decided not to try her luck with any more fords, so she went straight to Stake Allotments to wait for us whilst Julian and I took in Marsett and the fords to Stalling Busk. Stake Allotments was its usual self: long, stony and full of puddles. As it was getting late we went straight to Mastiles Lane and, in pitch darkness, struggled with mud and ruts and another two fords to end the day at Malham Tarn. It was not the day I had planned, but enjoyable for all that.

Peter Halstead

PEDALLER'S WAY?

Those of us who regard the trail bike as an ideal way of transporting their beer guts around the better country pubs should not read this – it involves (dare I say it?) – exercise. Mountain Bikes have arrived from the good old US of A and seem to be catching on with the notoriously conservative British public, at least in the more prosperous and flatter South. A mountain bike is nothing more, really, than a BMX for big kids, but they are great fun and can open up bridleways to the non-horse riders among us. I suppose a fair description would be a bicycle trail bike and the early efforts were, like their powered counterparts, very cosmetic in nature. The basic MB is still a lightly modified standard bicycle in concept, but an alternative school has developed that leans heavily on motorcycle design practise because it has dawned on them that we have been down this road before. I have had a 'British' Elswick Falcon mountain bike since early summer '85, covered a fair few miles on it and encountered some problems along the way. I put 'British' in quotes because I am reliably informed that the only British content is the assembly. The frame is knocked up in Taiwan, the twiddly bits are largely Japanese, the brakes are – I think, French. But there again, I suppose that all squares with British Sherry and Japanese Scotch Whisky!

I confess to being a relative ignoramus about bicycling, but perusal of the various mags demonstrates that bikes are a confection of off-the-shelf gears, wheels, pedals, brakes, etc., with only the frame differing from make to make. You don't get, for example, Muddy Fox gear sets, you get a Muddy Fox frame with, say, Shimano freewheel, Sun Tour rear changer, Huret front changer, Araya rims and Dia Compe brakes. You might find a Madison or Dawes next to it with exactly the same selection of bits, just with a slightly different frame layout and paint job and a £100 difference in the price tag. Mountain bikes having been common in the States for a fair few years now means that specialist gears, wheels, etc., are available and the higher quality of these components over standard roadster stuff where weight is all important means a minimum price for a decently equipped model of some £250. The 'traditional' mountain bike retains a conventional lean-forward position with the upper body weight well over the bars. This makes it difficult to lift the front end without making a conscious effort to apply power at exactly the right place. It's a bit like rubbing your head while patting your tummy — the footrests have to go round and round if forward motion is to be maintained! Tyre drag is a bit of a problem on tarmac roads. The 'serious' tyre size is 2.25" section (26" idiameter is universal at present), while the lesser models on sale go for 1.75" section with less rolling resistance. Racing tyres are now becoming available in 1.9" with a very low drag but it is still a hard compromise between off-road grip and pedal effort. I dare say the aces will change tyres to suit the conditions of any events they enter, much as a motorcyclist will choose sprockets.

There are all sorts of goodies coming in from the States now: spring loaded seat height adjusters (high for climbing hills, low for descending, so the saddle doesn't smack you in the bum on the bumps) and 'sump shields' are common. I often ride mine in open access woodland near home when exercising the family Jack Russell and have done a few longish trips on it, although the rotten weather this year has curtailed efforts somewhat. I have used it on one or two forgotten Inclosure bridgways where there are certainly no vehicular rights. These moorland trips involve carrying the thing up hills, but at about thirty pounds that is no real hardship, and downhills, even on very tussocky grass, are great. I reckon riding one of these is more akin to pony trekking than motorcycling because of the speeds and distances involved. Problems so far include a collapsing back wheel soon after purchase, compounded by a totally "couldn't care less" shop who I am now suing! and a broken spring in the rear derailleur, soon replaced by the very helpful manufacturer under guarantee. I like it; it won't replace the trail bike for most people, but it is a pleasant sport in its own right and you can bat about the local country park while the family are having a picnic.

The other school of design leans, as I said, more heavily on the motorcycle. Paramount among British designers is Geoff Apps of Aylesbury who used to be a useful trials rider before he developed his fixation with pedals and started small scale manufacture of his 'Cleland' off-roader. Geoff had quickly worked out from his own experiments that the weight-forward riding position was not too hot off the road as it stopped the rider using body lean to advantage. His answer was to develop a high steering head design with the cross bar sloping down towards the seat pillar. This allowed a high handgrip position without the need for high and spindly bars. His wheelbase is very short, ground clearance good, and the whole thing feels very 'motorbike' when you are on it. Geoff also imports French Velosolex moped hub brakes as he is not keen on the wet weather performance of the usual cantilever centre-pull units, and he fits really effective mudguards as standard — mine, and most other MBs spray you with a generous dose of gunge unless you do a retro-fit. The real difference between the schools of thought is on the trail. The conventional bike is competent — it will go where you have the strength to pedal it — but the 'Cleland'! It's like getting off a KL250 and trying an XR200 for the first time. The front wheel can be lifted by simply leaning your torso back and pedalling briskly; an hour or so's familiarisation and you can do wheelies to rival your neighbourhood BMX hotshots. That is not just for show, either; the ability to lift the wheel is very necessary to maintain forward progress on badly surfaced uphill stretches. The Cleland also allows you to pedal while hanging off the back of the saddle, and this versatility will permit a competent rider to go places you would have thought to be the preserve of the motorcycle.

Why, you ask, do I have a run-of-the-mill MB and not a Cleland? Simple, my Falcon cost under £300 and gives a lot of fun for the money. The Cleland is state of the art and will set you back at least £600, although the conceptually similar English Cycles Range Rider is available nearer the £500 mark. A word of warning — my experience of cycle shops would indicate that the very great majority are staffed by people whose horizons are no greater than the bit of dual carriageway they see over their drop handlebars every Sunday morning. They are very conservative and cannot comprehend that ideal off-road design may need to borrow from motorcycle and BMX ideas. If you want to buy, get a copy of *Bicycle Times* and look for the specialist dealer ads.

There is a national body now — NORBA — but their initial contribution to the rights of way front was to instruct members to "Ride where you like", although they seem to be getting their act together more now. Raleigh Cycles are promoting their Maverick MB with a brochure exhorting you to ride it on "Mountains, moor . . . anywhere your imagination takes you." Ye bloody gods! The MB continues to develop in the States. Over there, where they use the things for long mountain races, they have already developed cantilever rear suspension to keep traction on long, fast downhills.

One last benefit — I can hang the thing from the garage roof on hooks and keep it out of the way. Just try that with a KL250!

Alan Kind

TECH TIPS

To add to Eddie Wilkinson's ramblings on cam chains, can I suggest that an indicator screw from a C50, 70 or 90 is welded to a short length of welding rod, the top 25mm being bent at right angles to the rod? Take off the rubber boot, remove the M6 nut and slacken the locking screw. The threaded bar can now be screwed into the adjustment assembly which can be pulled into tension, held, and the locking screw nipped.

This method provides exact adjustment once you can sense the amount of feel and upwards pressure that is needed.

Bob McConnell, Leeds



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COPY DATE FOR BULLETIN 113
25th FEBRUARY 1986

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