



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

TRF

TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP BULLETIN No 140 MARCH 1990

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The National Club for the Encouragement of non-competitive
Green Roads Motocycling and Maintenance of Rights of Way

TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP
MARCH 1990 Bulletin 140

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Editor's Ramblings The South London & Surrey Group are taking over the job of producing a monthly Bulletin. I hope you will find it up to the standard set by the previous team. Please note that by simply folding this issue in half, you will have the correct size to fit the old binders, or store in the bookshelf. Really keen members might like to keep photographic records or lane user forms within.

I should like to include certain regular features such as a few words from the chairman and secretary. A rights of way column and a group roundup. If there is enough support I should like to include advertisements and a contact list for the one third membership who do not attend group meetings. These riders may wish to advertise for riding companions.

I should be pleased to receive short concise articles e.g. riding impressions of current trail bikes. Useful modifications. A description of your "special".etc.I also look forward to receiving your amusing and interesting letters. As encouragement, I intend to offer a prize for the best letter or article. This will be a car (or van) window sticker, encapsulated in plastic which should last for ages as well as doubling as a frost scraper. Incidentally I can order these for members, price £3 for single £5 for double sided. The suggested wording is "Trail Riders do it Legally" and "I would rather be Trail Riding". Please do not order "Trail Riders do it in the bog" or similar!

It seems to me that some new members may be expecting too much from their club. It might be of interest to point out that the printing and postage cost of this modest effort is around £500 using volunteer labour. Of course, the quality could be improved with greater cost. Perhaps group representatives might like to point out to new members that they should not expect too much for their fee and maybe not even marked up maps until they have proved themselves to be responsible members. It has been suggested that a club magazine should be thought of as a vessel, into which an individual may put comment and ideas. Out of the vessel will flow further ideas, comment and information to all members.

From recent contents of the All Wheel Drive Club's magazine it seems they are learning fast about Public Relations. They have organised "clean sweeps" in many areas. These are rubbish collections in co-operation with the local authorities.

Various lane clearance and repairs have been carried out. Voluntary restraint is being imposed in several places including a section of the Fosse Way. The A.W.D.Club is not taking the Automobile Association's criticism of vehicular use of green lanes, lying down.

Their article finishes with the question "Do you really want to pay money to a motoring organisation who comes up with such policies?" Personally, in future I shall rely on the R.A.C.

In my opinion the A.W.D.Club have the best rights of way officer ever, in Liz Hurley. Her latest achievement has been to persuade the Ridgeway authorities to permit them to build a footpath through a copse in order to bypass a muddy section. I recall some genius T.R.F. member expounding a similar idea in Bulletin no.124 I hope the A.W.D.Club follow up on my idea and erect a sign for the walkers to read saying "Conceived and built by members of the A.W.D.Club"

By the time this goes to press it may be old news, but at present we are still clearing trees fallen during the January 1990 storm. Early reports indicate that tree damage is not as high as the October 1987 storm, but that it might be more widespread. Many will recall that after the latter members moved quickly to clear the lanes we use.

Much useful Public Relations work was achieved.

We now have another opportunity. It is prudent to liaise with the local authority, who may not permit chainsaws to be used by unqualified persons. My experience has been that lane clearance work can be hard work, but Satisfying. Co-operation with a local conservation group can be beneficial in many ways. (Think about it!) We found that, in some instances, a rather flat mundane lane can be transformed into much more of a challenge if there are a few fallen trees to negotiate. These tend to be the ones we cannot clear.

Two severe storms within three years has made people begin to think about what is happening to the country. What can be done? Well, it is known that the so called "greenhouse effect" is caused, partly, by massive emissions of carbon dioxide, produced by burning oil, gas and coal, other dangerous gases produced are sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. We must reduce our consumption of fossil fuels. According to David Bellamy, we can offset the problem, to some extent, by planting lots of trees. (and by using our bikes instead of the family car where possible). As a club of nearly two thousand members we are in a position to achieve something positive. Each group could approach a conservation group with the aim of setting up a tree planting campaign. Alternately, some of the larger timber importers might be interested enough to supply the saplings. Let's do it before someone else earns the publicity. See Ian Thompson's article on the National Environment Week. This issue is turning out to be a very "green" bulletin. Perhaps I should have invited Bellamy (gwapple me gwapenuts) to write a forward. Brian Wright

National Environment Week 28 th April - 7 th May
The Civic Trust National Environment Week, sponsored by British Telecom, lasts for ten days (!) from Saturday 28 April to Bank Holiday Monday 7 May.

It is " an opportunity to do something to improve the environment" they say in their free handout (available from Civic Trust, 17 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AW Tel. 01 930 0914) This would be a good Public Relations exercise for every T.R.F. group in the country

The "something" can be as varied as you like: practical work such as lane clearance, collecting fertiliser bags, removing a pile of broken bottles from a lane; publicity such as putting on a T.R.F. display in the local library or community centre; a survey of lanes or lane use within your area; take another section of the community with you along some green lanes - your local councillor or your local rambler.

The Civic Trust wants to improve the environment. So do we, but we also want to raise the awareness of the general public to our existence and to the responsible way we behave.

I am sure that all T.R.F. groups could do something during National Environment Week. Perhaps you have something planned already which would fit under this broad heading.

I am offering to co-ordinate T.R.F. activities and to tell the Civic Trust what we are doing. Please phone me (0637 872813) with your ideas soon so that we can have as much advertising as possible.

After the event, send me photographs and details of what you have done. This will help with further publicity and press coverage.

I am hoping to have sponsorship for a prize for the best T.R.F. group activity during National Environment Week. Send me details of what your group has done and you could win a prize.

Ian Thompson

Snippets By Pete Wildsmith
 Have you ever met "en masse" 22 friendly rambblers? (yes, I counted them) We all had a good old chat, quite extraordinary. Derek Powell was just leaving a horse enduro after helping out and was joining the main road, when a passing caravan, swaying madly, knocked Derek off. Fortunately without injury but causing slight damage to the bike. Another caravan incident happened to Les Gwinnett. A paving slab, which, for some reason was on the roof of the moving caravan, fell off and walloped Les on the leg, putting him off work for some weeks. Last year, I took a new member for his first run. "So what?" you may ask. Well, the gent's name is Doug Hampton a 65 year old pensioner. Is this a record?
 (Can any members cap these stories? Ed.)

Sharing, by the Chairman, Dave Giles I would like to start by publicly thanking the Bristol Newsletter Production Team for all their efforts over the last six months, starting from scratch- I know just how much work it took to get it up and running (So do I now Ed.) So thank you from us all.

The South London & Surrey Group now take on the task of getting out a monthly issue and I am sure they can use all the help they can get. One idea that occurs to me from past experience of the continuous grind, how about one editorial team but two production teams, month about? But thats up to the group concerned, they will put their individual stamp on it, so expect some changes.

Because this communication link with the membership is so vital, the only imperative I have issued is that the newsletter should go out regularly every month. If contributions are in short supply, then send out blank pages and tell the membership why is my advice. We get what we deserve.

Although they live in different parts of the country, two sub-editors have stepped forward to help Editor-in-Chief Brian Wright; Ian Grimshaw from Derbyshire (Tel. 0773 823863) and Steve Neville of Kent (Tel. 0474 332785). They in turn will be dependant on you feeding them information. So please everybody say what you are doing, and what you have done, let everyone - including new members - know you are still alive. Hello..Hello..are you there?

Predominant issues for myself and the Executive over the last three months has been encouraging other L.A.R.A. members to contribute to the South Downs Way Fighting Fund - around £6000 has been raised outside the T.R.F., and in organising the Derby Training Weekend to encourage grass roots development in R.O.W. groups. May I say of the latter that I have persuaded an absolutely first class team of speakers and consultants to join us and we have gained Countryside Commission support. Groups are encouraged to send pairs of delegates, but be warned space is limited.

See you in Derby Dave Giles National Chairman
 Stop Press Item

" A nod is as good as a wink to the wise man" ; Richard Marshall, Deputy National R.O.W. Officer and T.R.F. Liason Officer for the Peak Park reports that Chapel Gate is showing signs of heavy use. He wishes to suggest that T.R.F. members could be getting as much fun out of the many other lanes that are less frequently used and giving our old friend a bit of a rest.

A Tale of Many Dales

We met in Richmond town square, a fine assortment making up the seven. Bill and Mathew Peak on KMX 200's Nick Morgan XT 600, Peter and friend XL 185 & XR 250 with Leo and David Crone, SP 400 & DR 200

At 9.30 sharp we fired up and headed for Marske, 6 damp miles South West of Richmond. The first lane, a steepish climb up crumbling tarmac to a gate near Orgate Farm, the site of a trials section used in the Scott Trial. After a photo stop a quarter mile of cambered wet grass led to the ford at Helwith. Three weeks previously it had been five feet deep. This morning it was back to 8" - 12" but still tricky to "clean". Through Helwith Farm, across the moor to Washfold and a steep winding drop led us through a deep ford and a similar climb. Good progress was made with the second and third men opening and closing the gates. (This seems to be the standard T.R.F. policy. Ed.)

A mile of tarmac took us past the church where John Wesley preached and into Hurst. The track from Hurst to Reeth crosses Marrick Moor before dropping into Swaledale, the final part Fremington Edge is nearly always windy and, when cold, icy. From Reeth we turned East to Grinton where we joined the moor road to Askrigg, 2 miles out of Grinton the road hooks left onto Whitaside Moor, signposted "unsuitable for motors" it is a gentle ride before the climb awaiting. The lane reverts to tarmac in Low House Farm yard where a quick left reveals a beautiful rock strewn gully, turning to wet grass at its steepest. On my XR 200 it was a breeze, gas on, let the suspension soak up the bounces and the knobbles find the traction. On my SP 400 the lane changes (they all do!) prudent use of the right hand coupled with a clean line seem to increase the pleasure. Try it all you out there, becoming bored, change the latest enduro whiz-machine for a V, W or X reg. limited, suspension, ground clearance, engine performance and brakes. (Sounds like a Brian Thompson road bike run. Ed.)

At the end of the lane we turn South-West towards Askrigg and drop down through the cloud into Wensleydale. An experience which never seems to lose its magic. Like a curtain being raised on the majestic sweep of a Yorkshire dale in the company of friends enjoying the country side. On through Newbiggin and Worton we found the concealed beginning of the lane that leads up to Thornton Rust. This lane has many types of terrain in it's half mile. A gentle rock climb, navigate the ford, after which both the gradient and the vegetation increase. The climb levels to a muddy rutted farm track before a steep wide climb into Thornton Rust.

The group head West into Cubeck, stopping briefly to watch a rainbow develop. A light rain falls as we climb over Worton pasture. The climb levels at Thoraby Moor Common. The track ends at Stake Allotments where we turned North through Stalling Busk and into Raydale. Take care with the fords as one can be very deep before Marsett. About 7 years ago this was the centre of a round of the World Trials Championship. Imagine as you ride through, cars parked for three miles solid, thousands of spectators and the cream of the Worlds trials riders showing their skills.

From Marsett we take the road to Bella Close Farm where a well defined green lane zig-zags up the fell with a series of hairpins all on lush wet grass before levelling out on Common Allotments where it joins the Roman road from Bainbridge to Hawes. By now the wind was driving the rain nigh on horizontal. We found tarmac and headed for Hawes and lunch.

After lunch the rain and wind greeted us and it was a cold two miles to the start of Highway surprisingly well signposted as a R.U.P.P. Approached from the East, it is a long, long climb up a steep grassy hill to a tiny gate followed by a steep winding climb onto Thwaite Bridge Common. It was at this point that the new boy on his XR 250 seemed to lose a number of his faculties, sense of direction, balance and strength to name but three. A hilarious 10 minutes was spent watching him trying to travel the 200 feet from the gate to the top of the climb. Eventually we helped him.

Highway is a long track passing many points of historical interest. The famous Carlisle to Settle railway runs parallel on the opposite side of the valley, while the lane itself has a number of derelict buildings along it's course including a coaching inn.

At the start of a long descent Highway crosses Hell gill, a deep chasm supposedly jumped by Dick Turpin. We joined the B6259 some 4 miles from Kirkby Stephen which was the nearest petrol stop. After a Southerly stretch of roadwork my brother David led us through Garsdale Head, turning South over Shaking Moss until we found what was, for most of us, a new lane. Monkeybeck Grains only has a signpost reading "Beware of bull in field", a little worrying as we were back in the clouds. Crossing the border back into Yorks. we headed for the infamous Widdale Foot Farm, the farmer has recently acquired a Rottweiler the size of a small horse. As the gate had been left open we did not hang around to say hello. The rest of the journey was spent partly retracing our steps until the partial collapse of my rear wheel. All told about 165 miles had been covered in under 8 hours by a wide variety of bikes over a good selection of lanes.

Leo Crone.

Wild Flowers

When out riding in March, look out for the Coltsfoot. Although fairly common, it is not well known like buttercups and daisies. The Coltsfoot likes to grow in hard shingly places by the side of paths, more often in the sun than shade. The flower is bright yellow, like a dandelion with lots of very fine petals. The stems are stumpy, palish, with brown scales. The leaves are small and relatively insignificant, considering how big they will be come Summer. Not a small plant standing between 6 and 10 inches high, it was considered the Apothecary's best herb for lung cures.



Please note

Next Executive Committee Meeting is on Saturday 31 March at A.M.C.A. H.Q. Darlaston Road Walsall

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir I thought your members might be amused by the following. I was recently reading the book "A Cornishman Abroad" dated 1926 by the social historian A.L.Rouse when I came upon this passage "Late at night we arrived at Grampound and, tired out, sat on the steps of the old broken cross, half way up the steep hill waiting for the last bus to St. Austell. That was the finest thing in my holiday; just like a scene from a Chekov play, groups of people from the village came down the hill, in earnest, talking about rights of way and ledging and crops"
Lloyd Watson Cornwall

Dear Brian

The Cheshire Group has recently written to Derbyshire County Council requiring them to remove a stone wall built across Frost Lane Monyash Derbyshire. Situated 6 Miles South East of Buxton Frost Lane runs North West out of the village of Monyash via Knotlow lead mines to the village of flagg (O.S. map 119 NGR 143-673 to NGR 137-680) and has a history of motor cycle use going back many years. Unfortunately it is shown on the definitive map as a footpath

We have been advised by the Council to apply for a modification order under W.C.A. 1981 to upgrade the route to a byway and to this end we are seeking user evidence. Could I please appeal for this evidence in the next Bulletin.

Geoff Bostock

Dear Brian

Could I please use your letters page for the following:- 52 year old local government officer seeks trail riding companion age 40-65, male or female for occasional days out in Cumbria, N. Yorks., County Durham and North East. Must ride at leisurly quiet pace. Write or phone Brian Thompson 70 Western Avenue Newcastle on Tyne NE5 5AQ Tel. 091 267 3686

Brian also encloses a note concerning the Rights of Way (Cultivation & Cropping of Agricultural Land) Bill 1989. As there is no room in this issue for the full text I will circulate it at the next committee meeting.

Dear Brian

I am enclosing a letter I have received from one of my members (The International Motorcyclists Tour Club) requesting companions on a trip that he is proposing to carry out in April I can vouch for both of them.

" I am trying to find a couple more riders on our trip to Morocco in April. We will be away for two weeks leaving April 13. Mostly hotels with about three nights camping in the Moroccan desert. This is excellent trail riding country with virtually no restrictions. A mixture of desert, stony trails and high mountains. Cost Approx. £300 Dave O'Byrne Tel. 0481 35675 office hours

Dear Editor

Could you please mention that the North West London & Herts. Group now meet at the Cotton Social Club Cotton Mill Lane St. Albans Herts as from 1 Feb 1990 at 8.30pm every Ist Thursday of the month.

Alan Vincent

Dear Editor

At our recent A.G.M. our group Rep. Steve Neville stood down due to impending arrival of a new family member. I will be taking over.

It was also decided to change our name to the Kent Group as the majority of our riding takes place in this County.

We would like to express our thanks to Steve and also Ian Roscow, who stood down from the Rights of Way Officer's role, for their many years of hard work which built our group up into the very healthy position it is in today.

Nick Moon

Tel.0322 862855

88 Ship Lane Sutton at Hone Dartford Kent DA4 9EE

Dear Brian

Re. South Downs Way

The Highways Committee for the Sussex County Council will be asked to revoke the 1989 Traffic Restriction Order on the South Downs Way. But They will make a new order covering the same lengths of Way. This will be accompanied by a map showing the alternative route.

Apparently they have refused to pay our legal fees and it may be that we have to go to court to recover these.

(It seems, therefore, that we have won a battle, if not the war. Also the T.R.F. has shown it's claws Ed.)

Bevis Billingham

I have received a letter from Peter Banks, Chairman of the South West Region, concerning the "grubbing out" of hedges. Peter, quite rightly, is concerned with our image. He feels that we can improve this by taking action where we see hedges being grubbed out. Please send details and photographic evidence to Peter Banks at Quaker House Ditchat Shepton Mallet Somerset BA4 6QR (I will try to find space for the article in the next issue Peter)

Dear Brian

Welcome to the hot seat! As I expect you know I have volunteered to take over from John Higgin as National Secretary. I would be grateful if you could make sure this fact, together with my address and telephone number appears in the next newsletter. Ian Thompson Glebe House The Square St Columb Minor Newquay Cornwall TR7 3HD Tel.0637 872813



'Speeding fine or not,' I said, 'no jumped-up little policeman is going to stop me galloping my horse in the park!'

Dear Brian Wright

I have heard that the authorities intend to operate a pilot scheme for access to the National Parks similar to Sweden. The plan is to install a turnstile arrangement to control entry which is to be by means of a "credit card" My contact tells me a Mr I.Lirpa (a Swede) is in charge. He has been quoted as saying "At a stroke, the type of useage can be controlled, a fee extracted and undesirables excluded" Apparently the pilot scheme could be in operation by the beginning of next month. Graham (This will be discussed at the next Committee)

Dear Brian

Could you please ask all group reps. to consult with their members regarding the Byway & Bridleway publication "Rights of Way Law Review" A lot of our membership will be interested. But at £105 annual subscription it might be more than individual groups can manage. However additional copies are £40 per set. With a little thought, therefore, we could raise the funds between several groups and share the information. Please consult and it can be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Richard Tallon

Small Ads. Gite or B.& B. in the Scottish Highlands 15 K. Inverness For more info. contact Ali Cameron Tel. 0291 420810 evenings only if telephoning before 31.3.90 After 1.4.90 Tel. 0349 64374

Small Ads.

Trail Riding - Buy the book

Exploring Green roads and Lanes of Great Britain Autographed copies direct from the author £13.95 inc p&p Ian Thompson Glebe House, The Square, St. Columb Minor Newquay, Cornwall TR7 3HD

Small Ad.

Peter Wildsmith has asked me to repeat his ad.
Exploring Green Roads and Lanes of Great Britain
for only £12.95 inc. p & p from;
5 Meynell Close Eastleigh Hants. SO5 4DZ

From A Previous Bulletin

As a Group Rep. one of the first questions I am asked by a new member concerns tyres. For this reason I have chosen the following item from Bulletin no. 110 by the T.R.F. hon. solicitor Mike Rowley.

We are still faced with the uncertainty of what is, and is not, "suitable". There is no point in fitting - or keeping - knobblies on trail bikes when it is known that the manufacturers of the particular tyres maintain that they are unsuitable for road use. This immediately rules out Avon, Continental, Dunlop, Michelin and Pirelli, probably Chenshin and the Japanese tyre manufacturers as well. I understand that Trelleberg say their motocross tyres are quite suitable when used within the speed limits, but Metzeler are quite definite that, used with caution and not above 56 m.p.h., their knobblies - which are excellent for grip and wear - are suitable for use on tarmac, although not recommended for prolonged road usage. (I interpret the latter as being that they are acceptable for the kind of use to which most trail riders use their machines - that is, at weekends riding on the tarmac only to get from one green lane to another. Not commuting.

As for N.H.S. markings, Metzeler say that these are insignificant for the U.K., being intended only for the U.S. market.

M.Rowley Oct/ Nov. 1985

Rights Of Way

I have been given no news as such (except those items appearing elsewhere in this Bulletin) I have, therefore, inserted a selection of " wayside scraps" from the selection sent by Tim Stevens.

Unclassified County Road or U.C.R. ;

Not long after the Great War, it was decided to classify the road network so that the new Road Fund could be allocated fairly to the roads in most use. The process divided roads into the A roads and B roads so familiar today, and most of the rest became C roads. (Guess in what order the tarmac was spread?) Those forgotten lanes which were not even important enough to be classified also escaped the tar brush, and therefore they are very interesting to us. Ask about them at your local friendly Highways Office.

Are all U.C.R.'s Legal for Trail Riding?

In most counties, yes - your local rep. should know. In the others most U.C.R.'s have vehicular rights, but it is claimed, not all. If they are not also on the definitive map as bridleway or footpath it is difficult to escape the conclusion that they are vehicular. One county claims to have U.C.R.'s with steps in and "therefore they can't be vehicular" but this just goes to show you can't judge by appearances. Don't forget you don't know when the steps were put in. And don't forget that vehicles don't all have wheels.

Vehicles

A device or contrivance used to convey goods or passengers, or provide a mobile service or facility. Thus the definition includes fire engines, prams, sledges, sedan chairs, and horse litters. It should also include roller skates but whether they count as one or two you will have to cogitate. Any vehicle user counts as evidence, even a bicycle (before 1968 and probably afterwards if the rider didn't know he could ride on bridleways too.)

You all knew that you could ride a horse on a bridleway, and a bicycle too. But what else? "Horse, says the law, includes pony, ass and mule. But not, you can be assured, a camel, llama or an elephant - all beasts of burden here and there in the world.

An Urgent Plea

I should be grateful if as many members as possible would sign the following letter and give it to their Group Rep. for forwarding to the editor, or send it to Kingston direct. We have little time left.

C.D.Robinson

County Secretary & Solicitor

Room 122

County Hall, Penrhyn Road

Kingston - on - Thames

Dear Sir,

Re.Wolvens Lane, Crockers Lane Coldharbour

I wish to object to the proposed Traffic Restriction Order on the above highway.

Please note that a recent attempt to impose a T.R.O.(at a cost of £100,000) on a section of the South Downs Way has failed, in part, due to over 350 objections.

I should like to remind the Highways Sub-Committee that they have a duty to "assert and protect" the right of the public (including motor vehicles, carriages, invalids etc.)

Last year there were over 500 objections to the T.R.O. on Coldharbour.It would be undemocratic to ignore this weight of objection. I demand there be a Public Enquiry.

Yours Faithfully

Date
Name
Address