



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

T R F

TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER 143 JUNE 1990

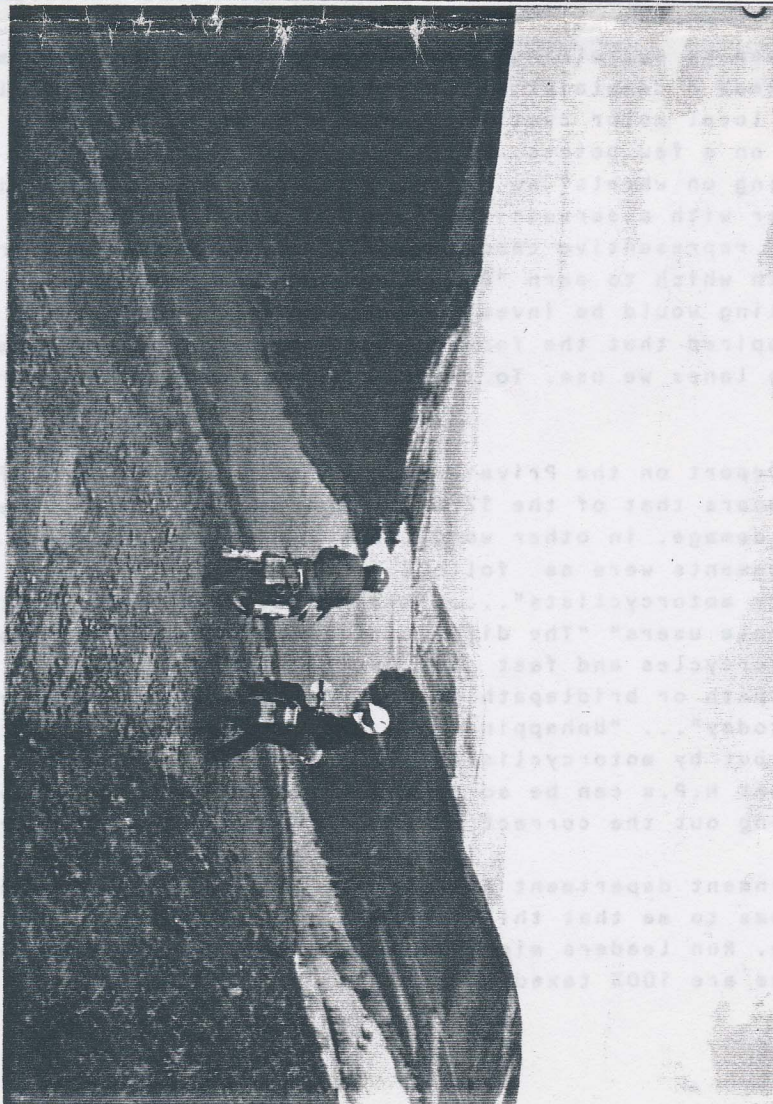
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The National Club for the Encouragement of non-competitive
Green Roads Motocycling and Maintenance of Rights of Way

TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP
JUNE 1990 NEWSLETTER 143



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EDITORS RAMBLINGS

Looking back through some old copies of the Bulletin I realised that I have been missing out on road tests and impressions of trail bikes. Well, this IS a motorcycle club is it not? Ever anxious to please, I have begged rides on as many member's bikes as I could persuade. If there is room you may read the results later in this issue. While planning the above, I wondered which trail bike is now the most popular. The following list is my guess:-

1. Honda XL range
2. Honda XR range
3. Kawasaki KMX range
4. Kawasaki KDX
5. Yamaha XT range
6. Suzuki DR range
7. Yamaha DT range
8. Yamaha IT range
9. Honda MTX range
10. Sidecar outfits

I have suggested that Honda's XL range is top because I am sure that a lot of members have one tucked away in a corner of the garage although they may use a later model. The XR and KDX are popular at the John Ebbrell type of weekend but I suspect that the KMX and XT are more prevalent on group runs. Perhaps the Husqvarna models should in there somewhere?

If members are interested enough to do a group census and send me the results, I will compute a more accurate top ten.

I was recently invited to a local Council meeting regarding the resurfacing of several rights of way. Also present were representatives of the landowners, the local warden and the police chief. Most of the people present were reasonable and listened to the points of view put by me. The police however, took a less reasonable view. "Their time was taken up patrolling Box Hill on Sundays" ... "No time to deal with scramblers"..... "Needs a complaint from landowner first anyway" (I should mention that Box Hill is a local motor cyclist's meeting place) I did my best to straighten him out on a few points, but I fear it was a mistake to describe our activity as "rambling on wheels" as he repeated this a number of times throughout the meeting together with a sarcastic snort.

The All Wheel Drive representative came away with details of a number of possible repair schemes, with which to earn "Brownie Points" All I won was a promise that any illegal scrambling would be investigated.

Incidentally it transpired that the foresters are proposing to use vehicles of up to 38 tonnes along the lanes we use. To think we were invited in order to discuss future damage!

I have received a report on the Private Members Bill regarding surface damage (ploughing) It appears that of the 17 M.P.s who spoke on the subject, no less than 6 spoke of vehicle damage. in other words they link surface damage with vehicular use. Some of the comments were as follows:- "The growing use of bridleways by motorcyclists"..... "Action must be taken about scrambler bike riders and 4WD vehicle users" "The difficulties that riders and footpath users experience when motorcycles and fast cars use the bridleways."..... "It is an anomaly that because a footpath or bridlepath has at some time been used by wheeled traffic, it can be so used today"... "Unhappiness is caused when modern routes are ploughed up, not by farmers but by motorcyclists"

I was incensed that M.P.s can be so ignorant of the facts and therefore I wrote to each of them pointing out the correct position. I hope other members wrote too.

I note that a government department has claimed that over half of all motor cycles are untaxed. It seems to me that this is grossly exaggerated and, of course, impossible to prove. Run leaders might like to check on their groups before a run just to make sure we are 100% taxed....!

If one were to reflect on the three previous paragraphs, it might become apparent that the "lawmakers" listen to, and are influenced by the police, central and local government officers, members of official bodies and other influential people. It seems to me that our enemies have done a good job so far and we must work on a reversal. I suggest we set to and finish the map survey and use it to prove there is minimal damage by us to the Rights of Way network. In the meantime it is essential to influence as many of the above as possible. Try to pick out the reasonable people, it can be disheartening to try and convert the hardened opponent.

I picked up a leaflet in Wales last month advertising a Game Fair as in Hunting Shooting and Fishing, not very "green" except for the Wellies you might think. Aha! but tacked on at the bottom we see "Leading Conservation Organisations show what is being done to preserve our countryside" O.K. thats all right then.

Whilst in France recently I bought a copy of Moto Verte. Inside I found an article on trail riding, but wait, closer interpretation revealed there was the possibility of alignment with Germany (and Switzerland) where there is no trail riding. Why not alignment between Great Britain and France to KEEP trail riding, then we could allow Germany to join! (They might need more suitable machinery though, if I had a GS 1000 and accessories I might not bother about green lanes) I think there is a strong case for supporting the B.M.F. in their Euro Lobby.

Like the idiot I am (pause for dissent) I only took 300 envelopes to the club in order to distribute 1,300 Newsletters
Consequently, I had to take a day off work to finish them myself
I would now like to thank everyone in the South London & Surrey Group for their help with this job. I should also like to single out Alan Seagrave for all his instruction and setting up the P.C to make it idiot-proof (nearly)
Since I typed the above I have received two replies from M.P.'s One from Emma Nicholson simply returned my photo-copied letter with a ring around "Sir" and a compliment slip with "Emma" underlined! I felt tempted to send it back addressed "Dear Sir or Madam" Emma Nicholson is M.P. for Torridge & Devon West I would suggest that the local lads have a word..... The other reply was from David Nicholson M.P. (Taunton) could they be related? which was a little more polite "If you look up what I actually said in that debate you will see that I was referring to HUNT followers in wheeled vehicles and I can assure you that whatever may be the case in other parts of the country it is certainly a problem in parts of my constituency notably the Quantock Hills" Over to you locals..... We have to thank Bill Kershaw for keeping us informed on Parliamentary events regarding this Bill.

I see the Green Party has finally decided on their policy regarding motor cycles. Not surprisingly (to me) they have ruled that motor cycles are are not "green" (not even Kawasakis?) as they cause pollution and have accidents. We all know better but, clearly, they have decided there are more votes in this line because motor cycles tend to be unpopular with the vast majority.

Brian Wright

AMERICAN MARKET V SINGLE EUROPEAN MARKET

For many years some excellent trail/enduro machines have been available in the U.S.A. also Belgium and France. Come the single European market in 1992, will we have to put up with having to import our own requirements direct from abroad? I hope that if you are not happy with U.K. supplies, one should be able to deal direct and be able to specify a particular model.

Because the American market is supposedly so large, is this why they can sell bikes a lot cheaper than in Canada? let alone Europe. When the countries of Europe unite in 1992 will we have the benefits that the U.S.A. now enjoy? Tim Gooderson (In other words, will we have a greater range at cheaper prices, I think the answer may depend upon how many members badger their local dealer for the model they want Ed.)

I asked Alan Kind for an update on any changes within L.A.R.A. I received the following by return!

As some of you will already know,

CHANGES WITHIN LARA

As some of you will already know, there was something of a scare during March that the Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) of which the T.R.F. is a founder member, might be facing radical restructuring. In the end, there have been changes, but LARA should be just as effective in it's work for rights of way as it has been up to now (and that is a judgement you must make for yourself). The most significant change lies in the RAC MSA and ACU's joint decision to form a "Motorsports Facilities Unit" at the ACU offices in Rugby. This department will be responsible for negotiating access to land for competitive events and, generally, improving the facilities available for the competitive rider and driver. It has been said that LARA has spent too much time on rights of way matters, at the expense of competition. There is an element of truth in that, if only because there have been so many pressing rights of way issues demanding attention over recent years. LARA has spent a good proportion of it's resources on the development of urban "Wheels Parks" but, quite honestly, these seem to be getting nowhere fast. Those local authorities who do start schemes put a lot of money in for little positive result. There are a number of reasons for this but, in the current post Poll Tax financial climate, it looks as though the ideal of a wheels park within reach of every major population centre will never be realised. If the new Motor Sport Facilities Unit can go some way to providing an easy way into competition for those youngsters (physically and mentally) who thrash around on rights of way, then we will all benefit.

Another result of the reorganisation is that the ACU will, no longer, be able to provide such a comprehensive secretariat to LARA. The ACU comes in for a lot of criticism but there provision of secretarial backup in LARA's first 4 years has been superb - well beyond what might reasonably be expected. In future the MFU will act as secretariat to the LARA parent committee, while Alan Kind will be retained, part time, as LARA's "Legal and Environmental Advisor". The LEA will spend more time on monitoring and researching current changes in law and policy so as to better advise the member organisations on threats looming and action to take. All member organisations will, in future pay the same donation to LARA, thus perhaps removing another cause of friction.

Post Winchester changes to the law

As was expected, the result of the Winchester Conference on vehicles in the countryside, last autumn, has been a widespread call for the laws on reclassification of RUPPS and the general rights of vehicular access to be reviewed and "tightened up". There are various suggestions floating around - that recreational vehicle users who damage the surface of green lanes should pay fines or compensation, while farmers who do the same should be exempt! As you might expect, there is much rhetoric and nonsense but the matter is now being considered by a sub-committee of the (House of Commons) Rights of Way Review Committee, better known as the Haselhurst Committee, on which Bill Kershaw represents LARA. It is reassuring that the Government is not rushing headlong into any half-baked changes on Lord Denning's say-so, but it looks very likely that we might be saddled with the consideration whether or not to apply a TRO every time a RUPP is reclassified as a byway. The quid pro quo might be that we have reinstated, the right to a public enquiry for every imposition of a TRO, e.g. The South Downs Way. That might not be a bad trade off. Anyway, it is our highways that are under threat of yet more bureaucracy and LARA needs your opinions, via the T.R.F. Executive, on what our negotiating strategy should be. What changes do you think should be made? (from an objective viewpoint)?

The Ramblers have not been slow to seek advantage from the present situation. Their friendly M.P. Andrew Bennett, tried at the end of April to give local authorities the power to make long temporary TRO's banning private motor vehicles from green lanes, at their discretion. This seems rather unsporting since the Ramblers participate strongly in Haselhurst via their membership of CROWC and it goes to show that we really must stay alert. The passage of the Ploughing Bill also gave a number of MP's the chance to sound off about vehicles on green roads.

It was plain that they had been briefed by someone (I wonder who?) since they mostly repeated the same inaccuracies and half truths. Again, this is a shame since the motoring organisations, although not very happy with the content of the Ploughing Bill, had promised not to seek its obstruction in the House. The Bill is a real "dog's breakfast" and it remains to be seen how many local authorities will want to take on the land-owning lobby. They find it easier to waste time creating silly little hierarchies of "user friendly" footpaths than to get down to basics and remove all the illegal obstructions.

The Ramblers Association v Kent County Council

Our chums the RA have been spending their cash in court again. This time they have done everyone a real service by taking to the High Court a case on S116 closures by the magistrates. The gist is that, where a highway is well used for recreation, then it is not "unnecessary" in the way that term has been interpreted until now (the Compton case is now, largely, overridden). So, if a local authority tries to close a highway that is regularly used, by a S116 order, a number of personal objections should prove that it is not "unnecessary". This might not work for roads that have been obstructed or forgotten for years - how can they be necessary if nobody uses them? At this time - and the case needs some thought - it looks the best course if the obstructed roads are regularly reported to the highway authority - that shows a public necessity - but it may lead to those highway authorities seeking S116 orders quickly. Written evidence of past user may be of benefit, so keep those user evidence forms handy. A more detailed report on this case is available from LARA on request.

Alan Kind

BMF EUROPEAN LEGISLATION MEETING NATIONAL MOTOR CYCLE MUSEUM

Before the meeting proper got under way Ron Hughes the president of the AJS / Matchless Club said the spares scheme had trouble making up economical batches of spares that were common to several makes of British bikes, such as Lucas, Burman and Amal. If there were co-ordination between all spares schemes it was possible that economical batches could be made.

John Chatterton-Ross then opened the meeting and said that the proposals for 1) up to 400cc (or 35 kw / 47 bhp) limits for new riders in the EEC and 2) the proposals that tests be taken on a bike of 249cc which would need to be hired or loaned especially for the test... had been discussed in the Committee stage of the proposals and the BMF had been successful in putting forward its point of view. The next stage was for the proposals to be discussed by the Council of Ministers, which was made up of Ministers of Transport.

The Sidecar Federation said that they had pressed for the adoption of sidecars to come under the light car regulations. There was a grave risk of this regulation being passed but the BMF were lobbying to modify the proposals.

The relative size of the motorcycle population was discussed and it was said to be 900,000 in G.B. plus approx. 200,000 "illegals" or non registered / taxed bikes. In Europe it was 5,000,000

Ways of influencing the political parties were discussed and it was said that it must be pointed out to the Labour Party supporters that the motorcycle had freed the working man in the 1930's to travel for work and leisure on journeys of more than 10 miles. The Green Parties were to be asked what their attitude to motorcycles was. (In reducing congestion and using less parking space and resources.)

Other bodies interested were listed, including the F.I.M. whose new president was Neville Goss, the M.C.A./ Institute of Motor cycling, and M.A.G.

It was pointed out that both Stephen Prower and John Ross had limited time at their disposal, are volunteers and can only do limited and low-profile work for another year or two. Vast money was required IF a full time office and/or lobbyist was required. For example the cost of going to Brussels was £150 per person for one day, or £200 for two days and the return air fare for Strasbourg was £350. Few clubs contributed more than the latter in BMF subscriptions, yet several trips might be needed.

Other legislation was listed

1) The Road Safety Bill 2) Motorcycle Emissions Directive 3) Initiative to set up European PACTS 4) Daytime Running Lights The specification for the latter was being drawn up by the EEC Committee.

John Higgin 12

May 1990

I would like to talk about the environment. This is now the "in" subject and if you say that you are "concerned about green issues", others will not, as they once did, think of you as an eccentric but as a person but as a person who cares about the future of the planet.

How does all this affect us as trail riders? Almost everything you do has an environmental impact, from flushing the toilet (having used it) to having a bonfire and burning fossil fuels as we all do. The impact of trail riders amounts to two or maybe three factors. The first is noise and this is the one that is probably the most quoted as the reason to ban us from green lanes. Fortunately each new generation of bikes is quieter than the last, including enduro bikes. Even the latest motocross bikes seem quiet compared to the racing cars at somewhere like Brands Hatch. The second is erosion. I feel quite happy on this issue since the erosion caused by bikes is not much greater than a rambler and certainly less than a horse. (I agree Steve but unfortunately M.P.'s and councillors tend to disagree Ed.) The final problem is fumes but again the exhaust from a small group of bikes does not produce anything like the concentration of pollutants like carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide that is found in urban areas.

We are told that by using lead free petrol we can help the environment. Although the oil companies market it as such it is not a true "green" fuel. All it means is that it contains virtually no lead and therefore will not introduce this toxic metal into the biosystem. It will not reduce all the nasties in exhaust such as carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen, pollutants which are becoming of more and more concern with the increase in traffic congestion. Just to put one final (green) fly in the ointment, if someone tells you they are "green" because they use lead free fuel in their car or bike, point out that it contains more benzene (up to 5X) than leaded petrol. Benzene is a rather nasty chemical and carcinogenic to boot! (He means it can cause cancer Ed.)

Steve Neville

Announcing the Trail Riders Fellowship photographic competition

Out on the lanes? Got your camera? Good, because now you can enter those pictures into this new competition.

There are two sections to enter, "On the trail" and "Smile, you're on Candid Camera" Photographs for "On the Trail" will be judged on composition and subject matter which best depicts the freedom and scenic beauty of trail riding.

For "Smile, you're on Candid Camera", photographs should show the more rib tickling side of trail riding. You know the sort of picture, the one where your buddy is knee deep in mud and his wellie has come off.

Any format, any size, black and white or colour. Prizes will be awarded to the best photographer in each section. You have to the end of October to get the entries in to Mike Cowling at 23, Whitehall Street, Wakefield, West Yorks. WF2 9BG If your picture is chosen it will be enlarged for the T.R.F. stand at the bike show and, space providing, in the Newsletter. Send a stamped self addressed envelope for the return of your pictures.

Competition rules.

You can enter both sections with as many pictures as you like. Write your name and address on the back of each print and what section it is for. Judging will be done by a panel of at least three professional photographers. Negatives must be made available for enlargement if chosen as a section winner. No reproduction fee will be paid for use of the winning picture within the T.R.F. and it's publications.

So get your cameras out and start by taking pictures on your next trip. You have nothing to lose and plenty of fame and fortune to win!

Mike Cowling

Lady Elizabeth Kirk of the Byways and Bridleways Trust and formerly a Countryside Commissioner, has recently opened three self catering cottages on her farm just North of Pickering, North Yorks. Ideal for Moors, Dales, Wolds, Scarborough and York. Enquiries to Lady Kirk, 0751 72601 or write Manor Farm Holidays, Newton on Rawcliffe Pickering North Yorkshire YO18 8QA

GREEN LANE TEST

Husqvarna 510 TC

At £4200 the Husky is not cheap. However if you like big fourstrokes and I do, it must be one of the best in it's class. What choice is there in this section of the market? I suppose the yardstick is the Yamaha XT600 at around £3200 and the Honda Dominator, about £3500 if you can afford to replace the plastic at regular intervals. It will be apparent, therefore, that to the well heeled trail rider the Husky makes good sense, especially as depreciation is likely to be low. Also the owner can be assured he will be competitive, should he contemplate the odd enduro. Sit on the Husky and it is lower than expected, the seat was far too hard for me. Once on the move and the plush suspension makes up for this to some extent. The general feeling was quality, it seems well put together with "state of the art" suspension and brakes. Power is obviously "adequate" and, as with all four strokes, extremely usable. A ride on private land showed that the it is possible to steer with the throttle. With a little practise the back wheel can be held in a power slide almost like a speedway bike, something I was not able to achieve on my KDX I I mention this only for the purposes of the test. The Husky feels light for a 500 four stroke, about the same as my stripped XT350 but with lots more power and far superior suspension. Some idea of it's superiority can be had if I recount that at the end of a long trail ride the Husky rider was just as fresh as the KDX rider. The Husky has the usual quirk of left side kickstart but this is no problem. It is possible to start it easily most times either by standing next to it and using the right leg or by sitting astride and using the left, the latter usually gave a first kick start. Is it worth the money? Well that's up to you, I have to say that a Prolink Honda XL500 will do everything the Husky will do for the trail rider and it must be pointed out that you could buy two KDX's for the price of one Husky.

KAWASAKI KDX 125R

This is the latest machine rather obviously designed for the very popular, young learner brigade. It will probably annoy Kawasaki if I describe it as a KMX 125 engine in the KX style perimeter frame with the various plastic parts looking similar to the water cooled KDX 200 enduro. The tank is pressed steel and the bike is equipped with all the necessary road bits such as indicators, mirrors, proper number plates etc.

As usual the KDX 125 is available in restricted and unrestricted form, I tested the latter. My first impressions were of a smaller KDX but in reality it is smaller lighter easier to ride and much more civilised. Having said that it is also an enormous improvement on the early DT 125LC

Sit on it and the lower height is apparent even compared to the KMX 200 The bike I tried was set up for a rider of under 10 stone so I found it rather too soft and therefore rode it gently. The owner reckons the suspension is superior to the KMX. Everything feels familiar, although I found the footrests far too low. For a 125 it makes very good power, although like most of the current crop it has to be worked hard to obtain good performance. I was a little disappointed to note that the exhaust note becomes obtrusive at high revs. not like the local morons with the after market Micron, but not as quiet as the KMX 200, maybe the restricted version is better. At £2,000 it seems a lot of money for the serious trail rider, especially when compared with the KMX 200 at the same price. It would appeal to the smaller trail rider who might otherwise have had to consider a trials bike, or maybe the learner who, having passed his test could have it derestricted. I did not have the opportunity to check it for overheating, the 200 has a tendency to boil on a long slow hill (to the delight of non owners) The Honda MTX 200 also suffered from this but I do not believe any of the 125's have this problem. The tyres fitted as original equipment are obviously designed primarily for the road, having a broad chevron pattern which is unlikely to find much grip on the trail. As a trail rider I am a little uneasy about so many enduro look-a-likes zooming around but I suppose it makes good marketing sense. (This can lead to amusing situations. One of my group, riding a new KDX 200 was stopped by a young policewoman, who said "Trying out the acceleration sonny?" and then after our member removed his helmet "Oh, sorry sir") I thought I'd better check the reaction of the local youths. This tended to be "Vuk-n-ell, rite-pozie-ennit" or "Bettit-pizes-allover-n-L.C.-dunnit?" I understand the interpretation is "Looks quite good" and "Probably quicker than the DT 125".

A MORAL IN THERE SOMEWHERE

I had lunch recently with....well it doesn't matter who, what is important is his image. White swept back hair, club tie, double-breasted blazer, hounds tooth "trizers" and "brine shuss" This image was complete with admiration for an M.P. who promotes the ecologically sound practise of cycling AND disparaging comments about those lucky enough to be born in a warm country but mug enough to emigrate to these septic Isles. "phenomenal scores, this chap, errr, whatsisname, Worcester isn't it?" "Sorry, I don't follow cricket."

"Eh? not interested in sport?"

"Well I play volleyball at least once a week and I enjoy riding my motorbike on unmetalled highways. You know?, green lanes." "What the hell d'yer do that for? Had 'em swarming over the South Downs the other week. It was in the paper. Hundreds of 'em" "For noise and surface damage you can't beat a tractor...." etc.

The food was excellent, so was the booze, the wind ups were put to one side as the conversation wandered from books to belly dancers. Inevitably, the conversation came round to the Second World War. My companion had been an "hofficer" and doubtless a gentleman. The only officer in his regiment to ride a motorbike. "Was doing damned well in scrambles til they brought in those tubular front forks. Great fun"

Could our problems on the South Downs and other areas, be rooted in the minds of retired military men, who associate off road motorcycles with unsilenced 500cc singles being ridden by men who have left their brains back at the barracks? Dave Tilbury

THE SOUTH DOWNS

The subject of remaking the T.R.O. was considered by the West Sussex County Council Rights of Way Sub-Committee on May 15. The subject was discussed for about 40 minutes. I took notes throughout. Some salient points follow.

10 councillors were present, plus chairman. The County Secretary himself kept a close eye on the proceedings. There were 458 objections to the new order. The debate was divided into two parts.

1 Should a Public Inquiry be held?

2 Should the Highways Committee be asked to make the new T.R.O.? 7 Councillors spoke strongly against a P.I., one spoke strongly in favour. The vote was 8 against an Inquiry with 2 abstentions. The support for making the new T.R.O. was predictably, similar with 8 in favour and two not voting.

Some specific points made by Councillors:-

Col. Jones We are elected members and it is our job to make the decisions. In West Sussex we are trying to set the pace in this issue. Looking at the objections, none of them deal with the fundamental questions of environmental pollution and noise. Pollution and noise are damaging to people and wildlife. Increasing numbers of bicycles are good, they are good exercise and non-polluting.

Mrs. Scott We have seen the effect of the T.R.O. so far and it has been very satisfactory. Voluntary code of practise would be wonderful if it was enforcable but it would not be.

Mr. Forshaw (chairman) There is a great increase in all traffic. We must protect pedestrians. The environment must protect pedestrians from the motorist. Pedestrians must come first.

Mr. Elliott Look at the organisations which objected to this T.R.O. Most represent a very particular section of interest (vehicle users). Balance that against the groups who have no objection to the order. Parish Councils, District Councils and the police - they represent a much wider section of the public.

Name not known We have 458 objections. How many of these are resident in West Sussex? Some were from Wales and Yorkshire. I think it would be better to go to the High Court than have a P.I. The solicitors letter is very good indeed, excellent. (this was prepared by George Lawrence on our behalf Ed.) If I was the applicant I would be very pleased with that letter. However, we must remember that a solicitor's main aim is to generate business and I wonder if he genuinely believes in the argument he has put forward.

Name not known I don't drive or own a car. I want to see the Downs protected.
The motor car ruins the environment.

It is well over a year since this subject was last debated by the Council, it is interesting to note that the argument against us seems to be much more broadly based. Instead of concentrating on the Downs and the use of vehicles on "footpaths", the main factors seem to be pollution, protection of pedestrians and general opposition to the evil motor car.

As government policy also, seems to be moving in this direction, we may find ourselves under more pressure simply because we use the internal combustion engine. The final decision will be made at the Highways Committee meeting on the 22 June.

Bevis Billingham

I have printed this in full because the average member should know (a) How his money is being spent and (b) How very ignorant some local government councillors can be. If pollution and noise are so damaging why not ban smoking and radios? Why does so much wildlife exist on motorway verges? Mountain bikes are becoming unpopular everywhere else except on the Downs! Mrs. Scott may be interested to know that some motorised users are still using the Way. If the voluntary code of practise was enforceable it would not be voluntary! If it is so important to protect pedestrians, why make them walk along a narrow stretch of tarmac road full of cars and lorries? Look at the organisations which objected Byways & Bridleways Trust, The various carriage drivers clubs, The British Horse Society Representatives of lots of mountain bike clubs, Oh, and a few vehicle users. Parish and District councillors purport to represent the public but if they are non car owners, they are hardly representative. Ed.

SPOT A WILD BIRD

As the last wild flowers are now out and probably dying in this drought I thought it was time for a change. I have been informed members are only learning these as an excuse for laying on the ground "I did not fall off, I'm admiring this Lesser Periwinkle" Well from now on make sure you are laying on your back when the others find you! This one is for the benefit of run leaders and anyone having to defend two-strokes. The bird is the Nightjar, difficult to spot during the daytime but if seen it will be perched ALONG a branch instead of across it. they tend to become active at dusk looking for moths etc. with it's small beak but wide gape, it is an attractive bird. The colouring is mottled grey brown and buff and this helps it to blend into it's nest in a scrape on a bracken path. So be careful. Why is it a friend to us? Well, it's "song" is described as an interminable churring like a distant purr of a two-stroke motor cycle. I leave it to your imagination how you use this information.

GROUP NEWS

South West Region Members Assist With Horse Event

At the invitation of the British Horse Society and as part of the T.R.F.'s growing regionalisation process, riders from the Dorset and Bristol Groups teamed up with the Somerset members to assist at the Annual Golden Horseshoe Endurance Event on Exmoor.

It was the first time that the T.R.F. have been involved with this event and under the guidance of Nicholas Crocker (Somerset) and Peter Banks (South West Regional Chairman) Eleven of us enjoyed Sunday the 13 May marking the 50 mile course. Starting at Exford and taking in such beauty spots as Tarr Steps, Hollowcombe and Dulverton.

Over 70 horses and riders were entered for the two day event. the first horse starting at 8 am each morning, the tail ender starting some 80 minutes later. Therefore very early on Monday and Tuesday mornings two T.R.F. marshals set off to ride the route, tying open gates where permission had been given and checking the route markers were still in position (The Monday check showed a few markers had been moved to lay a false trail)

(cont)

The remainder of the T.R.F. members then followed, closing gates, collecting score cards from check points and assisting any horse riders with problems by relaying messages via radio etc. The final task as the last horses left the course was to remove all the markers.

In all, a very successful event with no major problems (that we were aware of) and a good example of how people with different interests can enjoy the countryside together.

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY GROUP

In the last few weeks we have continued tracing the route of Ian Thompson's epic journey, this trip we covered H.M.S. Mercury on the South Downs to Stockbridge and we found the house with the Welsh greeting over the door! We had an evening run before a club night. What a difference riding at dusk, poor Alan was tail end Charlie and covered in dust. We checked out a couple of lanes for Brian Read as part of the Green Lane Survey, I'd forgotten how difficult it is finding new lanes, especially when they are not waymarked.

NEWS FROM SUSSEX

Firstly a change of venue for the pub meetings. Under pressure from the rapidly growing number of rather militant members from the East Grinstead area it has been decided to replace the bi-monthly two centre pub meetings with a meeting on the last (not the fourth) Thursday of every month at the Selsey Arms Coolham. The pub is at the junction of the A272 and the B2193, map reference 120 228, sheet 198.

The appearance of my name in place of John Penfold's on the list of groups in the last Newsletter does not mean there has been a coup within the Sussex Group - it was actually a mistake by Brian Wright (Oh no it wasn't, I don't make mistakes. It was a "computer error" Ed) John, who founded the local group continues to be Chairman but as he is difficult to contact owing to involvement in nefarious business activities, we have decided to let my name stand on the list.

The Group is actually thriving and during the last few months we have acquired a number of keen new members. There is hope that the average age of the Group members might drop below 40!

Bevis Billingham

THAMES VALLEY GROUP

I was pleased to meet some old friends at a recent club night. I hope you will shortly be able to read about this groups recent exploits in France. Other recent activities have been helping the A.W.D.C. clear a Roman road. Mention was made of some apparent downgrades in Berks.possibly due to someone not objecting.Don Lewis had no knowledge of this when I rang him. The Group express thanks to the Southern Group who were able to step in and marshal at the Ipping Horse Trials when the Thames Valley could not organise it. Forthcoming events are;

16 17 June Mid Wales Weekend

24 June Introductory (or novice) Run, Severn Stars Berks.

Brian Wright for Thames Valley Group

SMALL AD

Gite or B and B in the Scottish Highlands, 15 K Inverness. For more information contact Ali at 0349 64374 (I hope someone is supporting Ali, she is one of the few to religiously send her donations for the ads. Ed.)

FROM A PREVIOUS BMF MAG.

By way of a change, I thought both old and new members would be interested in the Rights of Way News in the early 70's These notes are by Norman Smith who must have had tremendous energy and enthusiasm as they seem to cover the country.

Gloucester are going to warn the farmer who turned Len Ore (now President of the Croydon MCC Ed.) and party back on the Pusedown Farmington Road Used as a Public Path that he must allow riders to pass. The letter stating this was passed for perusal to a Northern Footpaths Group who had denied that we could use R.U.P.P.s

Feb 1972

The "unnecessary" term is presumed by Pratt & Mackenzie in their Law of Highways (this is THE definitive work, not the little blue book Ed.) to be a way not used for many years and not likely to be used in the foreseeable future.

March 1972

We have been able to assist the Assistant Development Officer of the British Horse Society, Mrs. Brahams of Fittleworth Place Sussex and she is delighted with the information. With Mr. Charles Shippam and Lady Rothenstein in Wrigs area we are gaining friends.

Aug Sept 1972

Bob James has been checking all the old County Roads in Brecon i.e. the 1929 Delegations from RDC's to CC. It is noted that on the latest 1" maps the Gap Road is a R.U.P.P. yet we know that it was a 1929 listed public road. So watch the Limited Review when announced. Bob Perring recently ran a trial with 126 miles of public roads but had some difficulty getting permission from Monmouth CC.

Feb March 1973

Delegation Maps (or sometimes descriptive schedules) were made by the old Rural District Council Surveyors when they handed over maintenance to the County in 1929 under the Local Government Acts of that year. Some District Surveyors omitted the unmetalled ways and others did not, so we often get two Rural Areas differing.

Oct. Nov. 1972 The Ridgeway B4001 West to Blowingstone Hill, Kingston Lisle,

Ernie Wrigley's article in the Motor Cycle has, I believe, resulted in many protests to Oxford C.C. The latest news is that they intend to publish a Restriction Order on traffic on this section as an "experiment".

May June 1975

The "experimental" Restriction Order.....appeared in the London Gazette with only 20 days notice. I objected at once on several technical grounds and also wrote to the Minister.....

It was rather unfortunate that the Bristol Club ran their Wayfarers Enduro Timed Trial on May 10 as there was a great deal of adverse criticism to this event in the local papers which did our case a lot of harm.

July Aug 1975

Wales: The Gap Road is threatened now as the Taf Fechan Water Board has withdrawn permission to use it's land to by-pass the old washed out bridge, so it must be reinstated in some form to claim the true road.

May

June 1975

Myself: I am still in severe pain and a recent car journey of 35 miles was most uncomfortable.

May June 1975

These are just a sample of the notes covering 1972 to 1976 I expect most members would share my surprise that the news 15-18 years later is still very similar. I believe the debt owed by trail riders to the likes of Norman Smith and Brian Thompson is truly enormous. Ed.

I believe they would be of great interest to lots of Rights of Way Officers as they seem to cover most Counties of England There are a lot of familiar names mentioned and it may be that some of the information from these people should be on affidavit for future use.

Thank you to Tim Gooderson for making these available.

Ed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Liz Hurley of the All Wheel Drive Club

Dear Brian,

Firstly, thankyou for those kind words in a recent Newsletter. Unfortunately they are not going to put up any signs on the Ridgeway as it is not their policy to erect other than statutory signs. They did, however do a press release, copy enclosed, publish it if you wish.

(cont)

The L.A.R.A. Voluntary Restraint on the Fosse Way, Brokenborough Wiltshire section will be lifted at the end of May. It has worked very well and the only use of the lane has been by horses walkers and some illegal non number plated motor cycles. These have been seen at regular intervals. The vehicle they use is a white Transit type van. If you see it please pass the number on to Gwyn Thomas or myself.

I believe that an offer of help with repairs to this section was made to Ken Phelps of Gloucester County Council. On his behalf I would like to accept the offer. Could you please contact myself on 0761 71159 or Nigel Leach on 0452 303953 as we are organising the manpower. Ken and myself had a meeting on site today and it was decided that another 100 tons of stone is needed to complete the lane. So far we have moved 45 tons by hand (and Land Rover) and it is very hard work.

The T.R.F. recently put on a motivation seminar in Derby organised by Dave Giles and I would like to thank him for an excellent weekend.

You have also organised a rights of way weekend that I regret I will be unable to attend and I believe some others cannot. I would therefore like to take the opportunity to invite any regional Rights of Way Officers to attend an "in house" teach in that the A.W.D.C. are holding. We held one last year and it proved very helpful so we are repeating it. Speakers will be a County Rights of Way Officer and your very own Tim Stevens. We will be covering; Dealing with Councils, the Law, researching the history of lanes and all that goes with it. Our Reps. will be telling us what they have achieved in their Counties and any maintenance and clearance projects they have carried out. (We hope this will encourage others). The event will take place in Northampton as it is fairly central and a map of where will be sent to you. It is to be held on Sunday 22 July The fee is only £10 per head and buffet lunch will be provided. Tea and coffee available all day.

If you wish to attend can you let me know as soon as possible on the above phone number. Fee and note of acceptance should be sent to the A.W.D.C. Freepost, Bath, BA2 9JZ I hope that some of you will be able to attend as it will be not only educational but a unique opportunity for the three vehicle user groups to get together for discussions as the Association of Rover Clubs are also invited. Another project on the Ridgeway is under way for July so if anyone is interested please contact me.

Finally I would like to say thank you to Bevis Billingham for all the time and effort he and other T.R.F. members have put into the South Downs Way. The A.W.D.C. contributed £2,000 to the Fighting Fund and individual members have also sent donations. Peter Payne, my West Sussex Area Rep. has a collection going that will be donated later. I certainly do think that it has made the Councils realise that we are not just a bunch of amateur joy riders, vandals, yuppies, hoodlums and all the other names we've been called. We are responsible users who respect and wish to preserve not only the countryside, but our right to use and enjoy that countryside. Long may we Lane.

Best wishes to you all. Liz Hurley R.of W. Officer A.W.D.C.

Dear Brian

Could I please point out that we wish to be known as the Loddon-Vale Group and not the Berkshire Group as in the listings which appeared in Newsletter no. 142 We have recently voted on the issue and the result was almost unanimous. Also my correct address is "Ladybower" Dogmersfield, Basingstoke, Hants. RG27 8SS

Don Lewis

Dear Sir

Please could you ask T.R.F. members if anyone has knowledge or experience of trail riding in the Pyrenees as I am going there next year. I can be contacted at the address hereunder. Hope you can help.

Ian Rayton

0229 860342 2, Forestry Houses, Satterthwaite, Nr.Ulverston Cumbria LA12 8LN

Dear Brian,

After reading Sally Madgwick's article about her special XL 125/185 I thought members might like to know that I wrote of a similar project which appeared in the Bulletin of June 1984. I am sure it spawned many such specials as I sent copies all over the country. A Mk.2 version with Micron, built by my son was featured in one of the M/C monthlies.

Please note the Southern Group now meet on the 3rd. Wednesday at the Priory Inn, Bishop's Waltham on the B2177 (formerly A333)
 Pete Wildsmith 5, Meynell Close, Eastleigh, Hants. SO5 4DZ
 (If any other member requires a copy of the article, apply to Peter or myself Ed.)

Dear Brian,

Thanks for a very readable Newsletter. I bet you had to burn the midnight oil and as I know that you are an enthusiastic member, I take my hat off to you. (Do I get FULL membership now? Ed.)

Right, having got that over, now for the favour (well it had to come didn't it?) As one who knows little about electrics, is there a member who can help me with all the information needed to fit 12 volt lights to my DR200? It will have to pass it's first M.O.T. in 18 month's time and it will probably take that long to do it without expert help.

Beat this if you can! We were all seated at the Thames Valley meeting recently when the door burst open and in marched 60 year old Derek Curling (recently moved to Manchester area) He had ridden all the way there non-stop for six hours on his 100cc Yamaha. Thats what I call a keen motorcyclist! Ron Rickarby

(Derek is one of the "characters" of the T.R.F. My recollection of him is sitting at the breakfast table on a weekend run with two middle aged lady ramblers near us and Derek trying to tell us all about what "me and my bruvver got up to in Amsterdam" in a loud voice. Ed.)

Dear Brian,

I was interested to read the letter from Stephen Staley in the April issue. He seems to be rather unlucky with his TY250. Maybe my experiences with one for several years will be of interest to him and any other members using the same model, which to my mind is almost ideal for "mechanical rambling". I get 65 miles to the tankful, with no changes to the carb. from new. I use the original pumped oiling system, a 16 tooth gearbox sprocket and 45 tooth rear. A 3.50 knobbly on the back gives all the traction I have ever needed and it cruises happily in top at 40 - 45 mph without the motor getting too excited. I can't remember when the B7ES spark plug last needed to be looked at. Modifications are only making a saddle with comfortable padding, adding an extra external front brake lever return spring and fitting air release screws at the top of each fork leg for use after each run. This cures the habit of oiling the front wheel and garage floor overnight (works with DT175 and probably others too) I believe it is an ideal machine for a beginner, or in my case, an elderly finisher. Which model Kawasaki petrol tank fits the TY Stephen?

I very much appreciate your efforts with the Newsletter. When are we going to read about a South London & Surrey run before it happens? (See Group News Ed.) I would love to come on one but I'm much too lazy/tired/old/hooked on cable TV to come to the meetings. Now Derek Harvey's gone to live in the I.of W. the only green laning I get is with the Vintage Club. Chris

de Whalley

(For such a venerable early member I will make special arrangements to collect you and machine and transport you in luxury van to and from a suitable starting point for an "Old Codgers Run" Let me know when; and if you favour the TY or outfit Ed.)

Dear Brian,

I find the mag. personal, provocative and stimulating. I hope you find that a compliment. Richard Tallon

(Yes thank you Richard. Thats the sort of letter I like Ed.)

Sorry Newsletter is Late and in restricted Format

(Ed)

Can I start by saying that this is the Secretary's Column. A number of people have asked me about a separate Secretary's Newsletter to be circulated to selected members only. I have no wish to write an independent Newsletter. As long as the Editor of this one gives me space to talk to the whole membership, why should I want to send secret messages to just a few?

I enjoyed a day out with the Cornwall Group at the end of April. They cleared an overgrown green lane "on behalf of the County Council". It was excellent publicity, especially during the "National Environment Week". It was featured in the "Environment" column of the local newspaper. It was also good fun. Clearing a suitably devious route along a hitherto unusable lane is a great antidote to all the gloom and doom talk of fighting lane closures and "Reviews" of rights of way.

The Council foreman was on hand to approve our efforts and to deal with the farmers of the adjoining land who turned up to see what was going on. They each paid rent on their half of the lane. One of them was determined that his half of the lane was not the road; the road ran on the other chap's half! All this was put into perspective when it transpired that the landowner from whom they rented their fields was the Council. Who else could be devious enough to charge rent for the road as part of a farm and be responsible for ensuring that it was maintained as a public road?

My letterbox has received little post, since I took on the Secretary's job. Don't be shy. I'll talk to anyone.

I talked to the horse riders recently at a seminar they held to discuss the state of bridleways around Newquay. They were dreadfully disorganised and I offered them whatever help I could.

I always talk to the Ramblers, whenever we sit on the same committee. There is never any animosity. We each have our different problems of access and do not seem to have come into conflict on any local issues, at least not during the last ten years.

I talk to our local All Wheel Drive Club rights of way man. He would make a great trail rider. He is interested in all the right things - local history, natural history, rights of way, conservation, and, above all, having a good time, without upsetting others.

I talked to a car club recently. They put on a number of trials each year, two of which use green lanes which are under threat. Mutual aid was the theme. The TRF had the legal knowledge, while the car club had a powerful membership, including the local magistrate.

If you talk to people you can make some very useful friends. You can put over your point of view and listen to theirs. You would be amazed at how much trail riders have in common with other countryside users. Or perhaps you wouldn't be surprised because you already talk to them.

This is a great time of year to ride quietly; to ride by yourself and enjoy the countryside at its best. In the winter you need company to help shrug off the cold and the wet, but early summer is the time to potter along lanes, to pause and smell the countryside and to listen to the birds. You can't smell much with icicles on your nose and you can't hear much if there's a blizzard. Get your map out and plan a gentle half day out, not to test man and machine, but just to relax in the countryside.

SHARING: JUNE 1990

As we approached the ford, in brilliant May sunshine, I thought they were washing-up from a picnic, but to my surprise it transpired that they were panning for Gold! Apologising for disturbing their activity Adrian started across Afon Mawddach followed by the 'Ducklings', one of whom dived right under, to the delight of the bystanders who thought this to be very fair compensation. That was the first of 3 rest periods that day, the others being punctures, during which we chatted about TRF matters.

In this group on that day it was apparent that the mature members had maps, (as well as puncture outfits), and even as visitors knew were they were in general terms, although they might need to be shown the specific vehicular route across open moorland. On the other hand some of the local group members knew neither, nor did they appear to have explored further afield as yet. I hope they have that pleasure to come: for this weekend was a great example of the value of the TRF as an organisation that expands trail-riders horizons by allowing them to ride with new friends far from home.

For me an active walker/backpacker of 30 years nothing has expanded my knowledge and understanding of the English Countryside more than a decade of TRF membership. Hence the proposal to extend the map marking service, hopefully for the whole country, so that members can develop their independent riding to further areas of the country; 2 or 3 friends can plan their own day out, maybe mid-week if they are shift-workers, without having to wait for a formal invitation to a weekend by the local group.

The flipside of this requires local groups to share their research so that the maps can be marked. The rank and file membership with whom I have spoken are in agreement with this act of fellowship providing:

- a) that only the 'safe' lanes are marked on such publicly available maps, and
- b) that more sensitive lanes - which it is our policy to continue to use - are only disclosed to those members whose actions have proved their commitment to TRF policy.

Such a scheme would enable us to give an improved service to all members whilst protecting us from the 'asset-stripper' who is just passing through. It would also provide a place for those horse riders and mountain bikers who wish to join us to share in our R.O.W expertise, a liaison which could strengthen our power base. It is these considerations that have led to the idea of the Associate Member.

So in asking the Groups to discuss the question of map-marking and more than one form of membership the Group rep's at the exec meeting have not gone 'power crazy' they are just asking isn't this sensible and what do you think?

See you on the Trail.
Dave Giles.

This is the page for your news views and queries on RIGHTS OF WAY

Write or phone, Tim Stevens is your man.

(But only if you do...)

NO ANSWER, CAME THE PROMPT REPLY

Some time ago I announced a Rights of Way Workshop in the Dales in May, and I was disappointed at the response. Two weeks before the event and I had two firm bookings. Yes, two, and no way am I going to ask speakers to come from afar to talk to two people and me. Several others had *said* they would come, and even one or two *said* they would be sending a deposit. Perhaps it is asking too much for you to give up a whole weekend so that you are better able to help promote our sport, perhaps the summer is already too full of more important things, perhaps you are happy to let others do all the work, as usual.

ROW WORKSHOP: JUNE 22 23 & 24

The workshop planned for this weekend is still on even though I haven't got many bookings for this one either as yet. You should all receive this newsletter during the first week in June so if you are intending to come *please do not delay getting in touch*. The programme starts with basic principles of RoW, and continues with a review of evidence, where to find it, what is useful, and what to do with it when you have got it. There will also be some fieldwork, on foot and on trail-bikes. Same venue (Malham), same bargain price (£35 for TRF members). I have also offered to run a workshop in any other area of the country between mid-July and the end of August, at the request of local TRF groups or regions, and I can cover the subjects you know you need. Map reading, basic surveying, tithe awards, inclosure acts, legal principles, public inquiries, obstructions, illegal signs, old maps, quangos, you name it and if I don't know anything about it I know a man (or just as often a woman) who does.

TOUT TERRAIN

What a wonderfully colourful experience, riding in the Diois at Easter. There are the pale green flowers of the stinking hellebore, the dark green of the moss beneath the burgeoning beech trees, and every shade between. There is the delicate yellow of primroses, the bright yellow of coltsfoot, the acid yellow of spurge, the subtle yellow of cowslips, the grubby yellow of lady's bedstraw, and all the blues in the world from the washed out pinky blue of overblown hepatica to the deep royal blue of the violets. And then there are the gentians. The bluest of blue is nothing in the face of the gallant spark of concentrated brilliance that the spring gentian thrusts up between the stones as soon as the mountain snow has melted. If you are not into little treasures please don't go; it would be a terrible waste to have all the woods starred by such a display only to be passed by unnoticed.

I have asked participants to send in their comments on the first TRF venture abroad, so see elsewhere for more detail of the riding.

WHAT CONFLICT?

Every time I go to a conference or a meeting of outsiders to our sport the subject of Conflict comes up. Walkers and horse riders cannot get on, we are told, with vehicles on green lanes. There isn't, they say, room for us as well. Especially in National Parks and on bank holiday weekends. Well, all you critics, I have got news for you. I have just returned from two days riding in Snowdonia, guided by Adrian Walls and his colleagues, and each day we did about eighty miles of the most delightful tracks. It was the weekend of May Day, and the weather was glorious. On our way round we met a man and his dog, a family of three exploring in the woods, and lots of sheep. Oh yes, and a group of four who were messing by a ford looking for gold - they said we were the most exciting thing to have happened all day, and we wondered if they needed "panning permission". Two bright holidays in an area where we shouldn't have been able to move for ramblers, and where were they? And where was the conflict? Of course, one example proves nothing, but as I am sure many of you can confirm, this is not at all an unusual case. Perhaps the real significance is that no part of our route was designated a Long Distance Path, and therefore no part of our route was made artificially attractive to the type of walker who needs to be herded along and who can't be bothered with all this mapreading business.

WHAT SIGNS ?

As time goes on I am less and less convinced that what we need is for the old roads to be signposted and waymarked as carriageways. It would only make it easier for the rabble to churn up the lanes, and it would remove some of the satisfaction I get from finding places despite the neglect of decades, the misleading signs, and the out and out obstructiveness of some councils and some farmers. At the same time I can become very angry when I see a sign on an old road saying:

FOOTPATH ONLY NO BIKES NO 4x4

not just because it is a lie, and illegal, and the Council should prosecute and won't, but because the casual passer-by thinks it it is us who are the wrong-doers. Surely it would be better by far *not* to have signs "where the route leaves a metalled road" as is the current requirement for public paths, but to restrict signs to those places where one could unwittingly stray. Places where a farm access road or a forestry road could be confused with the proper route, for instance, especially as new access roads are not marked on any maps until new aerial photos are needed by the OS. The legal status *must* be marked on maps, though, ensuring that only those who can be bothered to learn map skills can find them, and that problems with farmers, officials, and other users could be resolved on the spot. However the official line seems to be that signs leading off tarmac roads are helpful, and if that is the case the sooner such signs all tell the truth the better.

With this in mind I was very pleased to spend the Welsh weekend in the company of Bill Kershaw, the man representing all motorists on the Hazlehurst committee, the House of Commons group looking at RoW matters. Dave Giles was also there and we spent a very stimulating weekend chuntering on about all sorts of things to do with our sport. There is now a working party of MPs, County Surveyors, and Users, set up by Hazlehurst to look in particular at Vehicles on Rights of Way, and DG, BK, and I chatted on into the small hours about signs, and how we were pleased to hear that the members of the working party seem all in favour of many of the changes outlined in my Winchester paper "Footpaths, Bridleways, and CARRIAGEWAYS", (Copies from LARA, send A4 sae). When Bill was appointed to replace Brian Thompson on this influential Parliamentary Committee I admit to raising an eyebrow because his background is in competition, but I am now very pleased to be

able to correct any unfavourable impression I may have created. I have no doubt at all that our interests are in good hands, in fact I will stick my neck out and say that they are in much better hands than they were. We also spoke about the future of LARA and the place of a small group like the TRF within it if we have to pay the same fee as bodies like the BMF with fifty times the membership. Especially as we are already in LARA through the BMF anyway, and especially as the TRF as a small group fighting the South Downs business with lots of our cash did not receive any financial support from some of the other LARA members who sit round the table with us and claim to support our aims...

One problem Bill's working party is wrestling with is the design of a suitable sign for a Carriageway, to go with the Footprints and Horseshoes already recommended for public paths. Undoubtedly a symbolic wheel would be suitable, but how to make a design which shows no bias to a particular type of user, but which is easy to recognise and easy to produce by the differing processes in use in different areas, that is the problem. Graphic designers in our ranks who may have ideas which could help are invited to contact Bill direct. Who knows, it could be *your* design which is immortalised and revered by generations of hooligans as yet unborn. His address is:
W H Kershaw, Esq., 20 High Cross Drive, Newport NP1 9AB

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WEEK

It would be easy of me to claim on behalf of the local Lancashire Group that their recent repair of t'black hole on Cam Fell was in response to the widely publicised National Environment Week set up by the Civic Trust. It wasn't because it wasn't. We only found out about it about a week before we were due to answer the summons of stalwart Jack Osborne to help move a few tons of stone into a well known Dales boggy-place. While we were slaving away a group of trail riders came by, mounted on newish machines, and mostly street legal, (so they couldn't have been TRF men, says Rodger,) and they just rode round us and carried on. If it was you, just remember that a "good afternoon" or "how do" costs nowt, and helps convince people that you are not alien beings but real people *just like them*. It really is true that half our problems are self inflicted.

I have asked the Civic Trust to let us know a bit earlier next year when NEW comes round again, and perhaps we could make a point of setting aside a day or two when we *all* put something back into the landscape we claim to treasure so much.

Trail riders do it nec vi, nec clam, nec precario.