

# TRF

BULLETIN

TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

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



TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP  
BULLETIN No. 88 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1982

LOCAL GROUP MEETINGS

Group & Group Rep.	Pie & Pint Night Venue
<b>ANGLIA</b> Bob Aley, 1 Aldersford Street, Sible Hedingham, Nr. Halstead.	NONE
<b>BOURNEMOUTH &amp; POOLE</b> Keith Cockrell, 'The Bungalow', Winterbourne Kingston, Near Bere Regis, Dorset.	1st Tuesday — Dorset Soldier, Corfe Mullen
<b>BRISTOL</b> Russ McDermid, 1 Woodlands Park, Lower Swainswick, Bath, Avon, BA1 8BQ	2nd & 4th Mondays Stanshawe's Court Hotel, Sundridge Park Road, Yate.
<b>CAMBRIDGESHIRE</b> Hugh Mason, 3 The Green, Haddenham, Ely, Cambs.	1st Monday — Manchester Arms, Needingworth Road, St. Ives.
<b>CHESHIRE</b> David Eaton, 125 Victoria Road, Northwich, CW9 6JH	1st Thursday — The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport.
<b>CHRISTCHURCH</b> Carl Nicolls, 30 Southey Road, Somerset, Nr. Christchurch.	1st Thursday — Ashley Hotel, Ashley, New Milton.
<b>CUMBRIA</b> Norman Phoenix, The Vicarage, Warcop, Appleby. Tel: Brough 683	NONE
<b>DERBYSHIRE &amp; SOUTH YORKSHIRE</b> Ian Dunshire, 1 Lodge Drive, Harley, Rotherham, S. Yorks.	2nd & 4th Tuesdays — The Victoria Hotel, 248 Neepsend Lane, Sheffield.
<b>EAST MIDLANDS</b> Graham Chinnery, 28 The Woodcroft, Diseworth, Derbys.	2nd Wednesday — Flying Horse, Kegworth, Leics. (on A6).
<b>EAST YORKSHIRE</b> Howard Wadsworth, 7 Hammond Road, Knottingley, WF11 0HL.	2nd Wednesday — Red Lion, Bramham, Nr. Wetherby.
<b>ESSEX</b> Dave Andrews, 123 Burrow Road, Chigwell, Essex.	Last Tuesday — Warley Sports Centre, Holdens Wood, Warley Gap, Brentwood, Essex.
<b>GLOUCESTERSHIRE</b> Fred Lord, 22 Glynrosa Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham.	1st Monday — Raglan Arms, Conduit Street, Gloucester.
<b>HERTFORDSHIRE</b> Frank Diamond, 42 Aldridge Ave., Stanmore, Middlesex.	1st Wednesday. The Valiant Trooper, Aldbury, Near Tring.
<b>LANCASHIRE</b> Keith Westley, 6 Briars Lane, Lathom, Ormskirk, Lancs.	1st Tuesday — The Bay Horse, Leyland, near Preston, Lancs.
<b>LODDON VALE</b> John Holloway, 25 Pheasant Close, Winnersh, Reading. 785995.	2nd Thursday — The Lamb, Theale, near Reading, Berks.
<b>NORTH MIDLANDS</b> Don Smalley, 33 Paris Ave., Newcastle Under Lyme, 620848.	3rd Tuesday — Jervis Arms, Onecote.

<b>NORTHUMBERLAND</b> David Young, 9 Edwards Road, Whitley Bay, Northumberland.	NONE
<b>NORTH WALES</b> Stan Whitaker, 15 Wedgewood Heights, Holywell, Clywd.	1st Wednesday — The Fox & Grapes, Hawarden, Clyd, (near Queensferry and Mold).
<b>NORTH WEST LONDON</b> Roger Newark, 76 Hale Grove Gardens, Mill Hill, London, NW7. 01-959 2386	1st Wednesday. The Valiant Trooper, Aldbury, Near Tring.
<b>NORTH YORKSHIRE</b> M. Drury, 21 The Avenue, Starbeck, Harrogate. Harrogate 885410	4th Tuesday — Prince of Wales, Starbeck, Harrogate.
<b>SHROPSHIRE</b> Mike Dutton, Top Cottage, Eaton Eaton Mascott, Cross Houses, Shrewsbury.	Last Wednesday of month, except December) Bell Inn, Cross Houses.
<b>SOUTH EAST</b> Mike Rich, 18 Way Volante, River View Park, Gravesend.	2nd Tuesday — The Westcourt Inn, St. Hildas Way, Gravesend.
<b>SOUTHERN</b> Peter Wildsmith, 5, Meynell Close, Eastleigh, Hants, SO5 4DZ.	3rd Tuesday — Tabby Cat, Hildingbury Road, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, Hants.
<b>SUSSEX</b> John Penfold, 'Marriners', Nyton Road, Aldingbourne, Chichester.	Contact John (every other month i.e. Feb, April, etc. Hassocks Hotel, Hassocks.
<b>TEESIDE</b> John Bloomfield, 31 Thames Ave., Thornaby, Cleveland.	1st Wednesday — The Station Hotel, Kirby, near Stokesley.
<b>THAMES VALLEY</b> Brian Crook, 26 Knightsbridge Crescent, Staines, Middx.	3rd Monday — District Arms, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx.
<b>WEST ANGLIA</b> Bruce Roberts, 36 Rosemary Drive, Bromham, Bedford.	3rd Thursday — Scott Bader Club House (opp. Parish Church), Woolaston, near Wellingborough, and 2nd Thursday, The Swan, Salford, Near Cranfield, Beds.
<b>WEST MIDLANDS</b> Mrs. Sheila Lewis, 72 Field Barn Road, Hampton Magna, Warwick, CV35 8TS.	1st & 3rd Wednesdays — King George V Memorial Hall, Stratford Road, Hockley Heath, Solihull, W. Midlands.
<b>WEST YORKSHIRE</b> Mike Pemberton, 36 Alder Hill Grove, Leeds 7.	1st & 3rd Mondays — Frizinghall Conservative Club, Off Manningham Lane, Bradford.
<b>WEST WILTSHIRE</b> Bill Riley, Allin Motorcycles, Seymore Road, Trowbridge, 65480	First Tuesday in month, Cross Guns, Avoncliff near Bradford on Avon, Wilts.

ACCOMMODATION

Farm House — Welsh traditional, 4 single beds, 2 single beds, 1 double bed, large lounge, (colour TV). Under cover parking for bikes, room for cars & trailers. Plenty of home produced food. Costs — B & B & Evening Meal — £8.50 1 night. £7.50 for 2 or more, 1 week £49.00. Dick & Jean Sutton, Pen-Rochell Farm, Llanfihangel Rhydithon, Dolau, Near Llandrindod Wells. — Tel: Peny-Bont 200. O.S. Ref. 154665. (Sheet 148).

**Editor & Distribution**

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14 Rycroft Close  
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Tel: Reading (0734) 696783

**AN OCCASIONAL COMMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Another year has gone. The T.R.F. making more progress during the last 12 months than at any time in its history. Thanks mainly to the work and time put in by Brian Thompson the Wildlife and Countryside Act will give us the best chance of protecting the lanes we love to use. The use of Brians holidays etc. to do rights of way work must have put a lot of pressure on his family, I don't know them but we must all be grateful to them as Brian could not have put in the time without their co-operation. I for one would like to say thanks on behalf of the T.R.F.

There is much talk by various groups about changing the Wildlife & Countryside Act because it does or doesn't do many things. It must be borne in mind Rights of Way was only one part — PART 3. Please do not defend the whole act unless you understood and/or agreed with it. I may not know a lesser spotted something or other from a Cwaka, others possibly do. As far as I am concerned the remainder of the Act could be changed by all the various pressure groups but we must protect PART 3, that should be the T.R.F.'s SSSI. Not to labour the point I think the T.R.F. via its activities with like-minded groups has been more successful in influencing legislation than all the professional full time motoring organisations, possibly since the turn of the century.

The last two years have been very pleasant being in the chair, many points of view but little acrimony. The various officers have carried on without any major changes, I think this stability is for the good. Rumour has it that there may be a few changes at the end of the year as some officials will possibly be standing down having offered their best. I'm sure plenty of notice will be given so that replacements can be found before the A.G.M.

I prefer riding outside the summer period, to be an interesting day mileage is not of major importance. Most non-motorcycle users like only the summer period. One sees more horse riders and walkers on one trip between June and September than the rest of the year put together.

Talking of riders, is it me or are the latest Enduro bikes measured in hands? They seem so high that riders will soon have to be helped into the saddle. We are often incorrectly called scramblers, I am aware that many are using green lanes and possibly other ways on unregistered racing moto-cross machinery. These are of course un-insured, untaxed and exceptionally noisy. The damage they do to our interests is considerable as we all get tarred with the same brush. If you can give any help to the locals, horse riders, walkers and police please do so. The vehicles that brought them, usually Transits are parked at the end of the way, these vehicles registration numbers would help to identify the culprits. In certain areas un-registered bikes with 8-14 year olds have been let loose along with the family dog, these cause more problems than a dozen trail riders.

Finally to round off these ramblings, the easy part of the T.R.F. is to join a local group, find and ride the local lanes, even make trips to more distant parts especially if its all laid on. Amongst the turnover of members are many who think its done by mirrors. They are often dissatisfied being involved in the donkey work, such as which lanes can be used and why, let alone recording details. All the history going back 200 years is as important as riding the lane. The backroom boys and girls are the foundation of the T.R.F. and riders and rides cannot exist without them. There are still many groups not prepared to do this work and other areas which have no groups, lets hope that the next twelve months will fill many of these gaps.

Don't forget we will have to work hard to keep what we have gained, we cannot relax, our opponents won't. Hopefully they may realise that we have much in common, but don't bank on it.

Seymour Moss

**USEFUL FACTS AND FIGURES**

- 1. There are only 5000 miles of green lanes** in England and Wales compared with 100,000 miles of other paths. Most have ancient vehicular rights. In the Hood case Lord Denning said 'Our old highways came into existence before 1835 it is important that they should be preserved and known'.
- 2. In 1979 the ACU, BMF and TRF agreed to a 'Code of Conduct'** for all trail riders. (a) travel at a speed not to exceed 25 mph, (b) give way to walkers, horses and cyclists, (c) fasten all gates, (d) ride quietly at all times as noise can offend.
- 3. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme** say they object to closure of green lanes needed for participants in motor cycle awards. (letter from head office 5.2.80)
- 4. The Sports Council** officially support a recreation strategy that allows for the activities of motor cyclists and consider it wrong to exclude this section of the community from the countryside. (letter 19.2.80).
- 5. A University of Aston in Birmingham** thesis in Aug. 1981 on the problems of off road motor cycle use concluded that most authorities recognise the need for somewhere for young riders (often unemployed) to go, usually based on safety grounds. Other points are . . . The Probation Service urged the Govt and local authorities that 'off road facilities need to be more generally available'. Essex Police Training School said 'it would be nice if kids had some off road areas where they could let off steam'. The Dept. of Transport want to see a lot more sites being provided by local authorities. 22 local authorities with a positive attitude to this social problem have similar sites. Merseyside Police say in the report 'controlling unauthorised use is difficult and denying riders in one area serves to transfer the activity to another'.

**6. The basic law re test for Byway for vehicular rights.** . . By virtue of Section 36 Highways 1980 pre 1835 highways are highways maintainable at public expense. In the Hood Case 1975 (3AERp246) Lord Denning's dicta said all former RUPPs if CRF or CRB are carriageways. 1979 Sorenson v Cheshire County Council and Section 32 Highways Act 1980 confirm the evidence value of pre 1835 maps. In Kent CC v Loughlin 1975 Lord Denning said 'maps up to 1820 were on too small a scale to show more than public carriage roads'.

User evidence per Section 31, and common law.

Brian G. Thompson, 39 Warren Road, Thorne, Doncaster, DN8 5PP, S. Yorks.  
Telephone: Thorne (0405) 814388

### WARNING \* WARNING \* WARNING

The membership year runs from the 1st of January until the 31st December. UNLESS you have paid your subscription of £6 (at least) this could be the last T.R.F. Bulletin you will receive. You know how much you miss the Bulletin when its not there so get your cheque in the post NOW and be entitled to receive all the benefits of a full years T.R.F. Membership, including legal assistance, friendly faces, lovely sticky mud and a feeling of belonging to the best Fellowship around!

\* \* \* \*

### ENDURO MOTORCYCLES: TRACK TESTS OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST.

Frank Melling. Publishers-Osprey. £4.95.

Here is a book that I could not for a moment take seriously. There are two reasons for this, firstly, almost all the bikes are about twice as much as most trail riders would be prepared to pay, and secondly, the writer constantly decried his own ability to ride them to the full.

This does not mean that the book is hard to read, to the contrary the writer has an amusing and self depreciating style and there are many crisp and clear black and white shots and a few colour pictures.

This is a book to dream from, rather in the way that "round the world" travellers books are made of, very useful information that hardly anyone will ever need, but pleasant dreams never the less.

John R. Higgin.

### SOUTHERN GROUP NEWS

The Group now meet at THE TABBY CAT – Public House, (Lounge Bar), Hiltingbury Road, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, still on the THIRD TUESDAY of the month.

Things are much the same as before down here – that is, regular attendance at Public Inquiries in Wiltshire attended to mainly by stalward Pete Cuerden who also meets up with Bill Riley of the Wiltshire Group. Pete must have attended a dozen Inquiries during 1981 and we are now getting some results from those held between 18 months and 30 months ago with at least some success.

Our relationships with the Hampshire C.C. Rights of Way Office are very good, which is a refreshing change from some.

We have also had to keep an open eye on all the new trunk road and bypass schemes as they cross many R.U.P.P.S. but they are not a major worry. Abridge for a R.U.P.P. has been constructed over the A34 which is very impressive (and costly). Further south there is another re-routing to take place near Mitcheldever Station. There is a problem with a trunk road near Thruxton, the D. of E. have said that it will be a bridleway but we are working on them to change it.

The Rights of Way Committee now consists of Pete Cuerden, Brian Boden and myself. . .

Peter Wildsmith, 5, Meynell Close, Eastleigh, Hants, SO5 4DZ

### SOUTH EAST GROUP NEWS

We held our A.G.M. on 10th November, a fairly informal meeting where all the officers posts remained as was, that is Group Rep.; Mike Rich, Treasurer; Steve Neville, and R.O.W. by Ian Roscow.

It could be that Steve is a budding entertainments officer as he is organising a film show for the next meeting!

We went to court for the first time, and won! The Kent County Council wanted to remove vehicular rights from a lane because it was "unnecessary" (the usual). Basically we said "Why?", to the Magistrates, and I guess they couldn't see why either.

I just hope we can keep our 100% record in the future, and at least the county council will think twice before wasting their time again.

Our group has a predominance of mud-lovers and the number who turn out for the winter runs is always amazing considering the usual foul weather, but then that's when the real mud is about. The last run brought out the winter woollies and a few hangers, but the latter soon disappeared after a confrontation at the start of the first lane with two dogs, three shotguns and a loud woman with all the usual uninformed phrases ending with a threat to call in the police. We said O.K., anything for a peaceful life, and rode on. A few interesting "new" lanes were ridden in the Maidstone area, and with no big hassle or breakdowns a pleasant, varied run was had by all. As an aside I personally think that one of the best things to 'promote' our cause is good signposting of byways so that other users will know where to expect motorcyclists. I'm sure most other path users have no idea of lane status at all and go on looks alone, and it is the surprise and shock which causes the aggressive reaction from them, after all they don't seemed too surprised to find a motorcycle on a tarmac country lane.

Anyway thanks to Andy (KLX 250), Steve (IT 175), John (XR 200), Trevor (XR 200), Gerry (XR 200), Graham (DT 400), Chris (TS 185), Stuart (DT 175), Clive (TS 185), Adrian (SL 125 – Anne's) and me (DT 400 MX – Best bike) for a fun run.

Ian Roscow R.o.W. S.E. Group. 20 Hilltop Road, Rochester, Kent, MEL 4QN.  
Tel: 0634 726185 evenings.

### WILTSHIRE GROUP NEWS

The remainder of the Inquiry that you visited at Devizes went off okay but took an extra day of everyones time, thanks to the longwindedness of Mr. Grant King, a well known (locally) archeologist. . .

We had a fair hearing and the landowner and tenant farmers were courteous and friendly even though they opposed us. I wish it was always this way!

This was our thirteenth Inquiry in 1981. We are now researching for the Inquiry at Winterslow near Salisbury on January 19th – Can anyone assist with use evidence, particularly the Roman Road, and contact myself on Bradford on Avon 3811 or Peter Cuerden at 52, Runnymede Court, West End, Southampton.  
Telephone: West End 7586..

Bill Riley, 141, Bath Road, Bradford on Avon, BA15 1SS.

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S NOTES

Belated seasons greetings to all. By now even the newest of riders should be conversant with techniques for riding under adverse conditions and I hope that experience is the only lasting reminder. Trail bikes must surely have had the edge over most other transports.

Although the introduction in 1981 or "The K.W. Computer" for Membership Records has eased both mine and John's work and eliminated the task of compiling, typing and duplicating 28 sheets of A4 lists, it has produced some teething problems. Keith Waddow and I are trying to find a method whereby some form of Receipt/Counterfoil provides John Higgin with some record of magazines addressed. At present changes of address seem mainly to suffer — some people will receive two bulletins — some none! Please bear with us and bring it to Keith's notice A.S.A.P.

My thanks to Keith for the help in '81 — I'm sure he's learnt a lot — in addition to not volunteering much needed services that is!

Time is running out for membership renewals for 1982, in fact this 'Bulletin' will be the last you receive unless '6 Greenbacks cross my hand 'Vitement'. To ease the workload and eliminate problems of the past, let me clarify some points, previously made at Executive Meetings and at the 1981 Members Conference.

- 1) All Renewals must be accompanied by cheque/P.O. to cover £6.00 min.
- 2) All cheques/P.O. to be made payable to T.R.F. **NOT ME.**
- 3) All lists of members by counties are available for group reps etc. from Keith Waddow upon request. (S.A.E. please). **NOT ME.**
- 4) Whilst I understand the frustration caused, queries regarding 'Bulletin' distribution (or lack of) should be directed to Keith Waddow or John Higgin our Editor. **NOT ME.**
- 5) Once again it would help tremendously, if group reps send one cheque to me, attached to a list of names and (current) addresses.

Of those renewing, new cards could then be returned to that scribe in time for his next meeting.

On a more personal note.

By the time you read this issue, I may well be working away from home, so please keep 'phone calls simple and brief in order that I can answer them over the following week. Whilst away from my H.Q.

If present trends continue I will be both unwilling and unable to stand once more as National Membership Sec. at re-election time — but that's old hat to these 67 members who bothered to attend the elections in 1981!

So look around — be warned.

Colin Patient, 14 Ryecroft Close, Woodley, Reading, Berks. RG5 3BP

## SHROPSHIRE GROUP NEWS

After a lull during summer holiday months our September and October meetings were quite well attended with some new faces, but, alas! some old one's missing! Myself and two other group members attended the National Members Conference — my personal thanks to them. We decided on the way back to offer Shropshire as host for next year's Conference. (We could discuss the "Portway" instead of the "Ridgeway") sorry . . . pardon . . . just an impression we got. [Portway — North to South road over Shropshire Long Mynd].

We have just, (end of October) had a successful group ride in S.W. Shropshire loosely following Offa's Dyke. It did, however, highlight a problem in rural districts of where to get petrol on Sundays. We are thinking of compiling a list (for I.T. owners) of garages open — only joking lads, we all use it! The only other trouble we had was a chained up gate between Five Turnings and Sliborry Green where the track crossed Offa's Dyke, but a little fence dismantling got us through. The merging of R.U.PPs with this long distance footpath has caused a certain amount of confusion for farmers and trail riders, but I think some research and consultation could be very rewarding as the area around Knighton has many old roads with fantastic views. Four counties are involved here, through Powts, Shropshire, and Hereford and Worcestershire, so some liaison with other groups is needed.

Anyway, we have more rides planned this winter, so don't forget to renew your membership Salop group! Yes, by the time you read this the new year will not be far off and the group will be a year old in January. Oh! and just for Phil Evans I think we have just found the longest ford in Britain — 550 yards on, or in, a county road at Worthen, unless somebody knows a longer one?

M. Dutton, Top Cottage, Eaton Mascott, Cross Houses, Shrewsbury.

## NORTH MIDLAND GROUP NEWS

There have been some changes in the committee for this group and it now is:— President, Tony Davenport, Secretary/Treasurer, Brian Smith, Group Rep, Don Smalley.

Rights of Way Officer, Mike Rowley  
Run Co-ordinator, Mary Oliver.

We now meet on the THIRD Tuesday of each month on either the Saturday or the Sunday following the group meeting. Details can be obtained from myself or Mary Oliver.

Don Smalley, 0782 620848, 33 Paris Avenue, Newcastle Under Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 2RQ

## CUMBRIA GROUP NEWS

At our recent A.G.M. we appointed the following Secretary/Treasurer, Norman Phoenix, The Vicarage, Warcop, Appleby, Cumbria. Tel: Brough 683  
Rugs Organiser, Pete Deeley, Pine Rigg, Loughrigg, Ambleside. Tel: Ambleside 3050  
Rights of Way Officer, David Howe, 3 Greenfoot, Mealsgate, Carlisle, CA5 1DF.

## HONDA XL 185

Firstly, a big thank you to all those readers who sent in a report on their bikes; it enables the writer to compile a more complete report, gives a more even, all round picture of the satisfaction, or otherwise, that you or any future buyer will get.

Now a very brief background to this bike. Honda, as few people need to be told, are the largest motorcycle producer in the world, accounting for almost 50% of bike sales in this country, yet trail bike sales are not one of their stronger sides. Their first offerings were the XL250, which was far quieter than anything else on the market, had a four valve four stroke engine, and must have had a power curve similar to a steamroller. Many members, especially fourstroke addicts (two stroke haters) bought the bike in the mid-seventies and found that its handling was not perfect, it was not very waterproof, and that all that silencing weighted so much that it rapidly tired its rider. Conversely, Honda's other offering, the SL125, was too light and underpowered for their requirements. Both machines were available in a variation of Henry Ford's colour scheme — any colour so long as its GREY. Not very bright. The ideal Honda, many riders thought, would be more powerful than the SL125 and a lot lighter than the XL250. At long last Honda obliged with the XL185.

Your opinions of this bike are very similar. No one had an outright hatred for his machine, but it is still not perfect. Part of the trouble is that it is impossible to please all the people all of the time and when you make a dual purpose bike you are torn two ways. As a road bike the XL185 is tractable, quiet, economical lightweight and generally civilised but not as fast as a true road bike. As a trail bike it is overgeared for hilly areas, has vulnerable lights and indicators, lacking in steering lock and some members claim that the brakes are not waterproof. Early models had a long rear numberplate that could ground in some circumstances, but this was changed on later models. The chain guide attached to the swinging arm is a point for criticism, being on the flimsy side it gets knocked out of place and guides the chain off the sprockets! Another comment is that it is rather high — for a shorty, but E. Wilkinson of Bradford 5 does not tell us his height, and he obviously hasn't tried an XR200 yet.

Some members reported a refusal to start when hot, which was cured by replacing all the electrics (under guarantee) and others — Reg Cox for one, report that the bike cuts out whilst riding through deep or prolonged water. The cause of this is not water in the electrics but the cooling of the barrel. Use of the choke brings the motor back to life.

The engine delights everyone with sufficient power in almost all conditions — “thinks its a 2-stroke”, “the engine characteristics are brilliant, Honda have definitely got it right” are some of the comments. One rider had an oil mist from the cylinder base but cured it by torquing down the head. Another rider reports that there is a lot of engine vibration AND a sort of death rattle knocking, but, he says, ignore it as it doesn't get worse. Hmm! I'm sure the instruction book says “see your dealer” as it may be chewing the cam chain for lunch or similar complaint.

The main point that riders like is the fuel economy. On the main road or Motorway owners are getting 85 — 100 miles per gallon and not a lot less on green lanes. Even Donald Denne at 6'1” and thirteen stones gets 70 m.p.g. on the Sussex 'whaleback' hills. Jonathon Huwitt (unreadable signature! and no address, but T.V. group member) says that the engine runs very hot and 'appears' to turn S.A.E. 10/40 to water after about 700 miles, and he must change the oil sometimes as he complains about the silly oil filter position.

No one even mentions the gearbox, except R.J.Hill of Malton who always finds neutral from second but he tells us that it can be cured by deepening the notch on the change barrel — fine for the confident mechanic but what about the unmechanical?

Handling is, sort of, glossed over in most of your reports. It must be adequate for most riders but on the other hand must be pretty good for no one to comment adversely. I suspect that with the sufficient power available but not to excess (pardon the pun) many riders do not know whether it is their own skills or the bike's that is the limiting factor.

The bike as a whole is very well liked — “Very good as first Trail bike” says Reg Cox, and Donald Denne says that he doesn't see himself parting with it for a long time to come, if ever! One of the main likes is the silencer — “admired by walkers, horse riders, policemen, farmers and ME” writes E. Wilkinson who, being a fourstroke lover also adds “it does not **stink**.” Everyone has to admit to a few faults though. “It eats chains”, “I have repositioned the in-line fuse from the battery box to under the seat” and almost everyone reported that they had replaced the tyres with knobblyies to obtain better grip in the mud and one or two had replaced even the silencer. Not to get a quieter bike of course, but the one thing that everyone complained about is the COST of Honda spares. Where spares must be purchased then do NOT pay Honda prices, is the message. “Chains and sprockets £4 cheaper at M.P.S.” — “I bought a pattern sprocket at one third the price of a genuine Honda item.” One member buys his new bearings from a local bearings specialist and not only saves money but a three to four weeks wait for his dealer to obtain them. Very sensible, on any make of bike.

This model “A” has been with us for two years and no one who wrote in reported an astronomical mileage, the highest being 20,000 with the majority in the 3000 to 5000 bracket. At these sort of mileages it should be surprising if any major parts were to wear out, even tyres and possibly chains should last this distance, so that I suspect that the biggest killer over the long term will not be rust or mechanical breakdown but that even older malady of obsolescence, a combination of new models and high priced, out of stock, spares. In the meantime, go out and enjoy this popular, easy to ride, cheap to buy, quiet, fourstroke, whilst ye may.

John R. Higgin,  
October 1981.

*Compiled from the reports sent in by you, riders and owners. The next report will be on that challenger for the XT500's crown, the SUZUKI DR400 and its predecessors and variants the SP370 etc. Please send your reports in NOW!*

First of all, I must thank you for your courtesy in allowing us to comment on your users' report. What a refreshing change!

In essence, I would not wish to disagree with any owner's opinion, and find from my experience that many of the points mentioned are quite valid. The main problem with most of our XL models is that they are designed to comply with all street regulations and then designed to go off road! XR models are designated “Enduro” — however, they are the true “Green Lane” machine.

To cover some of the points raised, gearing is usually okay for the road, but needs adjusting according to user and use. Chain wear is a major problem, but just look at the conditions it can have to exist in!

After passing through deep water, keep the engine revs high. Water vapour from the hot engine is induced, causing stalling. Many XL 185s can emit a knocking sound after considerable use, but it does not harm.

Oil — use only 10W-40. Our engines like watery oil.

Obsolescence — never! Not with so many keen trail riders at this office. The XL185 is in fact a favourite here with many of the staff.

Again, thank you for inviting our comments. It really is difficult to design this type of machine and please all possible users. We do, however, feel that some of our designers should try hauling certain of our XL models out of a typical bog, and then reconsider the weight factor.

By the way, I do trail ride, but am not a member of your organization. "What bike?", I hear you ask. The ultimate of course — Honda TL250.

BRIAN O'REILLY  
MANAGER  
Customer Service Department.

HONDA (UK) Limited,  
Power Road,  
Chiswick, London W4 5YT

### BACK TO SQUARE ONE!

After several years in the wilderness TRF members and friends in the Hertfordshire, Bucks, Beds and N. London area will be pleased to hear that the Valiant Trooper (birthplace of the TRF) has re-opened as a pub and that, starting in February, trail riders will be meeting on the first Wednesday of each month in the clubroom. For the benefit of new members the "Trooper" is in Aldbury just off the A41, south of Tring, it is now a "Free" house and boasts several real ales for the cognoscenti. Let's have a good turnout for our first return meeting.

Tony McCusker, Waetlings, High Street, Elstree, Herts. Tel: 01-953 5702

## RIGHTS OF WAY NEWS

### WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 — DELAYED START — CHANGES

In a letter to the writer the Minister, Neil Macfarlane has announced that the commencement date for the change over from the 1968 Countryside Act will be delayed until summer 1982. The Govt need more time to decide the transition arrangements. However Sections applying to ploughing, Byway signs, bulls, and wardens takes affect from the Royal Assent in November 1981.

The future of former Special Reviews of RUPPs is of great importance to motor cyclists. We have pressed the Govt to cancel the reviews of Somerset, Notts, Derbyshire and others where the authority have clearly abused the 1968 Act and as in the case of Somerset and Notts closed over 300 RUPPs or 95% of green lanes to motor cyclists. We have nearly 2000 objections outstanding, some 14 years old! The Govt is still undecided what to do about these. Meanwhile the biased and unfair 1968 Act procedures still apply and indeed Gwynedd County Council (Snowdonia National Park) have just announced a 1968 Act Special Review that downgrades 370 out of 420 RUPPs (object up to March 1982 to the Welsh Office in Cardiff. Send all enquiries and offers of help to me please). Public Inquiries into 1968 Act reviews will continue for some time.

However it is clear that reclassification of a RUPP as a bridleway or footpath does not extinguish vehicular rights providing vehicular rights exist, and there is nothing to prevent a second Byway claim under Section 53. Despite an assurance that the 1981 Act Section numbers would remain as the draft Bill most have been changed in the published Bill.

Sections 53 to 66 of Part Three concern us now. Section 53 for all footpath and bridleway upgrades to Byway. Section 54 reclassifies RUPPs although few counties have still to do this. The definition of Byways, RUPPs, Bridleways etc. is now Section 56. The duty to signpost Byways is now Section 65 (I don't know a single county that has erected Byway signs so do ask for them under this Section). Ploughing is now Section 61. Wardens is Section 62.

Claims for Byway should not be submitted before July 1982, and be prepared for a long wait. Have no doubts that this is a very good law for us and providing we have proper evidence there are no restrictions on 5000 miles of green lanes.

A copy of the entire Act can be obtained from HMSO, 49 High Holborn, London WC1 price £6.65. The writer can supply a photo copy of Part Three for £1. Parts 1 and 2 are concerned with flora and fauna.

### GWYNEDD COUNTY COUNCIL NORTH WALES

With Harry Ball and Mike Dutton of the TRF, I visited Carnaervon and met the County Council on 21st December. Despite 370 RUPPs downgraded some of the 66 Byways are good long ones over the mountains. However County say they will take a neutral attitude at Inquiries likely to be held within 12 months and will not defend Byway status.

I said they should defend their own decisions. They promised to let us attend all Byway Inquiries which will be contested by the NFU and RA as usual and it will be up to us to defend the status. Gwynedd said they don't want to upset anyone. Ahhh! We are co-operating with the British Horse Society and I met David Rendall, County Chairman in Llandudno.

The Byways and Bridleways Trust is also involved in this, hopefully the last of the 1968 Special Reviews.

### WILTSHIRE

The Sec. of State has just confirmed Inquiries into our 1979 Byway claims handled expertly as usual by Anne and Bill Riley.

A big set back was the Sec. of States ruling that four bridleways up grades were invalid because there is no power to upgrade in the 1968 Act. I replied saying therefore the Inquiry was a waste of time and money for all concerned because either the County Council or Dept. of Environment should have known this in 1973 and told someone. The D. of E. reply passes the buck to the County Council and I am awaiting their comments but someone has bungled and I mean to sort this out soon because we have many hundreds of similar upgrades lodged with the Govt. all apparently accepted and awaiting inquiries.

### WOMEN ON WHEELS

Plan to venture on to green lanes in Worcs and Hereford and ask me to appeal for other female riders to join them. Contact Miss Zoe Pitt, 1 Burnwood Drive, Wollaton, Nottingham. Miss Pitt is also a horse rider and asks trail bikers to avoid making sudden moves or noises that may frighten a horse.

Every year 3000 horse riders are involved in accidents with vehicles. They have no brakes, no steering and poor throttle control and it's a long way to fall!

## RIDGEWAY

The Countryside Commission is calling a meeting January 19th in London to try and get the ACU/BMF/TRF to agree to voluntary restraint use of the Ridgeway for May to October this year. This is a repeat of the 1980 scheme which met with limited response due to a total lack of publicity from the Commission. This time a lot of publicity is promised including, we hope, notices along the entire 42 miles. Unsightly perhaps, but this is the only way to reach the majority of casual riders who may offend the over sensitive ramblers.

Wardens from our ranks will also be required and providing we agree to continue the scheme, volunteers should offer their services to the new Ridgeway Officer Joe Burgon at County Hall, Oxford. Though Wiltshire County Council oppose the plans the entire Ridgeway in Wiltshire, Berkshire and Oxen will be included.

I shall recommend that we accept a further year but hope that after seven years of having the threat of a closure order hanging over us mainly to please the RA lobby, we can look forward in 1983 to a lifting of the threat.

## LAKE DISTRICT

The Secretary of State has now confirmed the Inspectors report of Inquiries into our Byway claims of Sept. 1980, the main track was the 5 mile Divock Moor/ Pooley Bridge upgrade from bridleway. The only motor cyclist who bothered to turn up to support the TRF Solicitor was BMF Vice Chairman, Geoff Wilson.

We failed to convince the Inspector to make this track Byway though vehicular rights were admitted and I have advised Geoff and the TRF Cumbria group that vehicular rights are not necessarily extinguished.

The main attacks on trail riding came from our good friends the RA and NFU and the victory is theirs this time.

This sort of result could not happen with the 1981 Act. The Solicitor cost the TRF £600.

## MID WALES

I plan to visit Llandrindod Wells May 8/10 and visit Powys County Council to try and salvage some of the few green lanes left after the defeat of the recent Special Review when certain mid Wales clubs did deals with the farmers and withdrew many Byway claims. The NFU issued a press release saying there is now only 3 Byways in the County and hail this a great triumph. The TRF West Midlands Group complains but I've told them as the TRF didn't put any claims in at all we should keep quiet.

I don't defend their actions but if clubs put claims in they are entitled in law to withdraw. Moral is don't leave it all to others.

I would be pleased to meet as many interested riders and clubs as possible May 8/10. At least the Welsh Trail Riders did their best but without use witnesses it was a hopeless struggle. The County Council tried to be fair but caved in under massive NFU pressure.

Brian G. Thompson, 39 Warren Road, Thorne, Doncaster, DN8 5PP. S. Yorks.  
Tel: Thorne (0405) 814388

## A RIGHTS OF WAY PROBLEM? TRY YOUR LOCAL OMBUDSMAN

The Ombudsman is independent, though public funded. They investigate complaints that an injustice has been caused by a fault in the way a local authority has either done or failed to do, something. These faults are called maladministration which can be regarded as malice, bias, neglect or delay, or even failure to inform people of their rights.

You must always give your council a chance to deal with your complaint and the Ombudsman is the last resort. The steps are thus . . .

1. Make a complaint to the Chief Executive of the Council, i.e. Rights of Way Dept. has failed to restore after ploughing of public right of way.
2. If you are not satisfied, ask a Councillor to help you.
3. If still no action, ask a Councillor to forward your complaint to the local Ombudsman by filling in the proper form.  
Note only a Councillor (a member of that Council) can forward your complaint. Direct approach is not allowed.

Forms of complaint are obtainable from your local Citizens Advice Bureau, local Council, or direct from the Commission's office at 21 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9BU, or 29 Castlegate, York, YO1 1RN, or in Wales - Court Road, Bridgend, Glam CF21 1BN.

The Ombudsman will, if he considers the complaint reasonable, usually ask you to attend the nearest office for interview. Travel expenses are paid. He will then hold an investigation and publish a report which goes to the Council concerned, the press and yourself. Usually the Council take action, but even so, they are not obliged to do so. There is sadly a lack of 'teeth' to their powers. He can also investigate Water Boards, National Parks etc.

The Ombudsman cannot investigate a) something that happened pre 1974, b) something more than 12 months before you told a Councillor about it, c) something which you can go to court with yourself (this covers most aspects of rights of way law apart from ploughing and offences that only Councils can prosecute), and d) complaints about court decisions etc. etc.

I have made two complaints to the York Ombudsman, Mr. Cook, so far :-

First on failure to apply Highways Act 1959 Section 33 to review Definitive Maps every five years, then, failure to remove an obstruction under Section 116. Complaint No. 1 was rejected because it took place pre 1974 and I have a recourse at law; and the second also because I can go to court. Both impossible because of the cost. Lots of sympathy of course, but no help. I hope you have better luck! There have been many successful appeals to the Ombudsman and it doesn't cost you a penny.

## IN PRAISE OF THE RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION AND COMMONS SOCIETY

The third Countryside Act is now with us, the third since 1945. Today we take the protection of Definitive Maps for granted. True they are rather inaccurate and out of date but they remain a tremendous achievement. The situation before the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, especially pre war, was that of constant battles between user and landowners.



The main lobby for change consisted of the (1865 founded) Commons and Open Spaces Preservation Society and the (1935 founded) Ramblers Association.

Their efforts eventually led to the 1939 Access to the Mountains Act, a gesture that died an early death but was a step in the right direction. John Dower's Govt. White Paper in 1945 set out the dream of access and registration of public rights and the 1945/48 Hobhouse Committee on which the RA and Commons Society were represented, gave birth to the great 1949 Act. The disappointing 1968 Act and now the latest 1981 Act, do little more than amend the radical 1949 Act.

We owe a great deal to those who struggled and lobbied for decades, though 1949 was not the end, and a big job was still to be done.

From 1949 to 1954 the RA undertook a massive survey of England and Wales of rights of way for the first draft Definitive Map. Parish Councils and others also helped but the RA contribution was without equal and form the basis of most Definitive Maps today. In the RA Tom Stephenson was the leading light. Labour MP Fred Marshall and Jim Middleton, Secretary of the Labour Party during the 1945 Labour Government, deserve special praise.

The Commons Society today is just as respected and admired for its 'give and take' policies as in Sir Lawrence Chubb's days, during the 30's and 40's. The BBT is now emerging as the unbiased tolerant body for non walkers, filling a much needed gap on the national scene. The RA have much to be proud of in their 45 years existence especially the 40's and 50's. It would be a shame for history to record that during the 1980's they became rather domatic, intolerant and selfish in their attitude to other users, especially the motor cyclists, who they want to ban outright. In this they are no better than the selfish landowners of pre-war who wanted exclusive use of the countryside. History I predict will judge them accordingly unless a more realistic 'give and take' policy is adopted soon.

Brian G. Thompson, 39 Warren Road, Thorne, Doncaster, DN8 5PP, S. Yorks.  
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## SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS

While in Britain we have problems in protecting rights of way in our overcrowded land we would think that in the USA which has an overall lower density of population, the problems of access to the countryside would be less, but this is not the case. During three visits to the USA totalling eighteen weeks, much time was spent up-country and their problems seem just as bad, if not worse, than ours.

For a start, American cities are larger than the average British city e.g. New York 10 million, Boston 3 million, L.A. 10 million, Phoenix 1 million (and there are many more multi-million cities). So, the immediate countryside around these cities takes a hammering from the population looking for recreation within an hour or two drive. Popular areas like the San Jacinto Wilderness in California and the Great Gulf in the White Mountains of New Hampshire are being 'saved' by a permit system allowing only, say, 20 hikers per day into the area. Very popular sights like the Grand Canyon are booked-up nine months in advance for the hiker and camper below the Rim.

Because of the nature of the terrain, most hiking in the USA is done on maintained trails. It is just impossible or too difficult to "bushwhack" across country as may be done in our Lake District or Pennines. Ground cover in the High Sierras or Blue Ridge is thick forest; in the Gd. Canyon, cliffs and desert country. Trails come usually under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service or Forest Service and some are closed at times of high fire risk (rarely encountered in G.B.) or when repairs are taking place (something the British countryside agencies are just embarking upon). Specific areas are set aside for different pursuits. What is a hiking trail in summer may be used by skiers or snowmobiles in winter. Of the eighteen National Forests in California, twelve have trails for ORRV's (off road recreation vehicles), fifteen have Wilderness Areas and seven cater for White-water Rafting, all offer Hiking Trails. ORRV use is also catered for in so-called National Parks like Saddleback or Racing World in California. These are not National Parks as we know them by any stretch of the imagination, but pay-gate areas set aside for commercial use. From the publicity given to Saddleback in G.B. I was disappointed when I saw the "Park". I had expected a huge desert area set aside for bikes but on passing the park and then viewing it from afar it seemed to be no more than a regular scrambles track and was certainly a blot on the landscape when looked at from the nearest habitation about five miles away. This is because the re-vegetation time is long in hot dry climates and with constant bike use Saddleback was just a mass of brown scars on a hillside. Problems occur in the great outdoors with vehicles. I quote from the guidebook to hiking in the Santa Ana Mountains near L.A. "Truck trails are excellent routes for motorcycles and 4WD vehicles as well as for hikers. They (the vehicles) have as much right to use them as you do (I wish the RA etc., would take the same view about RUPPs and OCRs). The motorcyclists do not belong to the hiking trails." The guide goes on . . . "illegally muffled (silenced) and two-cycle bikes are the main culprits" and also "The Forest Service has inadequate control over m/c in the lower parts of Trabuco Canyon which has hippies, m/c gangs etc." Finally, "The Morgan Trail is a favourite for illegal m/c use. The cycles have used every track and it is difficult to find the proper trail. Most cyclists stick to roads but some go wherever their bikes will take them leaving washed-out ruts as they go". Perhaps the most poignant remarks come in the final chapter of a book called "Desert Survival" from which I quote at length. "Our beautiful, wild deserts are taking a beating from which they may never recover . . . The most needless destruction is being done by off-road vehicles in the name of recreation. Big business is making millions of Dollars off motorcycles, so-called trail bikes, and 4WD vehicles. It has no interest in the desert except as a giant playground from which it derives money. The grinding and whining of these machines as they probe the canyons and barrel across the flats is sickening to anyone who has an interest in the desert in its natural state. Motorbikes have not been called 'Hirohito's Revenge' for nothing. Delicate vegetation is crushed, animals are sent diving for cover and erosion sets into the tracks to create gouges in the landscape that will be an eyesore for future generations. We have a 4WD vehicle and stay on the road at all times. All motorized vehicles must be strictly prohibited from leaving established roadways (of which there are plenty). Any areas set aside for off-road vehicles must be considered an ecological disaster and biologically dead."

I now wonder after exploring the desert areas of California, Arizona and Israel if there is indeed a place for the motorcycle in the "Wild and lonely places". Perhaps we should think more than twice about the odd (illegal) excursion over the mountain tops or the necessary research into "new" trails to take riders into the wilderness. Should our wild areas be subject to controls like in the USA? Should Rangers be given more power to fine violators on-the-spot, like the \$ 100 fine imposed on a lady hiking a dog down the Gd. Canyon? What do other readers think from their experience? I close with a quote from a US Forest Service leaflet. "Enjoy your visit and protect your National Forest for future Generations."

David W. Howe.

## SOMERSET TRYOUT, SEPTEMBER 12 – 13

Timed especially to coincide with the maximum traffic flow on the M4, Colin Fern and Nick Walker arrived to load up onto the trailer which it was my turn to tow, this time to Somerset, to pre-run and check our routes for a group run later in the year.

The route layout had been kindly provided by Ian Thompson, who had also suggested that he accompany us on the Saturday, not to lead, but to clarify any problems we had.

We duly arrived at the centre of Williton at the appointed time and found Ian waiting for us.

After the introductions, necessary as I had never met him, only been the recipient of his willing aid and considerable local knowledge during correspondence.

We set off, taking it in turns to lead while Ian took up the rear, confirming or otherwise our route/ground interpretations, grinning widely as we pointed to what appeared an impenetrable mass of stinging nettles and brambles as he nodded confirmation. I began to wish Colin rode something noisier than his XR200 as his screams and yells came from the lane, pausing for a short time while he wound his scarf around his head like some woolly Ned Kelly. I spent as long as possible discussing the fertility of the Somerset hedgerows with Ian, (they were at maximum summer growth) and then plunged into the tangled mass which seemed to have very nearly fully recovered from Colin and Nicks attack. At this point I should mention that I was wearing a new Belstaff nylon suit, bought for anticipated poor weather in Scotland but in the event only soaked from the inside. By the time the weekend was over, it resembled one of Tetley's famous tea bags!

Not all of the lanes were like that and we enjoyed a variety of going, from rocky stepped climbs to hub deep mud and muck.

We were due to meet Ian with a group he was leading around on the Sunday at the lunch stop, but over ambition on our part for our morning run, coupled with vegetation, dung-heaps, and wire strands, meant that by the time we arrived, the Landlord must have been considering opening for the evening trade. However, we completed all the route we intended and only regretted that we had not once more had the opportunity to meet Ian, again to voice our appreciation of his considerable efforts for our group.

Brian Crook, Knightsbridge Crescent, Staines.

## RESULTS OF PUBLIC ENQUIRIES.

ORTON – Won:– Breast High, Lost:– Borrowdale, Oddendale Fell.

PENRITH – Won:– ZERO, Lost:– Askham Fell (Moor Divock), Old Shap Coach Road, O.S.C.R. (by Jungle Cafe and southwards), Sleagill.

COCKERMOUTH – Buckholm Lane – decision awaited.

Please do not use the "Lost" lanes as they will be "illegal" when the final Review Map is published. Prosecutions could take place for riding on a Bridleway.

We will have to wait and see if the Review is to be scapped and continued under the new Act, or continued under the old Act. If the former we can re-claim all the "Lost" lanes, if Highway rights of way can be proved.

## DERBYSHIRE WEEKEND – THAMES VALLEY GROUP

September 25th – We were wending our way along the M1, (wending in and out of the road works) accompanied by sunshine (not much) and showers (plenty), en-route to the Hollowford Centre at Castleton in Derbyshire which was to be 'home' for a two day run organized for us by Ian Dunsire of the South Yorks Group.

Apart from a 'find the spark' exercise which followed a tyre changing exhibition (Triumph), all was ready for the Saturday morning.

Arriving well before the appointed time of 9.30, Derek Allen and John Bennett of the S. Yorks Group chatted to T.V. members while I rounded up their parties; these were all ready for the 'off' apart from a gearbox strip demonstration (Triumph) which did not attract the same interest despite the pouring rain. With those two parties under way, we chatted to Ian Bradbury who had only joined the T.R.F. and the S.Y. Group in January and was coming along for the experience, while we waited for our other leader. 10.00 came and went, so as I tried to brush away the cobwebs of what must be six years since I had ridden in this area to couple with Nick Walker's similar knowledge and Colin Fern's far greater knowledge which despite his denials seems to come from somewhere inside his creash-helmet whenever we get stuck. Then Ian sportingly suggested that he could lead over the tracks that he knew and we could play it by ear from then on.

In the event he was being very modest, and took us for a great day's riding, in conditions which I could never have blamed any of the leaders for not turning up. It poured down all day and many of the hill tracks were two to three inches deep rivers. He led us to an excellent lunch stop at the Angler's Rest at Bamford and finally back to Castleton. Thank you, Ian, for a run well led and all the more creditable for having had no opportunity for preparation.

Sunday morning and being the kind of Youth Hostel establishment that it is, it was our turn to clear away, wash up, and layout. Which was attacked with a determination by all the T.V. Group that I hope doesn't get known to too many wives!

Derek Allen had volunteered to take his party for the Sunday as well, whilst Ian Dunsire was to lead the second party which left Peter Walster to take the party which I was in.

Ian had really taken his end of the organization to heart, carefully arranging to arrive with a flat rear tyre so as to give a 'bladder flapping' demonstration to an appreciative audience.

After introducing the riding group to Peter, who looked every inch a seasoned greenlaner, he led off on his Bultaco Matador to start the run over some of the lanes we had finished the Saturday route on, now looking if anything even more exciting now the water covering had drained away.

We adopted a gate procedure which had won unanimous support at the previous T.V. Group meeting, which meant that normally the leader and backmarker don't open or shut gates as is usual – the system is that the leader stops by the gate and the second man opens it and remains by it until the backmarker is through, then closes it. The leader meanwhile checking his route if necessary, then moving off with the rest of the group. The theory is that the leader has enough to do, whilst the 'second person' should always be different, and having opened it knows the peculiarities of the closing method, (rope-wire-catch-stone-dead sheep, etc.) The backmarker of course always has the last attempt at any hazard with the added delights of stop – start tests when helping anyone who gets stuck or breaks-down.

We were superbly led, taking in such old roads as Churchgate, Hollinsclough, Excelsior etc., with a pause at the Three Shires Bridge where Jerry Jones and I took some photographs. Lunch was at the Travellers Rest at Flash. This establishment was commended to us by Peter for the 80 odd optics and pumps, and certainly they met all our requirements, all served by a delightful young lady whose appearance contributed not a little to the temperature inside.

Eventually like all great trail rides it was time to head for base. When we arrived, all of the others were packing their bags, and I hoped that someone had arranged for a cuppa so at least we could send Peter off home a little warmer inside, but regretably the kitchens were locked — sorry Peter.

We all said our goodbyes and hoped we had conveyed sufficiently not only our appreciation for what had been done but also for the way in which it was done.

I had always reckoned that the true dyed-in-the wool motorcyclist was the tops and my every contact with T.R.F. members confirms it.

Brian Crook, Thames Valley Group Representative.

### For those of you who missed Bulletin No. 12 . . .

#### A TRAIL RIDER'S PARADISE?

Trail riding in Australia (where I spent the last 2½ years) is more of a sport and less of a social pastime than in England. There are many more riders who, typically, go faster, on more suitable machinery, over more challenging terrain than here. But the Australian Motorcycle Trail Riders' Association is, surprisingly, smaller, and also less well organised and less in control of riders' behaviour than our Trail Riders Fellowship. The large number of Aussie trail riders and their lack of discipline and consideration in some cases are beginning to cause strained relations with forestry officials, and even the closing of some tracks.

Why are there so many more trail riders in Australia than over here? Though many more suitable bikes are available there, I think this is the effect rather than the cause. And contrary to what many people think, the climate isn't very different: London, Melbourne and Sydney all have the same amount of rain each year, and we sometimes used to meet snow in the mountains in winter. No, it's more ready cash for young people, and more unrestricted open country and forests that encourage this expression of the hankering for outdoor adventure.

Most popular trail riding terrain in Australia is the parts of the Great Dividing Range within easy reach of the two main centres, Sydney and Melbourne. Here are hundreds of miles of usually deserted forest track through beautiful bushland and the blue foliage and sweet smell of the gum (eucalyptus) trees. Some of the tracks include long steep hills that can only be conquered in ideal conditions, when the surface is neither too muddy nor too loose for knobbly tyres to grip. One of the hazards found on few English trails is the risk of a backwards somersault when climbing such hills.

Many of the riders are also competitors in scrambles, and some show no less skill and daring on the trail than they do in a race. Speeds of 70 mph and more have been known, and some of the riders who buy a new bike every few months do so because the last one is wrecked. Rough, tough Aussies who achieve some notoriety among other trail riders include characters like 'Canary', who delights in

passing lesser mortals on the outside of mountain bends (I'll nudge him over the edge one day! said a disgruntled rival) or monowheeling up long hills; Herman, who wiped-out a week-old DT1 Yamaha 250 single after careering brakeless down a long slope at 70 mph; and ex-Australian scrambles champion 'JB', who once took 20 minutes to catch up a team of novices who had left 3 hours before him. However, these fellows cause less offence than the novices who mess up the verges at suburban drive-in cinemas.

But there are also many more sedate riders who would not disgrace a Brian Thompson run through the suburbs of Sheffield; people like 40-year-old builder Ron Clark and his 11-year-old son Marcus. Ron rides a Bultaco Matador, Marcus a 100 cc Japanese Hodaka. Quite a few of these father and son riding combinations help to foster a responsible spirit of trail riding and also to bridge the generation gap — though of course they're restricted to riding off public roads until the sons are old enough. Others use trail bikes as a means of getting to remote fishing locations, of visiting disused mines, or simply of rounding up sheep and checking fences on the huge farm properties.

In one respect we in England are not so hard done by; the Spanish trail bikes that are (more or less) available here are generally considered by expert Aussies to be among the best for off-road handling. The larger Japanese trail bikes handle best when ridden fast over sandy terrain, which is not likely to be appreciated on English green roads. However, for the average road and trail rider, the greater sophistication and reputation for reliability of Jap. bikes makes them more popular than the specialized continentals. Writing for a Sydney bike magazine, I tested many trail machines and am sorry such examples as the Suzuki TS 185 and the Yamaha RT2 360 are not readily available over here. Standard Kawasaki and Yamaha 175's have shown their versatility with high placings in observed trails, so it's a pity the proposed import of the CT2 Yams has been cancelled — supposedly because they are one decibel over the present UK noise limit.

Still, there's one advantage in our small numbers; while English trail riders remain few and considerate of other users of the countryside, we should be able to avoid stirring up the sort of trouble now experienced by the exuberant Aussies. But I confess I sometimes miss those blasts through the bush on a bike with 30 usable horsepower and only 260 pounds weight.

Peter Chambers — May/June 1972

#### SMALL ADS FOR SALE

(£1 per advertisement — maximum 4 lines and address)

#### HONDA XL250

Usual sensible modifications to suit green laning really well. Full years MOT. New piston rings, brakes, wheel bearings, chain etc. Loads of spares and manual.

£275 o.n.o. Slough (0753) 20903 anytime.

Jeremy Nicholls, 12 Granville Ave., Manor Park, Slough.

**Across**

1. Rail amidst mid stern used to get to the run? (7)
5. Opt around for smoke (3)
6. Bad backward one (3)
7. Dance on one leg (3)
9. Hear beheaded to hear (3)
10. Rambler's crisps. (7)

1		2		3		4
	█		█		█	
5				6		
	█	█	█	█	█	
7		8		9		
	█				█	
10						

**Down**

1. High act confuses host POW (3,4)
2. Painting in the middle of the party (3)
3. Young boy (3)
4. Secretary Kenny (7)
8. Dog food, chum? (3)
9. Adams friend held in Steve's grip (3)

**STICKERS**

1. T.R.F. Saving Green Lanes @ 35p each.
2. T.R.F. Car sticker also at 35p each.

Send stamped addressed envelope to Dr. Keith Waddon, Harby Lane, Strathern, Melton Mowbray, Leics.  
 Save postage costs, get your group secretary to buy in bulk at the quarterly Executive meeting.

I wish to renew my membership of the TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP for 1982.

SURNAME ..... First Name .....

ADDRESS .....

POSTCODE ..... COUNTY.....

TELEPHONE No. .... S.T.D. CODE .....

MEMBERSHIP No. ....

I enclose £6 annual subscription and ..... donation to the Fighting Fund  
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Send form and fee to:  
 Colin Patient, 14 Ryecroft Close, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire RG5 3BP.  
 Any problems, ring Colin on Reading (0734) 696783.

**PUBLIC ENQUIRY UPHOLDS VEHICULAR RIGHTS OF WAY OVER ANCIENT ROAD**

The TRF have 'won' a case held at Orton last September over a road shown on the new Cumbria County Council map of Public Rights of Way as a Byway. Objectors from the Ramblers Association and the National Farmers Union contested that the road was only fit for horse and foot traffic. Mr. Reese the Inspector from the Dept. of the Environment, after taking into account evidence from the motorcyclists, ramblers and farmers, decided that the road should remain a Byway and vehicular rights be not extinguished.

The road, called Breast High Pass, runs from Hucks Bridge on the A6 to Bretherdale near Tebay, a distance of two miles and is well marked on ancient maps of 1770, 1823 and 1829. Several local motorcyclists said at the Public Enquiry that they had used Breast High for many years without being challenged.

This enquiry shows the value of proper research into highway rights and also the importance of local people to come forward to state that they use rights of way.

On the other hand three roads were lost at the Enquiry and therefore should be avoided as use is now illegal and a costly fine will result. They are – The Borrowdale track from Hucks Bridge on A6 (same start as Breast High) down Borrowdale to south of Tebay; Gt. Asby Scar road from Orton north east over the Scar (impassable due to walls and stiles) and Crosby Ravensworth Fell track east of Shap village from Oddendale south over Castlehowe Scar to near Orton. All three are now Bridleways.

David Howe, local secretary. Tel: Carlisle 20155 10.30–10.50  
 2.35–2.50 only.

**BIKERS ON CHEVIOT**

"The Guardian" has highlighted a serious problem concerning riders using The Cheviot (the 2676' high hill in Northumberland) for rough riding. On more than one occasion riders have been seen off public roads. Two occasions were mentioned:- during the Chevy Chase Fell Race a dozen riders climbed Cheviot from the Harthope Valley, practised trialling on the peat hags and then chased groups of sheep across the fell land. The second time three riders rode the Penne Way from the Scottish side of the Border and narrowly missed a Park Ranger hidden in a peat grough during a mountain rescue exercise. Of course, none of the bikes carried registration plates so identification was impossible.

Action of the above kind is indefensible and Margery Price and I are trying to smooth things over with the Northumberland National Park Authority.

If any riders reading this are involved please think twice about where you ride. No wonder bikers get a bad image when the sport is only given a bad name by the thoughtless few.

David Howe.