

GROUPS

BRISTOL

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

CAMBRIDGE

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

CHESHIRE

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

CORNWALL

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

CUMBRIA

Roger Harris, Tel: 0539 725198
2nd Wednesday, Albert Hotel, Bowness on Windermere

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

David Bonsall, Tel: 0742 748688
2 & 4 Tuesday, The Old Crown Inn, Handsworth Road, Sheffield

DEVON

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

DORSET

Pete Boyce, Tel: 0305 783210
1st Tuesday, The Royal Oak, Bere Regis

EAST MIDLANDS

Graham Chinnery, Tel: 0332 863433
2nd Wednesday, Three Horseshoes, Hemmington, Nr. M1 Junct. 24

EAST SCOTLAND

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

ESSEX

Neil Gamble, Tel: 0245 461643
4th Tuesday, The White Horse, Old London Road, Widford, Chelmsford

GLOUCESTER

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

HERTFORDSHIRE

Alan Vincent, Tel: 0923 775263
1st Wednesday, The Coach & Horses, Newgate Street, Near Cuffly

ISLE OF WIGHT

Mick Holbrook, Tel: 0983 866361
Last Thursday, Liberal Club, Longford Rd, Shanklin, I.O.W

KENT

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

LANCASHIRE

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

LINCOLNSHIRE

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

LODDON VALE

Don Lewis, Tel: 0252 616359
2nd Thursday, The Lamb, Theale, Berkshire
NORFOLK & SUFFOLK - To be Advised
NORTH MIDLANDS
Ray Morse, Tel: 0785 661543
1st Tuesday, Leek Area - Contact group rep (above)

NORTHUMBRLAND

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

NORTH WALES

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

SHROPSHIRE

Steve Rodenhurst, Tel: 0952 244161
2nd & last Wednesday, The Bell, Crosshouses, Shrewsbury

SOMERSET

Nick Crocker, Tel: 093589 261
Last Thursday, The Globe Inn, Somerton

SOUTHERN

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

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY

Brian Wright, Tel: 081 669 4214
9pm Every Wednesday, Epsom & Ewell F.C., West St, Ewell

SUSSEX

Bevis Billingham, Tel: 0243 585128
Last Thursday, Selsey Arms, Coolham, Junct. A272, B2193

TEESIDE & NORTH YORKS

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

THAMES VALLEY

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

WEST ANGLIA

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

WEST MIDLANDS

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

WEST WALES

G. Jones, Tel: 0239 810255 - Meets to be arranged
WEST WALES (WTRA), Bill Kershaw, Tel: 0633 895241

WEST YORKSHIRE

Gary Watson, Tel: 0836 696686 (Mobile)
1 & 3 Thursday, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd.), Odsal, Bradford

WILTSHIRE

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

WYVERN

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



TRAIL

MAY 1991

No. 154

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



Editor	3	RoW	10
Letters	4	Mid Wales Run	12
Group News	6	Book Review	13
Good Pub Guide	7	IoM	16
Wheel Problem	8	BBT in the 90's	17

Try to make it interesting!

All contributions to the Editor

T.R.F.
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KARCHER

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EDITOR

Enclosure - Enclosing of common land to make it private property'

That is how the Concise Oxford Dictionary defines it - adequate for everyone except perhaps a trail rider to whom the 18th Century Enclosure Act has a much greater significance. Not so much the actual enclosures but rather the bits in between. Finding and examining these Enclosure Awards frequently buried deep in the Nations record' offices can be a time consuming and often frustrating exercise as I am sure many of you can testify.

There is, however, light at the end of the tunnel - how so? Well these legally binding Acts generally require the landowner to maintain a boundary wall or hedge 'forever' around his land. This requirement has recently been 'rediscovered' by Leeds City Council in their fight to prevent farmers and landowners destroying the hedgerows - so important in offering a habitat to our wild life

The Independent (Saturday, 6th April) reports that none other than the Earl of Mexborough (who?) has been forced to replace a hedge he removed and at least two other cases have been similarly settled out of Court! Conservation Groups, including the RSPB, are reported to be 'excited'. Hopefully, these archived documents will now begin to 'surface' in Council's all over the country as Conservation Groups demand to examine them, making our research a little easier - but what a pity we didn't think of it!

The users of 'our' roads are few - 4WD's, ramblers, horseriders and of course the mountain bikers. We have agreed to 'distance' ourselves from the 4WD's. The ramblers have long since 'distanced' themselves from us, so what of the horses and mountain bikes? Although we are miniscule in membership terms compared to both these groups we are undoubtedly the 'market leaders' when it comes to rights-of-way work. They can offer us an acceptable image and weight of numbers. We can offer them information and expertise.

Many TRF groups already 'associate' with the horseriders and many TRF members also ride mountain bikes but should we seek to forge these links? If so, how and when do we start? If we hesitate we may miss the boat but then again perhaps we can continue to survive alone.

Lets have your views. Canvass your group and telephone or write to me, I'll publish the results and we can at least give our Executive Committee a mandate to act on.

Nettlebed

P.S - A group of us will again be visiting the Isle of Man TT in June. If you fancy saying 'Hello' to the Editor and some of his motley crew, we'll all be at Niarbyl Bay around noon on Sunday 2nd June

NOTICE

Please Keep off Grouse Moors from May to Mid June!

LETTERS

Alive and Well

Here I am alive and well and living in Newcastle on Tyne. Thanks for the mention in No 153. Still working as Assistant Rights of Way Officer for Northumberland County Council responsible for 1500 miles of Rights of Way or half the county.

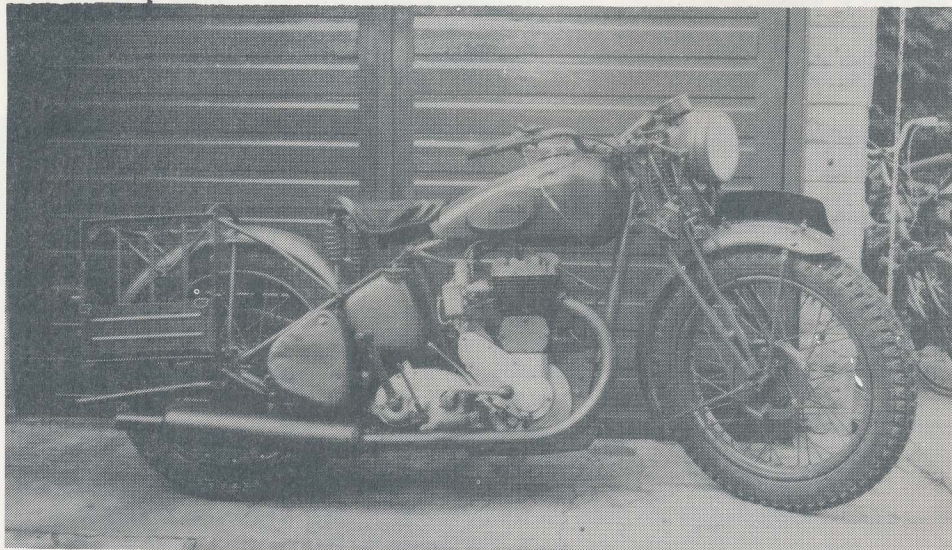
I am too old at 53 for active TRF trail Riding and am now in the vintage club Northumbrian Section which meets weekly. I like it, really nice people. I am green lane officer and put runs on for the club. I ride a 1960 BMW 250 R26 (below) and a trail converted 400 Hondomatic of 1980 vintage, not really VMCC approved! Or TRF for that matter! If the TRF ever want a speaker at their seminars do bear me in mind! No one has asked me in 2 years. Ahhh!

Vintage trail riding is just as much fun at 20 mph or less as some of those TRF members who like to travel at speed on green lane ignoring the code of conduct. Somehow public opinion is sympathetic to old motorcycles on green lanes and we always create lots of interest. "What's that bike then?" "Got a cylinder missing?" "Like a Vincent Comet" I reply.

The VMCC is a rich source of 20 years green lane users. Please note all you TRF Rights of Way Officers.

Brian Thompson

P.S. Has anyone an AE80 or DT 80 to sell me?



BSA M20

I was intrigued by the cover photograph on the front cover of TRAIL 151 showing two gentlemen obviously discussing the pedigree of the motorcycle on the left of the picture, this would be a BSA M20 500cc SIDE VALVED EX MILITARY DESPATCH RIDER motorcycle. Manufactured sometime between 1938 and 1945 BSA supplied some 126,334 machines to the War Office and over a million to allied forces. The events which lead up to BSA securing such an order from the Ministry might make interesting reading.

And so it came to pass that in 1936/38 BSA's board of directors read the political situation and started to "retool and equip their Small Heath factories for mass production of Munitions and Motorcycles". It was decided in the face of strong opposition from Norton and Triumph and Matchless to submit just two Motorcycles, from a list of over 1000 Dealerships BSA asked the A.C.U. to choose just two. These were "Sandhams" of Tottenham and "Godfry's" of Great Portland Street. They selected a M20 and a M23 Empire Star respectively. Under intense ACU supervision the side valver was returned to Small Heath for the fitting of Mod No 38 sidecar. The sequence of events which followed included; 20 ascents and descents of the dreaded Bwylch-y-Groes Pass in North Wales. One hundred laps of Brookland Motor Racing circuit. Having its gearbox locked in top gear while criss-crossing London's rush hour traffic. The sequence of tests were horrifying from a mechanical point of view. After 1,450 miles the ACU were given both machines to strip down and examine. Their verdict was that "There were no appreciable signs of wear of any component" and B.S.A were awarded the prestigious and much coveted "MAUDS TROPHY" outright. Orders came from the Automobile Association who required an outfit for their new Road Service Assistance. I can still remember the sullen faced AA patrolman sitting on his Outfit painted bright yellow on the forecourt of the local AA "Approved" garage. This association lasted until the M20 was quietly "withdrawn from service" by B.S.A. in 1966. Orders from the War Office resulted in millions of M20 being made for Home forces and Allies. In the years that followed many were unceremoniously dumped in "Tactical withdrawals". Some of these were exhumed and form the basis of Transport and Taxi service from Tripoli and as far afield as Ragoon. Its a machine that won't rest peacefully. Recently an EXWD M20 Outfit successfully completed the Beijing Motor Challenge, from London to Peking some 9,750 miles through Central Asia and the Gobi Desert.

It just goes to show that you can't keep a 'good un' down, although rather limited in ground clearance a good spread of power makes the M20 very nice to ride on moderate Green lanes and provides an interesting talking point at that ever popular lunch time halt.

Have any other TRF members interesting girder forked trail bikes they use regularly? I'd love to read about them in our bulletin.

David "Cog" Lowe. LANCS



GROUP NEWS

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND

I am investigating the interest in forming a South East Region. I have made contact with the Sports Council with a view to co-operation and to discuss possible mutual benefits. I have in mind, also, to produce an occasional newsletter. The frequency of this would depend on funds. Would Groups in this area like to let me know if their membership are willing to refund the expenses?

I would guess that each of the main groups would have at least 30 members. This would equate to about £10 per group. I would like to ensure that any newsletter goes to those members who do not attend group meetings. In this way we remain in contact with these people. We can also invite them to contribute to the various activities of the group.

I believe that a local newsletter might receive better support in terms of letters and articles than the National Bulletin. Obviously lane information would also be of special interest. I should point out that I am not looking for another editor's job so the newsletter will only appear if and when there are enough contributions.

The Groups in the area concerned are: South London & Surrey
Kent
Sussex
Thames Valley
Southern

However, I would not like to deliberately exclude any other group, so if Loddon Vale, Essex, North London Etc, wish to participate please let me know.

Brian Wright. South London & Surrey Group

WEST YORKSHIRE GROUP RUNS FOR 1991

All runs start at 09.30 prompt

Please advise run leader in good time of your intention to join a run.

Please pay a run fee of £1.00 to leader before each run starts.

DATE	MEETING POINT	LEADER	TELEPHONE
June ??	Chirk	Bob McConell	0532 843543
July 7th	Ribblehead	Peter Dyson	0274 307502
August 4th	North York Moors	Jim Souter	0274 Home 611789 Work 542361
September 7th - 8th	Rhayader Mid Wales (West Yorks members only)	Charles King	0484 686383
September 22nd	Lakes	Jim Souter	0274 Home 611789 Work 542361
October 6th	Pateley Bridge car park	Steve Thoma	0274 606810
October 20th	Peak District	Derek Walshaw	0226 295309
November 24th	Denby Dale Pie Hall	John Netherwood	0484 685492
December 8th	Bingley car park	Charles King	0484 686383

KINDLY NOTE ALL MACHINES MUST BE LEGAL, PROPERLY SILENCED AND WELL PREPARED

NOTICE

FORTHCOMING EVENT / SUBJECT TO RESPONSE

It's proposed to hold an event at Westfield farm Haworth, West Yorks one Sunday this summer to raise a few bob for the fighting fund.

It'll be an easy trial set out by the new Chairman Gordon Carr to be ridden on trail bikes, to give practice on a variety of terrain that we may have trouble with on our days out!

Not to be terribly serious, come and have a smile. Date and details next month.

Contact Gordon Carr 0535 644568

TRF

Good Pub Guide

Usually the first question a run leader encounters is "Where's lunch"? Woe betide the run leader who leaves the answer to this question to chance.

We all have our favourite watering holes which combine a cheerful welcome with good ale and large amounts of good food. finding such places can often take years of devoted application.

What is needed is a TRF good pub guide along the lines of Egon Ronay.

This is where you come in! If you write to me with the names of your favourite pubs and cafes along with the map references and why you think they are special. I will collate the information and have a booklet printed for distribution to TRF members.

Just to wet your appetite here's a few to start you off:

The Shepherd's Inn, Melmerby, near Penrith. 91 616374. Marston's Owd Rodger and superb food.

The Feversham Arms, Farndale, N. Yorks Moors. 100 670975. Good excellent value food. The 'best' hot chocolate fudge cake.

The Sun Inn, Dent, Yorkshire Dales. 98 713870. Theakston's ale and arguably the longest Cumberland sausage!

The Newfield Inn, Seathwaite, Cumbria. 96 227960. Any pub would be good after Walna Scar! Super food and ale.

Don't remember the name but it's in Ffair Rhos at the Strata Florida end of the Monks Trod, Mid Wales. 147 739680. Marston's Pedigree out of the barrel and excellent food.

Now it's up to you to send in information about other areas. At least the research should be fun! Does anyone know of any good pubs in Derbyshire? Don't forget to write to:-

Rodger Davies, 9 Woodford Copse, Chorley, Lancs. PR7 2ER.

Telephone: 0257 241289.

It's a wheel problem . . .

Ever heard of CRRAG? (No, it's not a rock climbing club!) It stands for Countryside Recreation Research Advisory Group. Located in Bristol at the School of Advanced Urban (sic) Studies, it's remit is "...to develop effective countryside policy through the exchange and dissemination of information on countryside recreation research".

I attended their recent conference in London on behalf of the TRF. The theme was "Cycling in the Countryside". Well, 30% of the TRF claim to ride mountain bikes, don't they?

After only a few minutes I had a distinct feeling of 'deja vu'. Words like, "problems", "conflict", "management", "facilities" etc, quickly emerged.

Could this really be about that greenest of all wheeled vehicles, the humble bicycle, I thought?

Appearing 'for the defence' were the BMBF (British Mountain Bikers Federation), trying hard to present their sport in the best possible light. I felt an immediate kinship...

They showed a film of the 'Repack' downhill race for clunker bikes in the States, so-named because they went so fast that their wheel bearing over-heated and they had to be repacked with grease after every event! Or so they said! Not the best way to influence the 'greens'. My impressions then, of this 'workshop'.

My first was how very reluctant were the large landowners like the National Trust and the Forestry Commission to offer dedicated cycle paths over their land. I never once heard the word dedicational. Plenty of talk about permits, licenses and income but ne'er an offer of dedicating a few routes for the good old Definitive Map!

"Massive growth curves" thundered the National Trust. Visions of Madonna and Dolly Parton appeared before me! Definitely anti. A slide showed two mountain bikers riding over green turf somewhere in the Peak District. A sylvan scene - man, bicycle and environment in perfect symbiosis. Were they on Definitive Bridleway or RUPP etc. I enquired of the presenter? "NO, they were definitely not", came the reply. I quickly and reverently sat down.

The unblinking eye of the camera had captured the culprits red-handed, You can't go far without being spotted by a Parks or AONB Ranger these days, my fellow friends. Now I am not defending cyclists riding everywhere and anywhere they want. We all know that their rights (that word again) extend only to bridleways and routes of higher status, Countryside Act 1968, otherwise it's a trespass. But why should a couple of cyclists evoke such barely concealed consternation?

The next presentation explained how to make a business out of family cycle-hire along converted railway lines. These routes pass through delightful scenery but there aren't very many of them in the country it seems. I welcome the development of such cycleways. As a cyclist myself, there isn't much pleasure on the tarmac with trucks, vans and motorists buzzing you at 60mph. But what struck me about this particular presentation, was that none of the profit was being ploughed back into the capital or maintenance cost of the cycleway. The Countryside Council had splendidly created the enterprise but private interests were riding on the back of it. Didn't seem quite right, somehow.

I am far from being a communist, as your Chairman will quickly tell you, but doesn't it seem off that public money is being spent for commercial gain? I can think of pony-trekking business' that use public bridleways and offer nothing in return for the maintenance. A lady from the Pennine Bridleway Project stood up and asked for vehicular rights to be taken away along the route so that horseriders would not be inconvenienced. As this is a Countryside Commission initiative, my concern for our interests was again alerted.

I tell you what, my fellows, if more of us in the TRF don't get involved in every access forum, the more we will lose the public relations battle. The National Parks Review Panel, according to the Telegraph, is calling for a ban on motorcycle scrambling and restrictions on cars on tarmac roads. Another slide showed a sign in an American National Park banning cyclists, dogs and horses. Clearly, cyclists are animals. Take note Alan Kind. Why are wheels so unpopular? Image, image, image, gentlemen. Too "macho", too aggressive a posture. The sport must tone down it's advertising. A clear message for the motorcycle industry too. It was also admitted that the cycle trade was not putting anything up front for cycle paths or rights of way.

A more gentle approach was urgently needed. A new phrase to conjure with "trail etiquette". I liked that one. Could have come from that BOF the TRF's PRO himself! Cyclists have to be environmentally friendly - no spinning or sliding rear wheels ...

"Conflict" was exemplified by a photograph of two walkers approaching a horserider on a narrow holloway. "Tread lightly" was a slogan being used to good effect by mountain bikers. "A planned approach to cyclists in National Parks" was required, someone said. Access prohibition? I wonder. Are we users of the countryside really as bad as these quangos suggest? On the credit side, there was a very fair and balanced presentation by Surrey County Council's ROW Officer. She bravely talked about ByWays Open to all Traffic, RUPP's and Unclassified County Roads but somewhat spoilt it by showing a slide of a "problem" section of green lane with muddy ruts and water-filled depressions. To be fair, I suppose it is a problem to a county if walkers keep asking for money to be spent on public paths.

There wasn't any real debate about aggressive driving by motorists alike. Nor was the vandalism of fly-tipping down green lanes on the agenda. I left the conference wondering whether CRRAG and similar organisations are not here as professional 'problem and conflict' organisers, drawing the attention of the already-prejudiced to isolated cases of anti-social countryside behavior.

The 'spokesperson' for the Penine Bridleway Project complained that approaching cyclists are so quiet that horses are likely to shy. You just can't win. Vive trail etiquette. I'm all for it. Let's hope the CRRAG's don't dominate too much. The Vice Chairman of the conference is also Recreation Officer for the Forestry Commission. They've been having a bad press recently - something about selling off forests without safeguarding the right to stroll there. Such is countryside life in the '90s.

Gwyn Thomas. Press Officer



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NOBODY seems to have noticed that there was nothing from me in the last issue, or perhaps you all did notice and were glad? I offer no excuse, but the reason was that I was busy. Sometimes it gets to the stage when I like a day off from all this banging of keyboards. Sometimes I even like to go Trail Riding.

EXMOOR, WILTS & CAMBS

Easter saw me pootling about in the South West with Peter Banks, our man on the spot. He too has had to limit his work on our behalf; he is a self employed antique furniture restorer, and you can't keep top museums waiting too long for their treasures. While there we called in one evening at the holy of holies in Bradford on Avon. Bill Riley has no number on his house, you just go along the road until you see a sitting room lined floor to ceiling with old maps. All maps of Wiltshire, too! I then went across country to Cambridgeshire, and gave David Edgar and his colleagues a chat about the history of the countryside and how to find forgotten lanes. This summer I promise I will finish off my booklet on this subject so that you all can learn the tricks. Perhaps there will also be time to sort out my TLR, last used in late summer last year...

WHAT COMPETITION?

Who won the competition, I hear you all clamouring. And what is this tool which is most useful for trail riding, anyway?

Entries were not, as they say, overwhelming. "Too true" says Aunt Mary, reading over my shoulder. No-one wants free membership, that's for sure, (so we will bear that in mind next AGM time when I suspect the question of finance will surface again). How do I know? Well, no-one wrote in for it, no-one at all. So you will never know about the useful tool.

"Don't be mean" says the Voice of Reason, from the kitchen. Oh all right, I suppose I can tell you all. It's a PEN. Subtle, eh?

PENNINE BRIDLEWAY

One evening last week I was asked to go to Manchester to talk with the Countryside Commission about their latest stunt. I was asked what they might do to help us co-operate with them, and I came up with these ideas:

- * Don't call it the Pennine Bridleway, how about Pennine Ride?
- * Sign & Waymark only the highest status.
- * Make it clear in the sales bumf that some bits are vehicular.
- * Try Voluntary Restraint before thinking of a TRO.
- * If you must close a section to us, how about a new alternative?

Their main concern seems to be to stay friendly with the farmers who will have to provide land for linking sections of their route, and the rambles who seem to run the countryside (or try to). I tried to get them to see that our needs should not be pushed aside just because we are a minority. Perhaps I could have reminded them that there is a name for a system in which the "majority view" over-rides all others. It has been the cause of some trouble this century, not least to minorities such as the Gypsies, the Slavs, & the Jews.

Back to the PB. The proposal will be submitted to the Commissioners shortly, and they will of course hack it about. No point in being a Commission if you don't throw your weight about a bit. Then it goes to the Ministry, to find out if funds are available for any of it. Because of the various options open to them regarding our rights, and the various ways we might respond, they suggest that we meet at that time to try to find a way forward. 'At that time' meaning November, and 'We' being the Senior Officer in charge of this scheme, and his minions, and those members of the TRF who will be affected. This means most of us in the North and quite a few from the balmy South too, and so you need to be prepared. Talk about the new route with your rights of way officer, and your group rep, and decide what you might do for the Pennine Bridleway, and on what conditions. No-one will say "Here is all the information we have on the green roads you want to use so that you can be sure to shut it all to us." But what if you were asked "How about if we closed this bit and arranged for that bit to be open to you instead?" Or even "We are really stuck for this length. Do you know of any alternatives to this very narrow section?" One possible venue for a meeting is near Clitheroe, courtesy of the Civil Service Motoring Association, a fellow member of LARA.

NORTH YORKS MOORS RIDE

A nice break this promises to be, for all you bonny-lads and canny-lassies. Centered near Helmsley in the Vale of Pickering, the BHS is having a long distance horse ride on August 4th. Organiser Mrs Pat Higham has heard nice things about how helpful the TRF are, and would like our assistance to mark out the courses, check the marking early on the day, and generally be useful and mobile over the whole weekend. If your bike is completely inoffensive, and you would like to spend a day or two in one of the best bits of England, get in touch with Leo Crone, hard working group rep for Teesside and North Yorks. Camping facilities are laid on, and there are cosy Bed & Breakfast places nearby. I am also led to understand that they brew a fine pint in the locality, but of course that will only be of academic interest to TRF members, won't it?

RAC QUIT LARA SHOCK HORROR!

Just as LARA applies to the Sports Council for dosh the RAC Motor Sports Association announce they are chucking it in. It was RACMSA which got our subs to LARA put up last year; could it be to get rid of a purely RoW group so that LARA could concentrate on noisy and damaging races in National Parks? Races called the Lombard Rally but races none the less, and on green roads, too. Gobsnacked? So am I. TRS

MID WALES RUN

EAST MIDLAND GROUP VISIT TO PEN-ROCHELL FARM

Saturday 13th April saw the East Mids Groups first visit of 1991 to Pen-Rochell farm at Dolau Mid Wales, to stay with Dick Sutton and Ann. On arrival mid day Saturday we (Andi, Allan and myself) were greeted by Dick and Ann, and whilst a snack was prepared we toured the farm buildings to see the new lambs and goats.

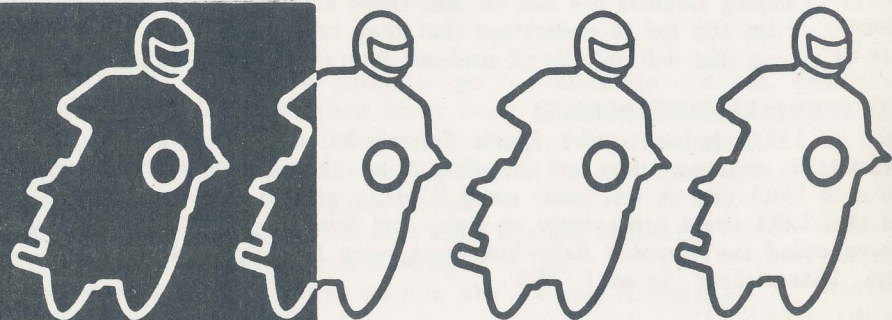
During the "home made" bread and soup we caught up on news since our last visit, and then after unpacking we set off unaccompanied for a few hours trail riding. (The excellent trails start at the farm gate, no need to go onto tarmac.) During the afternoon we were followed by the other half of our group (Pete, Alf and Darb) on the trails and together we enjoyed 5 hours of breathtaking trails both on the mountain side and in the forests.

Saturday morning following a full breakfast we set off escorted by Dick. As always when riding with Dick the trails were excellent, the sun and dark blue sky made it even better. During the morning the only people we saw were a group of Ramblers who although were not actually on the trail, went out of their way to be friendly and greeted us with smiles and waves. Just before dinner Dick left the group to call on a local farmer friend to secure future riding by permission on his land, we set off to "The Monks Trod". A couple of hours later and too many incidents to relate, we rejoined Dick on the other side of the Trod and headed for lunch.

Beans and cheese on toast, pots of tea and home made cakes never tasted so good and all for a couple of pounds! The afternoon trail riding was as excellent as the morning's, we returned to the farm early evening having all had a great day (and visit) and only sorry to be going home so soon. Thanks Dick and Ann for your hospitality we all look forward to our next visit. Anyone wishing to know further details please contact Dick and Ann on tel. 0597 87200 or contact myself for full details.

Mark Phillips East Mids TRF

P.S Thanks to all groups and members for supporting the TRF lapel badges, (all proceeds to the fighting fund). I still have a few badges remaining.



IF YOU LOVE BIKES YOU'LL LOVE THE *BMF RALLY*

BOOK REVIEW

TITLE: A GUIDE TO THE PILGRIMS WAY & NORTH DOWNS WAY.
AUTHOR: CHRISTOPHER JOHN WRIGHT.
ISBN: 0 - 09 - 464180 - 3
PRICE: £5.95 (1981 price) HARDBACK.
RATING: 3 out of 5.

A very handy small book measuring only 7" x 4 1/2", just right for fitting into the pocket of ones Belstaff/Barbour wax cotton and still able to button down. Comprising mainly of black and white photographs apart from the dust jacket, the book is aimed mainly at the walker as the title regards the route as one of the countryside commissions long distance routes. As many of my fellow TRF members from Kent would say though, the vast majority of the confirmed route is public vehicular, 7/8ths being BOAT around the Ashford area.

Following the route described in the book is both easy and totally relevant even on the latest OS maps, from Hampshire through Surrey and easier in Kent as the OS have marked the route. The photographs are for the benefit of the walker with several of the 'Way' itself. The author has dealt very ably with splitting the two routes, taking the follower via the long distance routes when the Pilgrims Way follows tarmac.

The author has utilised the older Bartholomew map of around 1950 rather than the OS map, and even following both routes on both maps of which I have copied was easy (it has to be for the Ramblers sake!) In the authors introduction and following text, he explains about a brief history of the route, a general survey, route finding, including such items as which OS maps to use, transport facilities and a code for the countryside, prepared by the Countryside Commission.

The photo's of the book only show a little of the 'Way' itself, the others are of church's, villages, towns etc. Others show an idea of what an old lane should look like, a sunken track adorned by old trees which are probably no longer there after the 1987 storms. Panoramic photos let you know what the view should look like once you get to a particular spot and are clearly annotated.

I have spent a number of evenings reading the book and then tracing it along on the maps, marking my maps when a place of particular interest can be found the next time I am in the area. Clearly a book for the walker and I dare say I may be coerced into following / surveying the route one day by mountain bike as some of the routes are strictly bridleway only. Altogether a handy and interesting book.

TITLE: WALKING ANCIENT TRACKWAYS
AUTHOR: MICHAEL DUNN
ISBN: 0 - 7153 - 8640 - 9
PRICE: £12.95 (1986 PRICE) HARDBACK
RATING: 3 out of 5

This is not the sort of book that I would recommend to take out inside your bellstaff as at 9 3/4" x 7 1/2" it is quite large, as I found out just walking/surveying one of the lanes described with the kids one day. The two routes which are local to me from this book are a short section of the Pilgrims way which I have done on the bike and the other is a section of a Roman road running from Maidstone towards Hastings, which is at present a bridleway, for which user evidence is now being documented. The black and white photographs interspersed with very good quality colour shots beckon the front wheel, but as the author is quite quick to point out in the

description of the Ridgeway route, although recognised by the Countryside Commission as a long distance foot path it is also a BOAT, at least warning walkers that we have as much right to use this ancient track as they have to walk upon it.

Badly drawn maps of the routes described, which are much easier to follow on the OS maps recommended at the end of each section are the only disappointment. All in all 34 routes are described, given that the author has to cram all of this into 232 pages and make it easy to follow might seem like no small undertaking. Such routes as the Icknield Way, Ackling Dyke, Exmoor Ridgeway, Sam Helen, The Old Pennrhyn Road, Fosse Way, Peddlars Way, Gartree Road, and the Correyairack Road to name a few of the 34 routes cover a very large area of the British Isles, and should be sufficient to keep even the short distant rider happy.

TITLE: THE COUNTRY MAPS OF OLD ENGLAND
AUTHOR: THOMAS MOULE
ISBN: 1 - 85170 - 403 - 5
PRICE: £9.99 (1990price) HARDBACK
RATING: 5 out of 5

An absolute bargain, both for price and quality. Definitely not a book to be carried green laning as it measures just over 14" x 10". The author is not so much one who writes, but is more a cartographer as this book is a collection of his maps of the whole of England and denotes the counties as around 1836. Unfortunately the maps are scarred by the railways but the colour in pastel shades is exquisitely reproduced. I have collected a number of pre-1835 maps of Kent and I found an unnamed map to which I was unable to put a name until I purchased this book. The name Thomas Moule is not a name synonymous with the likes of Cary, Andrews, Ogilby and Mudge as he copied rather than surveyed.

When compared to up to date OS maps, because of the difference in scales it is quite easy to go wrong. The maps show only the most prominent routes, but every now and again a major route there is a minor unsurfaced track now. Although each county is faithfully reproduced, towns like Portsmouth, cities like London, Bath, Oxford and Bristol are also shown in good detail.

I have seen this book advertised as capable of the maps being removed and mounted in frames, and if this sounds ideal then I would recommend buying two books - one for mounting and the other for reading. Otherwise you will spend to long looking at the maps on the wall when you could look at them in a book. Nice as pictures in the hallway. This book is easily available from W. H. Smith, and can usually be perused at leisure in other good book shops.

TITLE: ROADS AND TRACKWAYS OF WESSEX
AUTHOR: GEOFFERY N. WRIGHT
ISBN: 0 - 86190 - 248 - 3
PRICE: £11.95 (1988 price) HARDBACK
RATING: 4 out of 5

As with other books in this series, namely Wales, Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District, they are all aimed squarely at the walkers, but they give such a lot of detail about past uses, maps, drawings, photographs etc, that it is an ideal guide to the green laning enthusiast also. The author, who also wrote the Yorkshire Dales Edition, sets out the book in order of age, starting as the prehistoric, then Roman, Medieval, Trade and Turnpike eras. Reasonable routes have been drawn to follow a particular route and are easily followed on the newer OS maps and the black and white photographs that comprise this book are clear and sharp in details.

The author has used the word "UNFORTUNATELY" when describing the Ridgeway as also being a BOAT when he prefers to call it a long distance footpath and yet again the reader is informed to be on the lookout for traffic of all sorts along this most ancient of tracks. He does admit as past governments have done to it being a good example of a green lane though it would seem to have shown no sign of erosion from vehicles in the photographs within the book.

I do like the old maps, and this book has a number reproduced like Greenwoods Dorset map of 1826, Andrew and Durys map of Wiltshire of 1773, Taylors map of Dorset 1765, and Ogilbys map of the road from Oxford to Poole of 1675 being prime examples. As the author also lists his sources of these readily available maps of this area it seems like a lot of the hard work in finding relevant pre-1836 maps had been laid on a plate - he even goes into which books were references and which County Record Offices visited in Dorset and Wiltshire.

This is the sort of book which is sowing the seeds for me to write my own book about the Roads and Trackways of Kent, Surrey and even Hampshire, as the authors of this series have proved that it is far easier to follow an old road that is clear on the ground than to attempt to follow a footpath with questionable rights over them. All in all a worthwhile addition to my bookshelf.

Happy reading.

Tim Gooderson. Kent




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Isle of Man Run

"That was a mind blowing weekend", was Ali's comment when recalling our recent Bob Mconnell organised Isle of Man weekend. It started for us at 8.00 a.m. on Friday April, 5th, as three of us from Cambridge; Tony Thacker, XT250, Alister McFarquhar, Husqvarner 250, and myself, KMX 200, set out on the 200 mile trip to Heysham. On arrival we met up with Bob and the rest of the group who were preparing for the 4 hour ferry trip to Douglas. The sea was friendly and uneventful.

Our Hotel was The Ellesmere, situated just off Central Promenade Douglas, we soon settled in, well it took an hour actually, there was some confusion with the keys, and most other things too. But they did try hard.

Friday evening we set out to explore the night life in Douglas, some of the Yorkshire lads went for a lap of the TT course, one of the local sheep had other idea though and poor Barry Payne ended up in hospital. Although not too seriously injured, it was the end of the weekends riding for him. Much safer to go to the pub.

Saturday we divided into five groups of five or six riders. The other members of our group were Steven Bell KMX200, Ted Nuttal KDX200, and our leader Maurice Newsham KDX 200, later dubbed, Super Maurice. As we wet off into the hills it rained and rained and rained. Funny you always seem to ride the hardest tracks when its wet don't you. This was no exception, Saturday morning, we rode, if that is the correct term, the three hardest tracks on the island steep rock climbs and sheer descents usually covered in mud or running water. Too much for us Fenlanders, we slipped, slithered, skated and crashed, but Super Maurice rode up and then back down again to see where we had got to. Eventually we all made it back to the tarmac and set out to look for our lunch stop. After lunch it was still raining, but the tracks now were just hard, not impossible and we rode most of them in the south of the island. Sunday was terrific, blue sky, sunshine and beautiful scenery. The lanes were slightly easier too, more like the dales, by 3.30 it was all over and we rode back to the Hotel to join the other groups.

The atmosphere on these large organised away runs is to me fantastic, reminiscent of the much lamented John Ebrell Memorial Runs.

Thanks Bob and Maurice, brilliant lanes, good food, excellent company and marvellous scenery. It was just mindblowing.

Roger Young. Cambridge

Why are there no more John Ebrell Memorial Runs?. Ed.



B.B.T. IN THE 90'S

PREFACE

The TRF has had a long and fruitful connection with the Byways and Bridleways Trust. Most if not all of our active Rights of Way experts are individual members, some having served both organisations with considerable distinction.

It was therefore a matter of concern for the TRF when some members thought they detected a change in behaviour of the BBT. So Dave Giles asked them about this and was pleased to receive assurances that our perception was mistaken. At our invitation Douglas Coombes of the BBT explains how this may have come about.

BBT IN THE NINETIES

"In recent months some TRF members have expressed concern about what they perceive as a change for the worse in the policy of the Byways and Bridleways Trust. As a member of the Trust's Advisory Committee, and Chairman of it's Editorial Committee, I believe that this is a mistaken perception, and I would like briefly to explain why.

The underlying object of the Trust remains what it has always been: to protect rights of way, and to uphold the legal rights of all users. There has been no change here. However, 1990 did see the culmination of a gradual shift in the strategy adopted by the Trust to achieve it's ends. In short, the Trust is now concentrating it's efforts on the task of disseminating information and guidance on rights of way law in those quarters where this will have the greatest effect: highway authorities on the one hand and rights of way users on the other. This is a two-pronged approach, operating through both a training programme of seminars and workshops and an enhanced publications programme.

This certainly represents a shift away from the TRF's initial approach. When it was founded in 1979, the emphasis was on creating a climate favourable to access by influencing Government and local authorities, and on direct involvement in the task of getting definitive maps made accurate and up to date. Why the change in emphasis? To a limited extent the answer lies in the essential ingredient of much human endeavour, namely money. To be able to survive the Trust needs to pursue projects which can both raise revenue and attract official subsidy.

More important, however, has been the changing background against which the Trust has to operate. To start with, the need for adequate public access is much more widely acknowledged, and the authorities are more and more aware of the need for their staff to be properly trained in rights of way law, something in which the Trust, with it's unrivaled expertise in the field, is pre-eminently qualified to help: hence our seminars for rights of way officers and associated staff, of which we held four in 1990.

At the same time, we have learned from experience that we do not have, and are never likely to have, the resources successfully to monitor in detail, and where necessary take action "in the field" on, the myriad definitive map and public path orders that are issued. What we do have is the capacity to support those activists who are engaged in such monitoring with publications designed to inform, advise and encourage them in their efforts, and also with training: hence the new **Rights of Way Law Review** as well as the continuing **Byway and Bridleway**, both now appearing 10 times a year, and hence too our recent "user seminar" held amid snow and ice at Wantage.

There is undeniably a down side to all this. In order to concentrate our limited human resources on these new projects we have been forced to review the provision of legal advice, whether to subscribers or non-subscribers. For some while now we have been charging "at cost" for formal advice, and we may possibly reach the stage where we have to withdraw this service altogether

except in rare cases which appear to be of outstanding legal significance. Of course we regret our inability to maintain this service to the extent that we would like; but we do believe that the 'trade-off' in favour of our publication and training projects is very much to the advantage of our subscribers and indeed all rights of way activists. We have diverted our small but unique resources to provide an information service of a quality unavailable elsewhere - a service which is essential if local authority staff and private individuals alike are to be able to safeguard and improve public rights of way to the best of their abilities."

POSTSCRIPT

This cause for concern and the helpful reply from the BBT gives me the opportunity to raise two points which I would like to share with you:

1. We should always ask why?
If we don't ask we don't get to know. In this case we have had an opportunity to clear the air and to learn something of the strategic thinking of our friends. We have also been reminded of how easy it is to take old friends for granted, and have appointed a BBT - TRF liaison officer as a result.

2. Every TRF Group should join the BBT!
That's my personal opinion, but I think you should consider it. Ask at the next monthly meeting, 'Do we belong?' and if not what is our very good reason for not supporting an organisation whose work is in our own interest?

If you want to learn more contact:
The Granary, Charlcott, Calne, Wilts.
or telephone 9.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. 024 974 273

Dave Giles.

The Bristol Group as part of its effort to promote the T.R.F., has had the T.R.F.'s motif as depicted on the magazine cover reproduced for embroidering.

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