

# 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)

## NORTHUMBERLAND

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, Ashing on Soc. Club, Rr. of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles N. of Worthing

## 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

Gordon Carr Tel: 0535 644568  
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

OCTOBER 1991

No. 159

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

EDITOR: Mike "Nettlebed" Pedley.



Is it a Boat, or a Rupp?

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Try to make it interesting! . . . .

All contributions to the Editor

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## TRF OFFICERS

**Chairman:** Dave Giles, 22 Ford Lane, Allestree, Derby DE3 2EW Tel: 0332 552288

**Press Officer:** Gwyn Thomas, Minories Cottage, Priddy, Wells BA5 3AU Tel: 0749 75294

**Membership Sec:** Peter Clark, 34 Oak Rd, Barton -U-Needwood, Burton on Trent DE13 8LR Tel: 0283 713209

**Secretary:** Ian Thompson, Glebe House, The Square, St. Columb Minor, Newquay TR7 3HD Tel: 0637 872813

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**Editor:** Mike Pedley, Nettlebed, Newsholme, Gisburn, Nr. Clitheroe BB7 4JF Tel: 0200 445657

## EDITOR

As the TRF celebrates its 21st birthday we, the Bulletin Team celebrate our first and I make no apologies for devoting this month's editorial to the 'Team'.

Being part of that Team for twelve months has only increased my admiration for those who have gone before me and have achieved sometimes single-handedly what we can now do as a team effort.

My job is now comparatively easy because everyone pulls their weight, but apart from the main production team, I'd like first to thank those Lancs Group members who every month without fail, do all the boring bits like licking, sticking, typing, writing, posting etc.. In attempting to name everyone I'm bound to miss someone, but here goes - Tony, Tim, Brian, Stodge, Jim, Pinner, the Highams, Mary, Jeanette, No-Problem and the Weasel.

It's hard to say that any one team member is more important than another, but without Peter, Fred and Steve it would be very difficult to produce the Bulletin every month, on time, on budget, so I hope you don't mind getting to know these three guys a little better.

First there's Fred, our printer, nudging 50 (OK 47!), but still to be seen riding his Hailwood Replica Ducati or his Suzuki GSXR 1100 when not digging furrows in the Yorkshire Dales with his XR250! Conveniently Fred runs his own printing business (Ellison Printing) and is married with two teenage daughters.

Apart from bikes, business and the family, Fred's only other interest is his twelve pet sheep - but less said about that the better! As well as riding Fred has a strong interest in preserving our rights of way network and looks forward to the official recognition of the true status of all rights of way.

To have a printer is one thing, but to have a publisher also is amazing. Steve Griffiths, 34 year old owner of SGC Publishing Ltd., is responsible for assembling and typesetting the mag before it goes to Fred. Steve's also a family man with an eight year old son and joined the TRF at the 'Yeovil Wheels' show in 1988. Steve also has a road bike (RD350) and you will have read of his road racing exploits in the last bulletin. Steve has now retired (with a broken wrist), so we can once more look forward to seeing him and his two ageing Suzuki's on the dirt. Steve did try an XT350, but a combination of lack of leg length and seat height made for an unhappy partnership so its back to the Suzuki's.

We have tried to provide value for money with the Bulletin and show where the money goes and one man who tries to keep the costs down is our Advertising man, Pete Ballard. Pete is 37, married and into computer design with a major exhaust system manufacturer (no, he can't get you an exhaust for your 250 Yamakwakasaki!). As we've previously mentioned in the Bulletin, Pete's an odd-ball when it comes to bikes - they've got to be Russian, though he does now (thank Gorby) use a 185 Honda on the rough. As President and Technical Advisor to the Cossack Owners Club, he still can't resist using some unusual vehicles on the trail (see photo). Pete's done a great job with advert sales, but would certainly appreciate some effort from other groups. The Club has now agreed to give Pete a free hand in negotiating the advertising rates so he may be able to put together a deal to suit your local bike shop if you care to try.

NETTLEBED

P.S. OK, we got some criticism at the AGM, but on the whole I was pleased with the general feedback. Hope you like the Weasel's tabloid treatment of the AGM- as Willyeckerslyke said it doesn't all have to be doom and gloom!

# LETTERS

## What do you think ?

I hear that the Committee of the Fellowship are freeloading again.

After an all expenses paid weekend at the Civil Services Conference Centre in the Forest of Dean, with no doubt lavish evening meals and wine on Friday 13th and Saturday 14th of September, they are planning to celebrate the 21st AGM at the National Motorcycle Museum on Sunday 6th October.

How does one join the elite? No one invites me!

I am sure that all the hard riding members of the fellowship would like to know how to qualify for a free lunch and all the other perks that the full time officials of the club enjoy. Can you enlighten me?

*Rick O'Shea. The Lamb. Theale. Berks.*

P.S. Bet you daren't print this in Trail!

## New Group

As mentioned by Nettlebed in last months magazine, several of us "privileged" riders have got together in an effort to establish a TRF group in Powys (Mid - Wales to you). Initial response was quite good with some nine persons present and after some light banter and general ale swilling (those of you that have visited the Cornhill Inn know that this practice is very rare...!!) the serious business was discussed. The general feeling was that the area is in bad need of some proper direction regarding RoW's - the local motorcycle club having ruled the roost for many years to their sole advantage and everyone else's loss and to this end a RoW officer was appointed ( his being absent from the meeting at the time, made this appointment considerably easier! ).

Tim Stevens letter from the previous issue about "priveleged" riders was read out, as was Brian Thomson's reply and was discussed and placed in perspective. The general feeling was, after some interesting comments, that if a farmer is good enough to allow you over his land where there is normally no access, you don't kick him in the teeth, or anywhere else for that matter! However, with a subtle approach, any legal RoW's which may come under dispute in the future can be covered by our group which already includes some members of the farming community. The point was also raised that it was of little use someone from England or anywhere else criticising locals, however much they might know the area, they don't understand how things work here in Wales! You have to live here to get anything done. Also it's no good going like a "bull at a gate" at everyone. This has been done in the past with detrimental results.

A resolution was passed to obtain a Powys County map of classified county roads and to sort out the "iffy" lanes. Once this is done there will be a map marking service available to paid up TRF members.

At 10.30pm and all with dry throats the meeting was concluded and all future meetings will be held at 8.00pm the first monday of the month at the Cornhill Inn, Rhayader (0597 810869). Anyone out there is welcome to call in and all assistance will be gratefully received.

*"The Rhayader Villain". AKA Bob Buck.*

## Also about the New Group.

In the last issue of Trail you mention Bob of the Cornhill Inn, Rhayader, thinking of forming a local group.

Whilst not wishing to detract from his venture, I would like to bring to your notice some things that were mentioned to me in May this year when I was riding based at the Cornhill Pub.

It was suggested (even stated by local riders) that Bob had been taking parties of riders out on runs into areas where no rights of way exist and was causing some bad feeling amongst local landowners.

Also I cannot understand why Roger Bailey who lives in Builth Wells has not offered to do same; I know for a fact that he puts a lot of time and effort into tracing old trails in that area.

I have talked to several other TRF members who have ridden in Wales and know Bob and they agree that the TRF should end its unbridled enthusiasm for Bob at the Cornhill..

*R Short. London*

## Northumberland

As group Rep. ( anyone else want it ? ) I get a few phone calls from organisations. One was the British Horse Society, whose aims are very similar to ours, to help keep a County Road open at Barden Hill in Northumberland; others are mainly lads wanting to go scrambling asking for information. This one was from "Wear FM" local radio - Get Alan Kind, he's good at stringing a few words together, were my first comments - but eventually I was bludgeoned into it.

When I told someone at work they laughed and said that if I was any good they would sign me up permanently!

Well, Saturday Morning arrived. The Station was interviewing many sports - Trail Riding came after Croquet and Scuba-diving. I had made a few notes and took a lot of photos etc. not knowing what to expect. I was shown round the studios and was amazed at the high quality of the Disc Jockey, especially the weekly spot on Horse Racing. "And next is Dave Vaughan to talk about Trail Riding" - I think I was gobsmacked for a couple of seconds. My notes came in very useful to give direction. My advice would be to any broadcaster is to talk to the interviewer and not to the audience!

It was one of the longest two minutes. The following thirteen flowed very easily, I couldn't believe I had spoken for so long.

I got home feeling very important until I found out that no one in my family had bothered to listen - mind you, Wear FM probably only has two listeners anyway !

.....I read (Plonker) John Fowler's "cautionary tale" about being stopped on a county road by an off duty policeman. We had a similar happening in Weardale back in May.

In our group that day were a couple of new lads and a couple of visitors from Teeside. The day started off badly when Basil's engine squirted oil from a fractured crankcase - we were without our mobile legal eagle ! The first lane to be used was Middleton Lane, some 5 miles across open moors, following the ridge south of the Wear valley. At the southern end where it meets tarmac were a bevy of landrovers. We were all stopped and asked for names and addresses by the very irate gamekeepers. I was challenged by the head keeper, a man in his fifties. When he saw that we were not scramblers / Hells Angels he was fairly calm. He complained about us tearing up the country and endangering grouse chicks and riding on private land. All of which we disclaimed ! Middleton Lane is an enclosure award road, sixty feet wide, set out in the Woolsingham Common awards. I have used it for twelve years, with occasional hassle from gamekeepers. Today they were waiting for us.

Half an hour passed and our group set off towards Frosterly when a Panda Car with flashing lights came storming up the hill. We were stopped and eventually all cautioned about riding illegally etc. They checked insurances, licenses, tax etc. They were only doing their job. Apparently the shooting rights belong to the Sultan of Oman and his staff want to exclude anything that may affect the sport.

This debacle took over an hour of my valuable trail riding. No action has been taken but I wait with interest. I eventually got copies of the enclosure map and awards so we are ready for any court action.

If, as John Fowler, I was stopped, surely the person could be charged with obstructing the Public Highway. I wonder if Alan Kind could expand.

*Dave Vaughan. Northumberland.*

P.S. The gamekeeper was very worried about his chicks. - perhaps a caution could be given to all of us who ride over shooting moors to ride carefully so as not to harm the game, so it can be shot to bits on the glorious twelfth!

#### Keep looking behind you

I hope this will help a few of the older trail riders, as it does me. The mirror was fitted about four years ago and has not been damaged yet. It was off an old scooter; the stem was bent double and fixed into the original hole with a pinch bolt.

I fall off quite often, never hurt myself or the bike badly (yet). That's what comes of trying to keep up with J. Gibbs.

*M.J.Troake. Devon*



#### Mountain Bike

Glancing through some guff my wife had received from the National Trust I noticed a small paragraph about them "controlling" mountain bikers on Surrey's trails by publishing special mountain bikers maps. Available from the N.T.'s shop at that mecca for motorcyclists (and headbangers), Box Hill.

So next time I took the bike out I went there and for the princely sum of twenty pence I acquired a copy of the little map.

I rang the publishers (*Action Packs, Robin Cottage, Stones Lane, Westcott, Surrey, RH4 3QH. Tel : 0306 886944*) and they explained to me that mountain bikers could use Bridleways but my old Ajay cannot, even when shared with "private access".

They also told me that Brian Wright - South London and Surrey - had helped with the preparation of these maps. There are about ten in all, covering most of Surrey. I can't help feeling that something similar could be used by us in the TRF. What do you think?

*Leo Lacey. Surrey.*

AGM

# News

Monday, October 7th, 1991

Estimated daily sale 1500

FREE  
DIRTY  
WEEK  
END  
OFFER  
INSIDE!

# SHOCK!

Uproar at 1990

AGM Minutes

Cover Up

exclusive

As members were still reeling from the news that ever popular Don Lewis would not be attending the AGM, our Chairman attempted to have non-existent 1990 AGM minutes accepted by the meeting! "What minutes?" asked Tim Stevens. "I gave them to the editor" protested our Secretary. Fortunately, the Editor had not arrived by then (11.15am) and only a threat by Dave Giles to read out the whole five pages of minutes brought the meeting to heel.

exclusive

DOOM  
&  
GLOOM

Willy Eckerslyke, popular South Yorkshire ex-miner, lashed magazine editor NETTLED for introducing humour into the Bulletin. "Bring back Brian Thompson and his doom and gloom - t'lads are enjoying it t'much" said blunt-as-pit-prop Willy!

# DIRTY WEEKEND OFFER!

Membership Secretary, Peter Clark reported that MCNs Dirty Weekend Feature had brought in an incredible 75 telephone calls, most of them answered by his daughter, who now has her weekends for the rest of the year arranged! 30 new memberships were finally attributed to the article.

## Riders Bombarded with Golf Balls

Amongst the many RoW incidents successfully dealt with by RoW Officer, Tim Stevens, was one on Barbon Golf Course where the fairway had been extended across a byway. "TRF members could continue to use the lane, but have been asked not to get in the way of golf balls which could result in a player having to take an extra shot!" said Tim proudly.

## CAM FELL

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Trail Riders Welcome  
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## WRIGHT MAN FOR JOB

The shock resignation of popular Gwyn Thomas almost brought the meeting to a standstill, but a rousing speech by Chairman, Dave Giles brought forward a rush of volunteers eager to fill the vacancy. Lucky man was Brian Wright chosen on the basis that he was the only one wearing a TRF sweater and not having an official job!

PENNY  
A DAY  
TOO  
MUCH

When asked to vote for a subscription increase of less than a penny a day, hard-riding Willyeckerslyke told the packed meeting that "it's t'much for my lads - when you see SS on our bikes it stands for Social Security not Super Sports" protested Willy. None the less the increase of £3.00 per head in annual subscription to fund a Nationwide RoW Bursary was carried without further dissent.

# GET HOLD OF YOUR MEMBERS!

This was the shock advice handed out by retiring PRO Gwyn Thomas to an open-mouthed meeting who listened spell-bound to a flip-chart presentation taking the TRF into the next Century!

## LOSS EQUALS GAIN

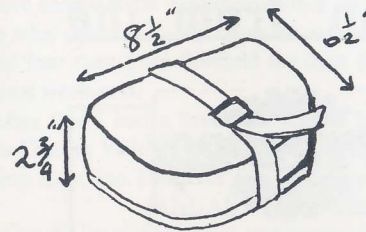
The Secretary, Ian Thompson attempted to explain to the meeting how the loss of two lanes was to the TRF's gain! "The TRF are now the acknowledged RoW experts in Avon" said Ian to his baffled audience!

"Our emphasis must shift from using ancient routes to the importance of preserving the routes" said Gwyn pointing out also the first prosecution under the 1990 RoW Act of a farmer who had ploughed up a RoW. (Lady members were advised to ignore Gwyn's plea).

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This was how our dynamic Chairman, Dave Giles described a dozen TRF founder members who had travelled from far and wide to be at our 21st AGM!

Dave paid tribute to those who had steered the group through 21 stormy years and invited everyone to share a piece of birthday cake generously provided by Mary Stevens, (long-suffering wife of Tim), though the recession had reduced the number of candles on the cake to three!

AGM

# sport

# NETTLEBED KNOCKERS!

The Editor must exclude all references to 'speed and competition' from the magazine in future.

Geoff Bostock, (Cheshire Group), absent from the AGM due to a badly broken leg, bent frame and cracked crankcase after being run into by one of his own members would no doubt agree. "Thank God he was only doing 5mph or it could have been serious" said Geoff from his hospital bed.



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## Report on DR 350M

Having had a Suzuki DR 350 for 6 months now I may be qualified to give a reasonable opinion of it as a trail machine.

My previous mount was a DR 200 with a suspension which gave pure comfort, the 350 is in the same league, with 11" travel both front and rear giving the most pleasant and forgiving ride especially on rocky going where it is in its element. Where most bikes would be bucking about and giving enforced diving practice the DR takes it all in its stride. It is quite a tall bike, although no different to an XR 250, which makes it difficult for anyone short in the leg when having enforced legwork. I am 33" inside leg to the ground and have been known to dab into thin air and disappear laterally into the undergrowth with bike on top.

The height does, however, have its advantages during deep river crossings, especially if you can do a Biggles and do it across on the back wheel. Several people have complained of bad starting problems but I have found it very easy to start if you follow the recommended procedure; pull in the decompressor lever, turn the engine over very slowly until the lever clicks back, raise the kickstart right to the top and then give a good strong kick and away she fires first time. If the bike has been stood overnight I give the twistgrip four turns to inject some petrol into the engine before I begin the procedure, and it is usually 1st time starting. If you have the bike laid down or upside down (I can't understand how, or why, you should, do this of course) you must clear the engine out before starting by operating the kill switch give full throttle, pull the decompressor lever and kick over 5 times before commencing with the "procedure".

The DR350 M is a little overgeared for trail riding in standard form and will benefit from some adjustments from the 14 tooth front and 47 tooth rear. I have a 13 tooth on the front and it is still geared to pull 90mph in top—and that is on the rough. I have a 12 tooth for the front, which I have yet to try, but being physically small may wear out rapidly so I think I will go for a 50 on the rear at the next sprocket change. The engine is very torquey and loves hill climbs without running out of breath more than can be said for the rider—and is also very good on fuel doing 60 mpg on general mixed road and trail riding. What more can you say about a superb machine.

BALDRICK (the bog finder). Lancs

## From the No.1 (Horse) Rider in Yorkshire

First the envelope, or rather Crabby Brians comments on it which intrigue me. Since February I have ceased to be Yorkshire's No.1. O.K., I am not saying if I am or not, just that I am curious as to what criteria Crabby bases his assessment on. E.g. on the morning that the March issue arrived so did four men from Sheffield for their first week-end trail ride away from home and we all had a great week-end.

After that I had a break for Easter but returned on Saturday April 6th to take a group from the Thames Valley on Sunday. This is something that I am always willing to do for any group, just drop me a line. Dates for Trail Rides open to individuals nationally next year are as follows:-

JANUARY 5TH, FEBRUARY 9TH, MARCH 16 & APRIL 27TH

These Sundays have been staggered so has not to interfere with your group runs. I am available on the Saturday before if you wish to make a week-end out of it and all runs will be suitable for first time away from home. Group leaders wanting me to act as a guide for their group should contact me to arrange a mutually convenient date.

SEPTEMBER 21ST, OCTOBER 12TH & NOVEMBER 2ND (1992)

These dates are for those who wish to plan a year ahead, as I do.

DECEMBER 14TH, 21ST & 28TH

These are short days and my answer is to cut out almost all of the tarmac roads, therefore, I prefer to ride with a different group of people each week. Good days but short days.

I look forward to riding again with those individuals with whom I rode on the John Ebbrel Memorial Runs and groups who have been out with me before; also others from around the country and nearer to home. Will this earn me the No.1 tag? (*Probably not. Ed.*)

Some readers may be interested in my other activity this year; namely horse riding. I started to ride in January this year building up towards the Backbone Trek at the end of May. This was a three hundred mile ride along the Pennines from Scotland to Middleton Top in Derbyshire. Our main sponsor for this was THEAKSTONS. With reference to the so called Pennine Bridle way I was considering pulling out when I learned that the Countryside Commission wanted money from us for use of their route and when we refused to pay them they said that we could not use the term for our ride, hence the term Backbone instead of Pennine. The only rights of way problems that we had were in Calderdale and this was the case again in August when we were riding north from Derbyshire to the stables at Queensbury. It would appear that only walkers are keeping paths open in Calderdale or that Calderdale is only interested in keeping paths open for walkers.

Horse riding is a good alternative to summer trail riding now that the summers are so dry and I am willing to help any individual or horse riding group. I know the trails, I know what horses can do and now I can ride if they want a leader. If not then detailed information is available regarding the condition and suitability of the trails. All this is because I firmly believe that use is the best answer to abuse. Unlike the walkers who we invited to use our tracks in the 50's I do not think that they will outnumber us and want them all to themselves.

How about someone writing in the T & MX News again as we need this publicity and trail riders need the information on where to join. There has been nothing in the paper since Brian Thompson had to stop writing. What we need is a team effort not a one-man-band.

Do keep up the good work as the Bulletin is important and our only national communication.

Yours in sport,

*Gordon Thackray .Yorkshre's No. 4 Trail Rider.*

## GROUP NEWS

### SUSSEX GROUP

**Change of venue.** From October, the monthly pub meeting will be at Ashington Social Club, Mill Lane, Ashington (on A24 about 9 miles north of Worthing). Mill lane runs alongside the Red Lion, and the Club is on an unsurfaced (not green lane!) road which carries straight on where Mill Lane bears left. The October 31st meeting will be there at 8.00pm.

**South Downs Conservation Board.** To fend off pressure for a National Park, the County Councils of East and West Sussex have combined forces to form a Conservation Board which will take over from the AONB Forum. The board will have 36 members, from local authorities and the usual 'amenity' groups. Powers relating to definitive ROW and the management of the South Downs Way are to be delegated to the new board by the County Councils. They cannot actually delegate powers over carriageways, and it will be interesting to see the outcome, because the policies of the two Highway Authorities are very different when it comes to the question of TROs.

## A Typical Non - Active Member ?

**A** strange title, how can anyone who does trail riding be called non - active; it must surely count as one of the more energetic forms of "leisure" that I know. So why the title?

I consider myself a very active rider, having road bikes for touring and commuting and off road for trail riding (obviously) and also trials competitions.

I am also the secretary of a large and active local motorcycle club. The outcome of all this is that I find it very hard to get along to my local (Herts) TRF group meetings, hence the title.

Just because I don't get to a group meeting doesn't mean that I can't do my bit for trail riding. Within "my" club I have encouraged members to venture off - road with me and to join the TRF and we now have over half a dozen riders who go out frequently.

Being based in Middlesex we ride mainly in the Herts. area - the nearest network of lanes - but venture further afield now and then with an annual visit to Wales and often going down to Surrey.

We always use quiet bikes, ride considerately and generally use well established routes which I checked when I used to get along to Herts. group meetings. However sometimes we find the odd lane marked on the map which doesn't seem to get used except by us, judging by the undergrowth!

This is really the point of writing this letter; just because I don't manage to get to a group meeting, like a great many other TRF members, doesn't mean I'm unable to help in keeping the lanes we ride open.

One example of this is a lane in Hillingdon, yes there are lanes in London, which the council put a TRO on one end, however they also put a barrier at the other end too!

Having inspected the County Map I was able to persuade the Parks Dept. manager, who had erected the barrier, to take it down again. It might only be a dead - end lane about half a mile in length and I'm sure not many people know it exists let alone use it, but I was determined that our right to ride it should not be denied.

So just because you, like me, can't be an active member of a group, doesn't mean you can't do your bit to keep our lanes open. Have another look at those maps and see if your council have closed a lane they shouldn't have. Keep them open and enjoy riding them.

*Neville Cross. Middlesex*

*Keep up the great work with the mag. From personal experience with our club mag. it's a thankless task at the best of times.*

# RoW NEWS

This has been my second year as your National Rights of Way Officer. To give you all a run-down of everything I have been doing on your behalf would be a waste of all our time. If you want a fuller story about any detail than has already been printed in the bulletin, you can have one, you need only ask. Let me tell you what this last month has been like, and you will be up to date. This term I have arranged Tuesdays off to catch up with motorcycling stuff, just as well, too!

First weekend: Follow up some letters about the Barbon Golf Course, collect information for a reply to the Haselhurst Committee on their latest proposals to revise the laws about Byways,

Tuesday: write last month's piece, take it to Clubnight.

Second weekend: Visit to the chairman to prepare for the AGM, and compare notes about Haselhurst, etc. Knocked together a selection of designs for a TRF card or sticker for the AGM.

Tuesday: Write a report for the Exec meeting next Saturday, type out my submission for Haselhurst, proofread, print out copies.

Third weekend: TRF Exec meeting at a motorcycle do in the Forest of Dean, all weekend. A good opportunity, I thought, to chat about the way the club is going with all the local reps I don't have enough time to chat with at normal meetings. A fiasco really, because hardly anyone stayed overnight, but I had a good talk with Martin Harding who is at the cutting edge of TRF work in the Bristol area. The weekend was spoiled by the discovery that the Harley Davidson demonstrators at the campsite were fitted with illegal noisy pipes...

Tuesday: Wrote a report to the BMF about the HD nonsense, read it through, and tore it up because it was too strong even for me. Tried again. Caught up with some business stuff and had a couple of jobs to do for the IMTC so I had to miss magazine lick & stick night. Sent Mary instead.

Fourth weekend: Wrote a long report in reply to the Country Landowners Association's latest attempt to prise money out of public coffers, "A Better Way Forward". After years of ploughing up, blocking and denying our rights they would like us to pay them to put in some nice permissive routes. And put TROs on legal lanes, of course.

Tuesday: Sorted out some BMF paperwork for the FIM rally next July in Edinburgh. This has all fallen in Geoff Wilson's lap and he is already busy with LARA stuff so I am helping out where I can.

Fifth weekend: Suddenly there is an urgent request from Alan Kind to respond to a report of a court case in Devon. Not the one Martin Cooper has been involved with, but 'The Fowler Case' which may turn out to have serious implications for us. It all hinges around the wording of the 1949 National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act, and whether or not a 'definitive' footpath could have higher rights. George Laurence says not, and I say it could, but how can we convince the DoE lawyers that a top barrister is wrong and a

bumbling amateur is right? At least one judge is on my side, but what if it goes to appeal? And there is a call from the kitchen to help ice a twenty first birthday cake, but we'll come to that later.

Tuesday: Finish off the stuff for Alan, with copies of maps, references, etc. I only managed to find seven reasons why I might be right and George Laurence wrong, I hope that is enough! Also write this report to give to the editor for those members who would rather go trail riding than come to the AGM. Trail riding? What's that? Oh, yes, I remember. I used to do it before I volunteered for this job.

As you can see, this has been a rather busy time. I am not complaining. Complaining just isn't in my nature, is it Geoff? The whole year has been one long series of fights, local, regional, and national. What the work of the TRF ought to be about is surely something more than standing without backs to the wall fending off those who want us to stop. Last year I asked you all to help by doing the research and recording we need to go forward. Have you done it? I know Martin Harding has. And so have a few others. Can we really build a future for you all on the efforts of so few?

You told us you didn't want a two level club, when that idea was floated. You all want to be equal. Fair enough. Nothing would please me more than have a whole club who worked as hard as Martin. Start at once, please. Start by letting us all know what your group has done for the rest of us. Stand back, Nettlebed, here it comes.

Oh yes, the cake. Whose birthday is it then? You couldn't get away? What a shame. It was such a nice cake, too.

TIM STEVENS



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