

GROUPS

BLACK COUNTRY

John Chilton, Tel: 01902 659009
1 & 3 Thurs, 8.30pm, The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton

BRISTOL

David Clegg, Tel: 01275 373652
2nd Mon, Warmley Community Centre, Deanery Road, (A420), Kingswood

CAMBRIDGE

Richard Palmer, Tel: 01353 88344
1st Thur, Golden Ball, Boxworth

CHESHIRE

Nigel Hockin, Tel: 0161 456 8270
2 & 4 Mon, The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport

CORNWALL

Sally A. Madgwick, Tel: 01208 74411
Ring Secretary for details

CUMBRIA

Roger Harris, Tel: 01539 725198
2nd Wednesday, Duke of Cumberland, Kendal

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Kevin Marsh, Tel: 01246 237910
2 & 4 Tue., Enfield Arms, Broughton Lane, Altercliffe, Sheffield

DEVON

Richard Arscott, Tel: 01803 612950
2nd Tue, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton Abbot

DORSET

Tony Summers, Tel: 01202 894419
1st Tue, Greyhound Inn, Winterbourne, Kingston, (Nr. Bere Regis)

EAST MIDLANDS

Graham Chinnery, Tel: 01332 863433
2nd Wed, The Chequers Inn, Main St, Breaston, South Derbyshire, J25 on M1

EAST SCOTLAND

Les Mollison, Tel: 01382 738530
2nd Wed, Glencarse Hotel, A85, Perth to Dundee Rd.

EAST YORKS

Dave Barratt, Tel: 01977 794143
2nd Wed, Kellingley Social Centre, Knottingley

GLOUCESTER

Wayne Little, Tel: 01452 611735
1st Tue, Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.

HERTFORDSHIRE

Colin Adlam, Tel: 0181 445 5203
1st Wed, Coach & Horses, Newgate St, Nr Cuffly

ISLE OF WIGHT

Mick Holbrook, Tel: 01983 866361
Last Thur, Liberal Club, Landguard Rd, Shanklin, IOW

KENT

Jeff Hayward, Tel: 01322 863521
2nd Tue, Pied Bull, Farningham, Nr Brands Hatch

LANCASHIRE

Keith Westley, Tel: 01704 893215
1st Thur, Hindshead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard

LINCOLNSHIRE

Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 01529 60793
4th Thur, The Queens Head, Kirkby-la-Thorpe, Sleaford

LODDON VALE

Bernard Green, Tel: 01344 50289
2nd Thurs, Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading

NORTH MIDLANDS

Simon Lowe, Tel: 01298 24388
1st Tue, Stafford Arms, Bagnall & 3rd Tue, Cheshire Cheese, Buxton

NORTHUMBERLAND

Mark Snoddy, Tel: 0191 386 0749
1st Tue, The Beamish Mary, No Place, Co. Durham

NORTH WALES

John Mills, Tel: 01477 534425
1st Wed, Hope & Anchor, Ewloe Place, Buckley

OXFORDSHIRE

Pat McGuire, Tel: 01844 238414
3rd Thursday, Duke of Marlborough, 1.5 miles North of Woodstock

RIBBLE VALLEY

Anthony Dinsdale, Tel: 01200 28507
2nd Tue, Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)

SHROPSHIRE

Mr. C. Ball, Tel: 01952 598092
2nd & last Wed, Cournd Lodge Hotel, Shrewsbury Rd, Shrewsbury

SOMERSET

Peter Banks, Tel: 01749 860396
Last Thur, The Canal Inn, Wrantage

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Euan Harrison, Tel: 01962 733781
3rd Wed, The Ship Inn, Owlesbury, Nr. Winchester

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Brian Wright 0181 686 3458 Wed/Sat or 01797 363373 Sun/Tue
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Trevor Gardiner, Tel: 01788 815927
2nd Mon, The Spencer Arms, Chapel Brampton

SOUTH WALES

Stuart Dodwell, Tel: 01446 710851
1st Thur, Welsh Institute of Sport, Cardiff, 8pm

SUFFOLK

John Green, Tel: 01473 730493
Last Wed, Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd, Bury-St-Ed.

SWINDON

Pete Owen, Tel: 01793 750557
1st Wed, Jacobs Ladder, Stratton St. Margaret, Swindon

SUSSEX

Bevis Billingham, Tel: 01243 585128
Last Thurs, Ashing on Social Club, Rear of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles North of Worthing

TEESIDE & NORTH YORKS

Leo Crone, Tel: 01325 380117
1st & 3rd Wed, Blacksmiths Arms, Swainby

THAMES VALLEY

Don Hoaglin, Tel: 01474 813977
3rd Mon, District Arms, Woodthorpe Rd, Ashford, Middlesex

WEST ANGLIA

David Knight, Tel: 01933 313816
1st & 3rd Thurs, Scott Bader Clubhouse, Opp. Parish Church, Woolston, Wellingborough

WEST MIDLANDS

Dennis Hayter, Tel: 01527 23550
1st & 3rd Tue, Wilmcote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon

WEST SOMERSET

David Dyer, Tel: 01643 841139
2nd Wed, Anchor Inn, Exbridge

WEST YORKSHIRE

Gordon Carr, Tel: 01535 644568
1st & 3rd Thur, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd), Odsal, Bradford

WILTSHIRE

Bill Riley, Tel/Fax: 01225 863811
1st Tue, The Toll Gate, Holt, Trowbridge

WYVERN

Steve Pighills, Tel: 01902 672479
Every Thur, 10pm, Potter's Rose & Crown, Colley Lane, Halesowen



TRAIL

OCTOBER, 1995

No. 206

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

EDITOR: Mike "Nettlebed" Pedley.



Photo by G. Shilton.

CONTENTS

Editor	3	Lady Anne Clifford's Highway	9
The Dalcassian Rally	4	A Ride On The Wild Side?	10
RoW News	6	Scotland For The Brave	16
Clipping, Prop. new gp, Notice	7	Letters	20
FEM News	8	Respecting The Ridgeway	11
Book Review			14

All Contributions to the Editor Please keep it short and sweet!
COPY DEADLINE: FIRST POST, 1ST TUESDAY OF MONTH

CLASSIFIED

YAMAHA SEROW 225 SPARES ... All now available. Postal service from Bike Sport, Leek, Staffs. Phone/Fax: 01538 387918. Send an SAE to Bike Sport, Barnfield Ind. Estate, Leek, Staffs., ST13 5QG for latest info sheet on Serows.

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GIVI MONOKEY luggage fitting kit for Yamaha XTZ750 Super Tenere. As new £30. Tel: 0181 301 2913 (S.E. London).

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WANTED Yamaha Serow. Must be electric start. The odd scratch not important. Tel: 01704 894136.

HONDA MTX200 1986, 8000 miles, T & T, top end overhaul, clean. £750 ono. Tel: Gordon 01298 26201 (Derbyshire).

YAMAHA DT125R 1994, 6610 miles, taxed, excellent condition, £1600 ovno. Tel: Steve 01843 584427 (Kent).

ALLOY TAIL PIPE for XR250, £40. Acerbis rear mudguard in white, £10. Wanted - two bike trailer. Tel: Andy 0116 277 7467.

MAGAZINE ADVERTISING

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TRF OFFICERS

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PUBLIC REL. OFFICER Mark Holland, Corn Farm, Devauden, Chepstow, Gwent NP6 6NS
Tel: 01291 650240 (weekends only)

MEMBERSHIP SEC. ... Graham Stratford, 38 Thornton Crescent, Old Coulsdon, Surrey CR5 1LH
Tel: 01737 553599

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Tel: 01274 870162

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EDITOR Mike Pedley, Nettlebed, Newsholme, Gisburn, Clitheroe, Lancs. BB7 4JF
Tel: 01200 445657

RoW COORDINATOR. Steve Neville, 19 Henley Deane, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 8SU.

The views expressed in 'Trail' are those of its correspondents and not necessarily of the editor or the T.R.F.

EDITOR

Trail riding, with a small 't' has of course existed as long as motorcycling itself - simply because at the outset all roads were unsurfaced! Trail riding with a large 'T' ie the TRF variety is generally accredited to the late John Ebbrell and has barely been around for twenty five years.

It may seem, in that relatively short time, that the legislation which governs our hobby has become more and more oppressive but, is this really the case? The problem is perhaps that as we have become more successful, our 'profile' has risen and the public at large and the Ramblers in particular, are simply more aware of our existence.

I sometimes feel that we preach 'doom and gloom' a little too much for our own good. I do not deny that conflict does arise but lets be realistic, in terms of the vast amount of trail miles covered it is surely minuscule and easily as much exists whatever the pursuit. Try talking to a Council RoW Officer, chances are he will never have heard of us but complaints from landowners about ramblers (with a small 'r') and from ramblers about landowners are legion! Not to mention horseriders! My own area is festooned with footpaths bearing 'No horseriders' signs.

At the recent Labour Party conference, John Prescott told the Tories to 'go home and prepare for opposition'. I've been doing the same every time I've set off for a Sunday run for the last ten years or so! The Labour Party also promised 'freedom to roam'. Sounds good. Could be just the thing to take the heat off us for the next few years.

Yes, we must continue to fight injustice but we are still here and although there have been losses there have also been great victories. We are riding a vastly greater network of lanes than when I joined the TRF ten years ago and for me personally the 'aggro' on the trail seems less. Or perhaps my skin's just got thicker.

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EAST MIDLANDS TRF MEMBER

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NETTLEBED

THE DALCASSIAN RALLY

The Dalcassian Rally is a fairly famous trail riding event which has diminished in size and formality in recent times. When I went to the 25th Event in, I think, 1989, when it was centred on Killarney, there was a hotel full of people, and a car park full of bikes. The impact on the local nimby population discouraged the organiser, Arnold Acheson, from really publicising future occasions.

The result is that it still takes place, this year in C. Donegal, but attracted only a small clientele, about ten from the UK and a slightly larger number from Eire, on this occasion.

The British participants were more or less traditional trail riders, as were a few of the Irish. But the bulk of the latter, riding mainly trials bikes, disappeared each day, first onto the hills, and then, from lunch time onwards, into the bars.

I came as one of six from the Wyvern TRF. Mid week, Nettlebed arrived with a group from Lancashire; there was also a lone TRF representative from south of Watford Gap, Derek, who rode with us.

As a concession to domestic harmony I brought my wife, daughter, and her dog. This enabled me to arrive sufficiently late to miss the first two wet days, and to be forced to go out with the family instead of on the third day's really ball breaking ride. The group covered 12 miles by 3 o'clock in the afternoon, including their road work. Fun for some, but not for me. On the fourth day the riding and weather were

good again. The luck of the quarter Irish in me, I guess. The other three quarters Yorkshire in my blood would have had me struggling through a bog in driving rain for sure.

The Donegal area has some of the best scenery in Ireland, and is remote and unspoilt, as I imagine Wales or the Lake District might have been fifty years ago. Except where they coincide with peat cutting, the tracks, as designated on the new satellite generated 1:50000 maps, are unused and vary from metalled but overgrown, to deepest bog. There are lots of very minor tarmac roads, too! This year's drought was probably a saving grace. Many of our routes would have been near impossible otherwise.

On my first day we climbed through forestry onto the hills south of Glenties, over bog to drop down towards a pass north of the Blue Stack Mountains. Great riding over the pass, a solid surface to

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tempt you to speed up and ignore the view, but with the odd hole to induce wrist and neck stressing shocks to the system. Don't let anyone tell you good handling and long travel suspension are unnecessary luxuries. There was a circle of similar tracks before lunch, and we even saw a leprechaun, or at least a small, silent old man sitting at the roadside who was a dead ringer for one. Lunch was followed by a ride on the only railway in Donegal. Not very long, not very exciting, but the lady who sold us the tickets would have been most upset if we'd passed up the chance.

The afternoon produced more of the same good riding, the evening involved mountains of food so great that I was too full to over indulge in the Guinness. Maybe a good thing, but I'm not entirely sure.

The second day we headed north, not quite so exciting till the end, when we followed up a ride in the sea with the crossing of the largest uncharted area of bog and peat I've ever seen. If it hadn't been for coming upon old rail tracks leading out, and following between these, we might still have been there.

More food mountains, and a sufficiency of Guinness, followed that evening, as became the pattern.

The next day I missed, making an excursion by car to Malin Head, no doubt familiar to those of you who listen to the Shipping Forecast. It's very interesting once in one's life.

My colleagues spent their day in the bogs as I have said, which they assure me was really good fun.

My third riding day, when we were joined by Nettlebed and his cohorts, was spent to the south of Glenties. The first track, a climb by the side of a spectacular waterfall, was followed by routes above and along Atlantic cliff tops, past abandoned ports, crofts surrounded by hedges of fuchsia, and swathes of montbretia and scabious. Red bushes, orange flowers and blue flowers to those who didn't care.

He who knew advised us to change our minds about the direction to take for the last track of the day, and the trip, for the Wyvern Group. He was right. We started by climbing up along a break through forestry. The drainage was inadequate. I got wet for the first time when, wheeling my bike across a particularly soggy bit, it stayed on top but I didn't. It's hard holding a trail bike upright when you have sunk to your thighs in mud. In fact it's impossible, and you need help. When the help had stopped laughing, he lifted the bike off, thus saving me from a watery and muddy grave.

I thought that that was it; I hadn't realised this was the dreaded "track with the bridge missing at the end". I thought we had given up on that one. The only way to bypass that uncrossable ravine which had replaced the bridge was to head up the valley until said ravine became more navigable. By that we mean just a sixty foot, one in one, skid down a boggy bank into the river, then full power up the rather less steep opposite side. Maybe it wasn't quite as dramatic as its build up, at least not on a dry day, when the river was low. They said it seemed impossible on one of the earlier wet days when the river was a torrent.

It was a good end to the trip anyway. I've now been to the three main Dalcassian venues (the last was Westport, Co. Mayo). They all provide excellent riding, and I'd recommend taking a bike, trial or otherwise, across the sea to Ireland to anyone.

Steve Pighills

RoW NEWS

PROBLEMS WITH LOCKED GATES

I had some problems last weekend with locked gates on OS104. The first one was on lane 107b. This lane runs WSW from Blubberhouses. The Eastern end at Manor House was padlocked (a contractor is renovating/converting the house). We turned round and tried 176 which runs through the forest at Back Allotments to Helgar Pike. The gate at 166530 was padlocked too!

During this summer I lead a run from Pateley Bridge. I experienced difficulties on two lanes. The first lane was lane 33 (OS 99). The lane goes NW from 166657, passes just North of Sparrowhawk Farm and ends in a quarry. Unfortunately the 'exit' was fenced off! The second is Bagwith House Lane, lane 58 (OS 99). This one runs South(ish) from Bagwith House at 197756. I contacted NYCC about these last two lanes and they said they would check the information on the definitive map. They have written back to say that they are both designated as footpaths. However, I have recently discovered that this is a County Road and a letter was received from NYCC on 20/10/78 to confirm it!!

Has anyone any information or knowledge of the above letter or any of the lanes mentioned. That weekend I also avoided Pock Stones Moor Road. When we arrived at the South end at 129594 (OS 104) there was no sign to indicate a TRO! Is this TRO still operating? HELP!!

Alan Hodson, 16 St. Stephens Close, Astley, Manchester, M29 7GR.

HAMPSHIRE ROW NEWS

FORTHCOMING INQUIRIES:

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Map Reference</u>
Dummer & Kempshott	21 November	11	SU588460 to 588441
		13	SU598462 to 605457

Candovers RUPPs 1-6-9-12-13-14-15
16-20-21

12 December

PUBLIC INQUIRIES IN 1996. Please make note of the following:

Over Wallop 16th April

Bradley 18th June 1996 This concerns objections to the modifications to bridleway

Martin 9th July 1996

Western Patrick 10th September 1996 This concerns objections to the modifications to bridleway

THERE IS STILL A PRESSING NEED FOR EVIDENCE SUPPORTING VEHICULAR STATUS ON THE WESTON PATRICK AND BRADLEY LANES.

As proved at Litchfield and Woodcote, user evidence counts for a lot.

Contact Dave Tilbury on 01703 618937.

CLIPPING

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JULY '95

ACTIVE SPORT AND RECREATION

The planning control of formal sports such as motorbike scrambling, sports car racing, four wheel drive activities, gliding, parachuting, clay pigeon shooting, executive sports and even paint balling is vested in the local planning authorities and guided by local plans. In many cases, however, this control is difficult as enforcement can only take place after a certain period (14 or 28 days) and if it can be proved that the activity constitutes development or change of use. There are clear environmental conflicts with many of these activities, such as noise and visual pollution, and the landscape interests of the AONB must be a primary consideration in the

judgement of applications. Other legislation exists which can be used to control activities, such as the Environmental Protection Act, and these have become more rigorous in recent years.

Care needs to be taken, however, in considering the legitimate use of unclassified roads and green lanes (classed as Byways Open for All Traffic, BOAT) for motorbike trail riding. This activity is popular amongst a small and dedicated group and currently represents little threat to the AONB's landscape. In fact, devotees can be an important lobby for the protection and management of ancient routes which are and important and irreplaceable part of our landscape heritage.

PROPOSED NEW GROUP

PEAK DISTRICT GROUP

meeting at The Travellers Rest, Ashbourne Road, Derby.

1st Thursday of every month at 8pm.

For more details please contact Phil Sadler on 01332 344495.

NOTICES

WIRING DIAGRAM - SUZUKI TS185

Will the gentleman from Sussex who contacted me requesting information on wiring for his Suzuki TS185ER please give me a call - I'm afraid I lost your address.

Tel: 0831 476839 weekdays

Tel: 01254 209683 weekends and evenings

Paul Atherton, Ribble Valley Group

NOTICE OF AUTUMN MEETING FOR SOUTH WEST REGION

TRF members are cordially invited to the next meeting of the South West Region of the Trail Riders Fellowship, to be held in the Village Hall, Cossington on Saturday the 4th November 1995 starting at 10.30am.

All will be welcome, particularly those not in regular contact with local groups and those from other parts of the country. Cossington provides an opportunity to meet fellow members in neighbouring groups; all who are working for the good of the TRF can compare notes and exchange ideas at an informal event. Following on a couple of weeks after the national AGM this meeting will be a useful opportunity for further discussion on topics raised. Each group in the S.W. and our national officials are usually represented. Expenses, including tea and coffee, but not lunch, will be covered by a donation from S.W. groups. I will reserve places at the Red Tile Inn for lunch so please let me know if you wish to join us.

Cossington, near Bridgwater, Somerset, grid ref ST360402, is approx. 4 miles east of M5 junc 23 (Nth Bridgwater); take the A39 towards Glastonbury and look out for the left turn. See you there or get in touch if you have any queries.

Peter Banks, Somerset Group Rep.

SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL MEETING

There will be a meeting of the South Eastern Region on Saturday 18th November 1995 at The Crown Inn, Guildford Road (A25) Westcott, near Dorking, Surrey commencing at 10.30am. Anyone who is interested is welcome to attend.

Please let me have any items for the agenda by 10th November. For any further information please telephone Brian Read on 0181 660 9620.



Commissioner Martin Bangemann wrote to Roger Barton MEP to say that the "Commission does not support the German Government's view that the brand of high speed replacement tyres should be determined by regulation".

But Mr. Bangemann said, "While the choice of tyres to be first mounted on the motorcycle lies obviously with the manufacturer, the choice of tyres clearly

remains with the consumer".

At present no government supports Parliament's view on the new noise limits which will threaten production of air cooled machines. The Dutch want stricter anti-tampering requirements than those already proposed in the directive for small machines, whilst other governments want marking and plating of engine components to apply to larger machines. The Common Position is expected in October, before Parliament reconsiders the directive.

Governments yet again on a collision course with riders and democracy. For further information call Simon Milward on + 32 2 648 3996.

LADY ANNE CLIFFORD'S HIGHWAY

Sod you Jack, I'm alright. No, I know you're not like that, but SOME motorcyclists ARE riding in the countryside with just that attitude. They must have their fun, no matter what the effects are for others who live, work or play there.

Earlier in the year, Sam Watt (TRF West Yorkshire Group Rights of Way Officer) was contacted by an authority following a complaint made by the farmer who owns land at the southern (Hawes) end of 'Highway'. The complaint was that motorcyclists were riding all over his field on the climb up to the first gate, allegedly in large groups, sometimes seven or eight abreast.

THE VISIT. It was arranged for the farmer, Sam and myself to meet 'on site' in order to discuss the problem and hopefully find a solution. Sam and myself met half an hour early, so that we could walk the section involved. We were disturbed to find that the farmer was not exaggerating the problem. We found ruts, caused by motorbikes, spread over fifty yards away from where the track should be, with deliberate "doughnuts" carved out of the turf well away from the track - including in the top right hand corner of the field. The gate is in the top left hand corner!

We were able to persuade the farmer, after lengthy discussion, that we were members of a responsible user group - we are, aren't we? and that our legitimate rights shouldn't be prejudiced because of the selfish acts of a few idiots. Between the three of us, we came up with three suggestions: 1. Place a sign at the bottom of the

hill asking all users to keep to the proper route (a sign to this effect is now in place); 2. Have some way marker posts placed along the track so that people could see where they should be. (The National Park have placed a couple of marker posts in the shadow of the wall on the left of the field as you go up the long steep climb); 3. We would do our best to make sure that our members, and as many other motorcyclists as we could contact, know the importance of sticking to the road.

So here I am doing 'our bit'.

Please keep to the main track up the ridge and once you are on the long steep climb, up to the first gate, keep to the wall on the left as closely as possible.

PLEASE, have fun, but ride sensitively, wherever you ride, ride only where you are legally allowed, keep to the track. Ride sensibly or lose your right to ride.

It's now up to you.

Thankyou, Garry Watson, TRF Secretary

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A RIDE ON THE WILD SIDE ANYONE?

PART 1

In January, my trouble and strife - who isn't a motorcyclist - said she hadn't bought me a present this birthday, but would I like to take a biking holiday abroad? A red haze came down for about a month. The dreams of Baja Peninsular, the Mountains of Mexico, or even Ayres Rock, came and went; too hot you see, and I met her in Morocco 20 odd years ago, so where else could there be?

Now, much as I like riding with you lot, I still enjoy my Missus the best. When I realised she was serious, I asked if she'd go to South Africa with me on a trail bike. From an advert in 'Bike' mag, I learnt of BIKETREK in Pietermaritzburg, who are very friendly and will work out a personal itinerary around the fantastic and fascinating province of Kwa Zulu-Natal - also, supply a couple of F650 BMW's and trust us.

It's 18 plus years since our honeymoon and the kids haven't left us alone from then to now. The first two weeks of August is the quietest time on our farm. The two eldest were booked on a Youth Club trip - out of harm's way to the Shetlands; a nanny borrowed the two young ones; the holiday cottages were fully booked; and someone who doesn't know any better, borrowed the farm. How lucky can we get?

Over a few months - communicating occasionally with Gail Howes by fax - and Wendy getting bike-fit on the back of our PEGASO - we flew to Johannesburg from home in 12 hours: Friday night. We were met by friends for a duty weekend around Jo'burg - a Commercial and Industrial Jungle on Saturday; on Sunday, a more pleasant cultural visit to Pretoria. Early Monday morning we climbed on a 'Greyhound' for the 6 hour drive down from 6000 feet to the fresh, green, cared for town of Pietermaritzburg. Gail met us in her 4WD Combi and took us to their comfortable suburban home. She and Stuart are 3rd generation Springboks and have a very English attitude to all things, i.e. racial tolerance, universal education, work ethic and a warm smile.

After lunch, Stuart sat us both on one of the bikes and accompanied us around 100km of local roads and tracks - he politely rode behind to eat our dust!

Tuesday am Gail put us on the road out of town and said - "Now go and enjoy yourselves". She'd arranged all our overnight stops and a suggested route, but we were free to vary this as we got a feel for the maps, the bike and the weather.

The seat was soft and low; the bike balanced and steered well; the engine gentle but willing; the landscape was big and the wives happy. That red haze is reality!

If you want to know any more about very high places, desolate places, a bike loving Yorkshire gamekeeper, nubile dancers and very wild animals - I'll tell you next month.

"WAINWRIGHT", West Yorkshire

RESPECTING THE RIDGEWAY

The 'Code of Respect' is one of the new management measures announced by the Countryside Commission in January 1995 to safeguard the Ridgeway's future and to reduce conflicts between walkers, horse riders, cyclists, motorcyclists and drivers, all of whom use the National Trail for a variety of activities.

The Ridgeway was made a National Trail in 1972. It is 137km long, the westernmost 64km (known as the Wessex Ridgeway) being mostly byway, RUPP (road used as public path) or county road and open to all vehicular traffic. The Commission has had a long history of involvement with the route since well before its creation as a National Trail, particularly in relation to the debate about conflicts between users. A survey in the late 1970s confirmed that in many places much of the damage to the surface of the route was caused by agricultural vehicles not, as many users thought, by recreational vehicles. However, walkers and horseriders continued to press for action to limit, or manage better, vehicular use of the route on the grounds that it interfered with their enjoyment of the National Trail.

Following considerable levels of detailed study and discussion over many years, various measures have been tried to minimise this conflict. These have included a Code of Voluntary Restraint adopted by motorised user groups, approaches to farmers to encourage use of alternative access to fields and a very substantial investment in better management of the route, including the appointment of a National Trail Officer and the production of a Management Strategy. These had some success but the Commission concluded, in October 1986, that they should be backed up by a traffic regulation order at the busiest times. As the county councils were not prepared to make an Order, the Commission asked the Secretary of State for Transport to use his reserve powers. The Secretary of State asked for further survey work to be done and it was not until October 1992 that the public inquiry was held into the draft Order. The Inspector found against the Order and the Secretary of State accepted his recommendations in December 1993.

From March 1996 for a 12 month period a comprehensive user survey of the whole Ridgeway will help to assess how effective the Code of Respect is at reducing conflict.

Ed. - As this item is part of a news release from the Countryside Commission on official headed paper the implication is that the code is mandatory. In fact it is only a recommendation and has no legal standing but to be successful relies upon the goodwill of ALL users. The TRF logo does not appear on the information boards reproduced overleaf - were we not consulted or did we not agree to some of the recommendations? The information is to go on 72 boards along the Ridgeway.

THE RIDGEWAY a National Trail

Code of Respect

This Code has been endorsed by the many organisations whose logos appear on the front of this board. It has been developed so everyone can enjoy The Ridgeway now and in the future.

Key

- ! walker
- 🚲 cyclist
- 🐎 horse/ rider
- ! 🚲 motorcyclist driver - recreational four wheeled vehicle
- 🚲 driver - agricultural vehicle

Please use this key to find details relating to your use

Country Code

- Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work
- Guard against all risk of fire
- Fasten all gates
- Keep your dogs under close control
- Keep to public paths across farmland
- Use gates and stile to cross fences, hedgers, and walls
- Leave livestock, crops, and machinery alone
- Take your litter home
- Help to keep all water clean
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees
- Take special care on country roads
- Make no unnecessary noise

FOR RECREATION YOU CAN		
Use all The Ridgeway	!	
Use all except footpath sections	! 🚲	
Use all except footpath and bridleway sections	! 🚲 🐎	
CODE OF RESPECT - YOU SHOULD		
Understand that others have legitimate access to many sections	! 🚲 🐎 🚲 🐎	
Spread the message about responsible use	! 🚲 🐎 🚲 🐎	
Follow the Country Code	! 🚲 🐎 🚲 🐎	
Limit your use when the surface is vulnerable during and after wet weather	! 🚲 🐎	
Avoid using The Ridgeway if you can find or develop another route	! 🚲 🐎	
Keep to already well used parts of the track to prevent damage to the whole width	! 🚲 🐎	
Continue to help by reinstating the surface where possible	! 🚲 🐎	
Make sure you and your vehicle are fully road-legal	! 🚲 🐎	
Make sure your bicycle is roadworthy	! 🚲 🐎	
Drive at a quiet and careful speed with no more than 4 four wheeled vehicles or 8 motorcycles in any one group	! 🚲 🐎	
Ride at a safe and controlled pace	! 🚲 🐎	
Help other users, and make your own visit more enjoyable, by using The Ridgeway when it is less busy	! 🚲 🐎	
Warn walkers of your approach and pass carefully	! 🚲 🐎	
Warn walkers and horse riders of your approach and give way to them	! 🚲 🐎	
Give way to horse riders	! 🚲 🐎	
Watch out for and respect temporary voluntary restraint signs and report registration numbers of those who break codes to LARA (Motoring Organizations' Land Access & Recreation Association), tel 01543 467218	! 🚲 🐎	
FOR INFORMATION YOU CAN		
Use the Information Hotline (01865 875555) for up to date information about the condition of The Ridgeway, temporary voluntary restraints and special events	! 🚲 🐎 🚲 🐎	
Obtain general information about The Ridgeway and report problems by contacting The Ridgeway Office, Countryside Service, Dept of Leisure & Arts, Holton, Oxford OX33 1QQ. Tel 01865 870224	! 🚲 🐎 🚲 🐎	

THE RIDGEWAY - a National Trail

Code of Respect

To respect this National Trail so that it can be enjoyed by all, please...

- ! 🚲 Act responsibly to conserve The Ridgeway
- ! 🚲 Be aware and considerate of the rights of others

Please read the full code on the back of this board

Thank you



BOOK REVIEW

"EXPLORING BRITAIN'S LONG DISTANCE PATHS"

AUTHOR: MULTIPLE ISBN: 0 7495 0502 8

PRICE: £25.00 1992 price - hardback

RATING:: 4 OUT OF 5

This book is atypical for the RA member looking for somewhere else to walk. I had a feeling of being of a biased opinion because the AA (no not Alcoholics Anon) are the publishers - maybe they give this book away with initial membership - biased because the AA are against vehicles in the countryside. NO, I did not buy this book, just glad that I found it in the library where perusal is free.

The book is well laid out, with pages explaining which author wrote which guide, which routes are explained and an introduction to LDPs. This introduction is all very well but it does rather beat the RA drum, suggesting without explanation that one should expect to only see walkers on these routes - therefore potential conflict. It is a shame that within the introduction the possibility of meeting vehicles was not mentioned as the book does explain the Ridgeway in some detail.

The section on how to utilise the book is worthwhile but only for the information - mention is made that the OS Landranger maps are an ideal companion, how to make use of grid references and how to read them. Yet again though, the failure to mention vehicular routes followed by the LDP is unforgivable (see earlier mention of AA policy). Further on in the book, under the section 'erosion' is the statement that "should the route be also used by horses and 4WD vehicles, the problem becomes considerably worse". This is the first time that vehicles, be they recreational or agricultural are to be experienced, are mentioned. The following section concerning Rights of Way goes some way to explaining the complexities of access to the countryside. The ways open to motorised vehicles are as byways or green lanes, for some time terms that the

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RA and others suggest are not correct for determining where vehicles can go, especially as green lanes also explain many vehicular footpaths and bridleways in the TRF vocabulary. Countryside Commission recommended colours for waymarking footpaths - yellow, bridleways - blue and byways - red is explained but the book was published before royal assent was passed on the Ploughing and Rights of Way Acts, so I question the Statement that RoW can be ploughed out without reference to their true status.

For those interested in the West Country, the South West Coast Path, Two Moons Way, Leland Trail and the Cotswold Way are explained in good detail with descriptions, photographs and annotated maps together with recommended maps and map references mentioned. Reading through the text, many unmetalled lanes and muddy tracks are written about and the occasional photograph of a grassy lane is worthwhile.

As I stated earlier, it is the article concerning the Ridgeway that is the reason for the review, under the main heading of the South and South East England, and includes the low coastal route, Wayfarers Walk, South Downs Way, Downs Link, Greenland Way, Wealdway, Essex Way, Oxfordshire Way as well as the Ridgeway. Good photographs and interesting text makes for an enjoyable read, but unfortunately the author of the "South Downs Way" explains that the route is bridleway only and therefore "no motorised vehicles are allowed".

Confrontational or what? There are a total of 10 pages explaining the route and its various feeders from places to visit and the author makes many references to sunken lanes, partially metalled tracks, rutted tracks between hedgerows. But not once does the agricultural vehicle get even part of the blame for tractor ruts or similar damage, preferring instead to state that, despite voluntary restraint on Sundays, Bank Holidays and days following heavy rain, there is a hope that a total ban on recreational vehicles is in the offing. There are also guides to car parking, accommodation, public transport and tourist information centres.

Overall, not a bad book, pretty well researched but loaned from the library better than purchasing.

Tim Gooderson, Kent

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SCOTLAND FOR THE BRAVE

DAY ONE

South from Aboyne on the Fungle Road to Tarfside

We set off early after breakfast complete with hangovers to follow the trail through Glen Cat. Dropping down into Balloch and across the bog we began to head up into the hills. About a mile further on the trail begins to thin out a bit and the fun begins. We cross two or three small washed out burns and we're in trouble. The next burn is impassable and we can't turn back.

Off the bikes for a rest and a drink while Nick goes off up the hill to scout out the upper trail we know is there somewhere. Meanwhile Jabba's DR350 won't start and I fall off my WR200 trying to turn round on a 2ft wide sheep track on the side of a 45° slope. Nick comes back claiming to have found a route up the steep heather bank above us, we decide to give it a go. Nick goes first and with some assistance disappears up the hill out of sight. Julien goes next and flies up. My go now, three attempts and I'm up, not bad so far. Now for Jabba on his DR. Jabba goes airborne for 15ft up the hill then lies down for a rest. The DR won't start. We push the bike up the hill for about 10ft and have another break. Eventually we all make it and stop by a small waterfall for a rest. The rest of the trail is plain sailing apart from Julien attempting some tree felling and Nick's near miss with a sheep.

Lunch at Tarfside Post Office and off up Glen Mark towards Mount Keen. The climb to the top is awesome and fast reactions are needed to negotiate the rocks and holes. We make it just in time as Nick's KDX125 decides it's had enough and boils over in the midday heat. Still it's a good excuse for a rest. The view from the summit is tremendous. We move on and pick our way down the long descent into Glen Tanar and cruise through the forest back to the Profeits Hotel. Several pints later it's time for bed.

DAY 2

North into the Ladder Hills

After talking to Stumpy, one of the local lads, we follow his directions to try to reach the top of Morven. The route turns out to be a dead end with no sign of a track across the steep rock and heather. After yesterday none of us are in any mood to try and find a way up. We head back to the road via a trail along the side of Deskry Water. Half a mile of tarmac and into a forest. We attract the attention of two forest wardens who explain the trail we are on is a dead end and show us the way out to Strathdon.

North from Strathdon into the Ladder Hills. Great riding with fantastic views until we stop by a deserted Bothy for a rest. Inside the roof has been inscribed by previous visitors since 1865! We move on deeper into the hills. Dropping down out through a short section of forest trail we come out at Glenbuchat Lodge and meet face to face with an unhappy looking Gamekeeper in a Land Rover.

The poor man's reaction to our passing is typical. None of the people we meet can believe what we are doing and they are amazed at where we have been. Trail riders are a very rare breed up here indeed.

On our journey back to Dinnet we do a short loop up over Geal Charn and follow one of the many short sections of old Military road back onto the A939 and return to the Profeits for more beer.

DAY 3

A lazy day in the Southern Cairngorms

After a late night in the bar with the locals and Chip the Landlord we are now down to three as Nick's back is playing up and he decides to go for a day out in Aberdeen. We ride out to Braemar follow the River Dee along a flat sandy trail. Our planned route is stopped by a waterfall and some rocks so we turn due south towards Bynack Lodge.

Turning to head west along Geldie Burn our second attempt to reach the mountains is blocked by a giant bog with no discernible route through. There are lots of nasty peat hags and black smelly lakes of goo, we decide not to bother. We now follow a trail past the ruin of Geldie Lodge and eventually reach a dead end by the side of a river where we spend the rest of the day sunbathing. A pleasant end to a quiet day out.

DAY 4

The Corrieyairack Pass

Nick's back has eased now so we load the bikes in the van and drive 100 miles to Laggan and the start of the infamous Corrieyairack Pass. The Corrieyairack Pass has to be one of the all time classic sections of off road trail in this country. It is a 10 mile mountain pass built by General Wade whose passion for road building set out the routes for many of the tarmac roads in Scotland today. This man was incredible.

The ride out was superb with brilliant sunshine and clear views out over the mountains. Even above the snow line it was still very hot and the experience is one not to be missed. At the Fort Augustus end of the pass the trail is washed out to a depth of over 15ft in places and is impassable. From here the view up to the North East is breathtaking as the vast expanse of Loch Ness disappears into the distance. Reluctantly we began our return trip back up the pass over to Laggan. On the return journey Nick was caught out by a steep rise in the trail and produced a spectacular display of acrobatics and gymnastics as he struggled to stay on the bike. How he didn't fall off is a mystery but it cured his bad back which gave no more trouble after that.

A short detour at the highest point of the pass led Julien and myself to ascend Carn Leac while Nick and Jabba wimped out and watched from a distance. The view from the top was fantastic with snow capped mountains in all directions.

Well worth the steep ride up. Another great day over and after the long drive back we had to recover from all the excitement.

This period of recuperation led to a late night in the bar with Brian, a local shepherd, telling us how to ascend Morven from the southern side and not believe Stumpy's claim that he rode to the top on a Kawasaki 250 from the northern side. He also told us to make sure we wrote our names in the book at the top of Morven. The book being in a tin under a rock on the summit. However the main entertainment of the night came from Egg, a mad redneck Australian copper who drank his way into oblivion with the four mad bikers from England.

DAY 5

The ascent of Morven

The day began rather slowly thanks to the late night with Egg the Aussie and Brian the Shepherd. However we set off for fuel only to discover the servo motor to my WR's YPVS had packed up. The morning was spent in the hotel car park with the WR in bits all to no avail as a repair was not forthcoming. However no one cared as we were all glad of the rest and it was another boiling hot day. After a toasted sandwich for lunch I finally gave up and set the power valve in the fully open position and that was that.

We set off once more for the hills following the route revealed to us the night before. Out of Ballater up to Lary onto the dirt and up a gentle climb round a bend to a securely locked gate. Another failed attempt to reach the top of Morven. Undeterred we studied the map and found another route in through a forest off the north side of the Pass of Ballater, success at last as we climbed up out of civilisation into the hills.

Our next problem was to find the track described to us by Brian, it wasn't marked on the map. Over Peter's Hill, up Tom Garchory, turn left and follow the track to a line of Grouse Butts then turn left onto a Land Rover track and follow it up the hill. Sounded simple enough. About 2 hours later we were still heading East with no sign of the Grouse Butts although we did see a herd of wild Deer cross in front of us as we traversed a dried up peat bog, amazing.

At the next gate we stopped and turned round as we had now passed Morven and we decided we must have missed the way up. Almost back at the track we had come in on there was the Land Rover track just as described about 20ft away from where we started. At last we were off climbing up past the line of Grouse Butts heading towards Morven.

After a steady but challenging climb to the top we were there, among the rocks, hundreds of rocks. Book in a tin under a rock, oh yes, very funny. But there it was, all nicely protected from the weather, a book and two pens in a Tupperware box. So we signed our names along with a short account of the first properly documented ascent of Morven by trail bike. What a day.

DAY 6

Mount Keen by the Mounth Road

Our last day in Scotland was greeted by a cloudy sky and mist over the tops of the hills. We didn't care and set off to ride up onto Mount Keen from the northern side. No problem we thought until we lost our way in the thick clouds and ended up missing a turn off to the right below the top of the mountain.

After spending a few worrying minutes wandering around in the mist we eventually found our way and rode down the other side back into Tarfside where we had been earlier in the week. An excellent lunch and a visit to the museum at Ardoch and we are off again back over the mountains to Aboyne this time by the Firmouth Road.

The weather had begun to turn and it was cold and wet over the top but we didn't care as it was refreshing after the heat of the previous 5 days. So the last trail of the holiday was over and we returned to the hotel feeling subdued.

What a great holiday, over 350 miles of trail riding, great company, fantastic scenery, excellent hotel, nice friendly people, we're going back again next year.

To finish I must thank Les Mollison from the East Scotland Group for all his help in identifying where to ride. I must also thank Chip and Jean at the Profefits Hotel Dinnet for looking after us so well, a hotel I would recommend to anyone who is ever in this part of Scotland.

Simon Lowe, North Midland TRF

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LETTERS

RUN LEADERS

I don't know how to describe this letter. I suppose it's just the ramblings of a mud plugging, clutch-feathering, 5-getting, bog-hole-finding, poor-map-reading, ex-moto-crossing, carries-everything, trail rider. With apologies to the T & MX 1970's sticker writer, (for those who remember), I did say I was rambling!!

I belong to the Lancs group and for the last 9 months very few people offer to lead runs. Peter Knagg, Brian Cummings and myself have offered to lead runs over many months. Maybe it was my bad timing...but for several runs only one Lancs member turned up...Ian Wright. John Bernard also came on a couple of runs, but he's from the Cumbria group! I am stating fact, this is not criticising anyone. Everyone has the right to turn up (or not). We all have our reasons for not joining a run.

I have been riding motorbikes off-tarmac/off-road for 34 years. I have been trail riding for about 5 years. I remember going to my first few club nights. So many issues were discussed, and so many new words... RUPP's, BOATs, RoW, UCRs. Language is such a powerful tool. The 'Chair' said "RUNS...will anyone lead a run this month?" I waited with bated breath. Then a voice came from the

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corner "Hellifield on the 14th, 9.00am for 9.30". It was Peter Ballard to the rescue...A RUN!

There are two of Peter's runs I remember well, both in the summer of '91. The first from Kendal took us over Gatescarth Pass. I learned a lot on that run! It was a pleasure to watch talented riders overcome the obstacles with ease, while I struggled. I also remember the camaraderie and support of fellow riders. Thanks for dragging me and my XL over the naggery bits. Thanks also for your advice and encouragement over the 'sections' I managed on my own. The second run was from Rusland Pool taking in Walna Scar Road. This is the first time I met my good friends Ian Wright and Phil Lord. My phone bill has nearly doubled since I met these two! Peter Ballard is moving (or he already has) to a new job in Germany. Good luck Peter! Your friendship and contribution to the TRF will be sorely missed.

I have also enjoyed runs with other groups, meeting some very interesting people along the way. Thanks to Paul Hall and the Yorks group for Kettlewell November '94. I met Andrew Care, Peter Boyce and the 'Dorset boys'. Hope to see you soon. If you fancy a run 'up North' give me a call. Our run leader for the weekend was Dave Loney. I returned to Kettlewell this summer with Dave, and some Lancs and Yorks members. We set off at 10.00 (Dave was late), but we were riding until 8.00. This was the best run I've been on. The lanes, the company, the scenery...superb. I remember cresting the hill and dropping into Swaledale at the NW end near Crackpot Hall...what a valley! Thanks Dave.

I must offer my commiserations to Ian Mills (ex-Cheshire group). He now lives in Cambs and it is a long way from God's Country. Strange as it may seem this Lancashire lad for once agrees with a Yorkshireman's statement. Seriously though, I am sure he is enjoying exploring the 'new' lanes, and he says the 'natives' are very friendly, but..."How many hills are there in Cambs?" I am sure he misses the 'Northern' terrain. I must also thank Roger Davies from our group. He gave us an enjoyable day out recently in N. Wales. This man is an enigma! He travelled to a wedding 'down south' on his 600cc Yamaha taking in several trails including the Ridgeway. He has also



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travelled up to Scotland, on the same 'beast', over many trails including the Corrieayrack Pass, and still got home in one piece the same day. I'm gobsmacked!

Anyway I'll stop rambling now as I have now emptied the bottle of Scotch (hic).

Alan Hodson, Lancs Group

TALKING SENSE?

At long last somebody is talking sense (or should that be writing sense). I am referring to Trail 205, the letters from Peter A. Lee and Peter Knagg.

It is not all about what we wear, what bikes we use or even what tyres we use (in Welsh bogs see how far you would get with a trials tyre!). It is all down to common sense i.e. riding at a speed and nature compatible with the prevailing conditions and trying to communicate with other users while we are enjoying our hobby.

Getting back to the colour or style of our clothing, most ramblers look like extras from a West End production of Joseph and his Multi Coloured Dream Coat, so why should we wear black Belstaffs or yellow plastic jackets and not make use of modern materials.

Dave Kirkby, North Wales

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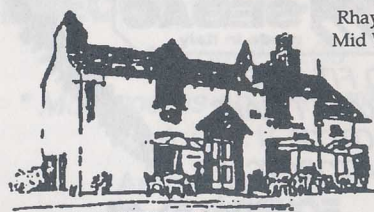
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RE: TRAIL NO.204, NORTH STOKE

Thanks for publishing my North Stoke Inquiry letter in time.

We had a good number of TRF'ers turn up on September 12th, including some from outside the Bristol Group. So, many thanks to those who put in an appearance, particularly those who gave evidence (it wasn't too painful, was it?) and/or stayed the entire three days. About the only consolation this time was that the opposition's barrister was a lot better looking!

We don't know the outcome yet but on behalf of the Bristol Group I would like to thank everyone from the National Exec. Members, BBT, LARA, BHS, ROWLR, WTRA, MCC, VMC, LDMCC and Co (sorry if I've forgotten anybody) for their efforts to secure a few more byways.

All the best, D.C. Clegg, Bristol Group Chairman

PUTTING IN MY OAR

As a converted road rider and relatively new member (second year), I thought I would put in my oar.

I agree with previous letters concerning difficulty in getting in touch with the TRF (eventually finding the address in DBR magazine).

In addition "TRAIL" itself is amazingly negative in its portrayal of our pastime (I always thought we were having fun!) and for this reason as well as the fact that I can't find my local groups meeting place (just where is "No Place" Co. Durham anyway?), I have not yet attended a local meet.

As for tyres, surely they must be road legal, after that it's down to personal choice, after all even road tyres dig up dirt once the grass comes away. The only way to minimise damage is not to spin your wheel.

Next bugbear: Clothing. I prefer a full face as I feel "naked" without one. Regarding colours, I have only had bother from the "provisional wing" of the countryside experts (part time) when wearing a two piece waxed cotton ensemble. Personal experience (however limited) suggests it's not what you wear it's who you meet.

Chris Kelley, Whitley Bay

P.S. It's good to see the musings of Peter A. Lee, the man who invented swearing as a means of propelling an Africa Twin over difficult sections of Spanish Trail - cheers Pete!!

P.P.S. Trail magazine - I'm up to issue 3 (as of 22/9/95) and think it's a breath of

USEFUL NAMES AND ADDRESSES

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