

GROUPS

BLACK COUNTRY Chris Braznell, Tel: 0121 421 3086
1 & 3 Tues, 9pm, *The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton*

BRISTOL Martin Harding, Tel: 0117 969 6674
2nd Mon, *Warmley Community Centre, Deanery Road, (A420), Kingswood*

CAMBRIDGE Richard Palmer, Tel: 01353 688344
1st Thur, *Golden Ball, Boxworth*

CHESHIRE Tony Bramah, Tel: 0161 366 6813
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 Tuesday, *Derby Arms Hotel, Witherslack, Nr. Kendal*

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Kevin Marsh, Tel: 01246 237910
2 & 4 Tue., *Carbrook Hall, 537 Attercliffe Common, Sheffield*

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

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 YORKSHIRE
Howard Wadsworth, Tel: 01405 860904
1st Tue, *Boot & Shoe, Gowdall, Nr. Snaith*

ESSEX
Aelwood Finch, Tel: 01245 329118, Mobile: 0374 471251
2nd Wed, *The Swan Public House, Great Eastern, Nr. Dunmow*

GLOUCESTER Wayne Little, Tel: 01452 611735
1st Tue, *Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.*
3rd Tue *Worcester Auto Club, Perdiswell Park, Worcester*

HERTFORDSHIRE Colin Adlam, Tel: 01727 875618
1st Wed, *Call for location*

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

ISLE OF WIGHT Mark Gregory, Tel: 01983 867730
Last Thur, *The White Lion, Arreton, IOW*

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

LANCASHIRE Keith Westley, Tel: 01704 893215
1st Tue, *Hindshead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard*

LINCOLNSHIRE Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 01529 460793
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*

NORTHUMBERLAND Steve Bertram
Tel 0850 863620 11am-6pm Tel & Fax 0191 261 9629
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 Thurs, *Duke of Marlborough, 1.5 miles N. of Woodstock*

PEAK DISTRICT GROUP
1st Thursday, 8pm, *Travellers Rest, Ashbourne Road, Derby*

RIBBLE VALLEY Tony Broughton, Tel: 01200 423239
2nd Tue, *Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)*

SHROPSHIRE Lynton Powell, Tel: 01743 358423
2nd & last Wed, *White Horse, Shrewsbury*

SOMERSET Kevin Parfitt, Tel: 01935 72343
Last Thur, *The Canal Inn, Wrantage*

SOUTHERN Russ McDermid, Tel: 01703 812371
3rd Tue, *The Phoenix, Twyford, Nr. Winchester*

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY Brian Wright
0181 680 5734 Wed-Sat, 01797 363373 Sun-Tue
9pm every Wed, *Ewell Sports & Social Club, Banstead Road, Ewell, Surrey*

SOUTH NORTHANTS

Trevor Gardiner, Tel: 01788 815927
2nd Mon, *The Live & Let Live Pub, Harpole, nr. Northampton*

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

SUFFOLK Richard May, Tel: 01787 374073
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*

TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS

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

THAMES VALLEY Don Hoaglin, Tel: 01474 704530
3rd Mon, *District Arms, Woodthorpe Rd, Ashford, Middlesex*

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

WEST MIDLANDS Richard Hawker, Tel: 01527 893874
1st & 3rd Thurs, *Wilmcote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon*

WEST SOMERSET Ron Rickarby, Tel: 01271 326653
2nd Wed, *The Hartnoll Hotel, Bolham, A396 1 mile north of Tiverton*

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*

WORCESTERSHIRE David Gunster, Tel: 01905 616400
3rd Tuesday, *Worcester Auto Club, Pendiswell Park, Worcs.*

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



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

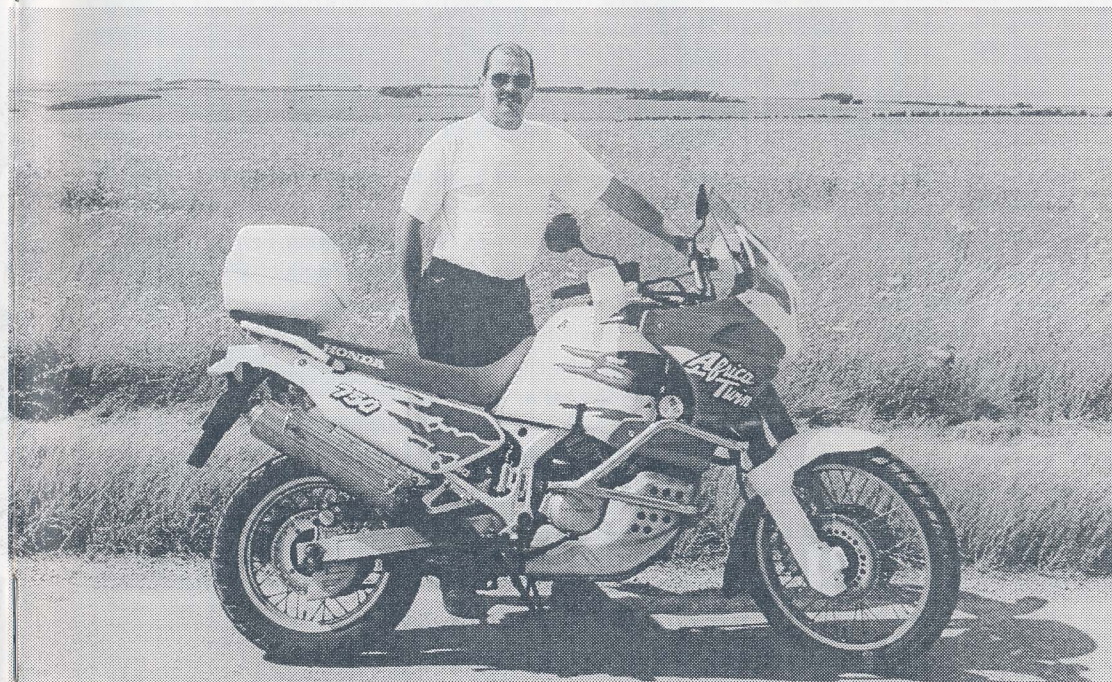
TRAIL

NOVEMBER, 1997

No. 231

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

EDITOR: Michael "Nettlebed" Pedley.



Tony Steel & "Africa Tart" - Where it should be - on tarmac.

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

TRF OFFICERS

- CHAIRMAN** Tony Stuart, Cambrea, Worthy Hill, Trebetherick, Wadebridge, Cornwall, PL27 6SG. Tel/Fax: 01208 862960, Mobile: 0831 467273.
- PUBLIC REL. OFFICER** Mark Holland, Corn Farm, Devauden, Chepstow, Monmouthshire, (Gwent), NP6 6NS. Tel: 01291 650240 (Weekends only).
- MEMBERSHIP SEC.** ... Graham Stratford, 38 Thornton Crescent, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1LH. Tel: 01737 553599.
- SECRETARY** Dave Clegg, 10 Hardwick Road, Pill, Bristol, North Somerset, BS20 0DG. Tel & Fax: 01275 373652.
- TREASURER** Alan Wilkinson, 29 Christopher Close, Heckington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 9SA. Tel: 01529 460793.
- EDITOR** Michael Pedley, The Cobbles, The Green, Long Preston, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 4PQ. Tel & Fax: 01729 840828.
- RoW OFFICER** Steve Neville, 40 The Sandpipers, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 5QB. Tel: 01474 332785.
- BMF LIAISON OFFICER** Derrick Collins, 11 Grangewood Road, Wollaton, Nottingham, Notts. NG8 2SJ. Tel: 0115 9282806.
- KEEPER OF STATIONERY** Aelwood Finch, 8 Hallowell Down, South Woodham, Ferrers, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 5FS. Tel: 01245 329118, Mobile: 0374 471251.
- DISPLAY EQUIPMENT CO-ORDINATOR** Jeff Ward Ltd., Gretton Road, Weldon, Northamptonshire, NN17 3HY. Tel: 01536 267036 or Fax: 01536 408787.
- TRF MERCHANDISER** Rob Sawyer, 22 Gloucester Close, Weedon, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN7 4PA. Tel: 01327 341255.

TRF, P.O. Box 196, Derby DE1 9EY.

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

EDITOR

Please note that I have moved and with it has come a change of telephone and fax number. My new details are as follows: The Cobbles, The Green, Long Preston, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 4PQ, Telephone and Fax: 01729 840828. Please direct all future correspondence to here.

It was disappointing to see so few people at the AGM - I know nobody particularly likes meetings but surely once a year isn't asking too much. Some say it is because of our financial problem. Well that hasn't been allowed to affect the aims or running of the Fellowship and we can now put that behind us, learn a hard lesson and get on with things. So let's have some more support.

That's enough of the lecture. It's that time of the year when we go out and do some serious trail riding so get out there and enjoy it but do remember to record the lanes you ride.

Have fun.

NETTLEBED

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT FOR NOVEMBER

Thank you to all those that took the time and trouble to attend our 1997 AGM.

It seems a shame though, that out of 1700+ members, only about 50 people were sufficiently interested to attend our most important Meeting of this difficult year.

Despite my having indicated in the August Bulletin that we required nominations for National Secretary at the AGM, NONE were forthcoming and we therefore left the AGM without a replacement being found for Dave Clegg, who was due to finish at the end of this year.

This now means that your Club, with 44 Groups and now over 1700 members will be without a National Secretary.

Whilst I am quite prepared to do all my own secretarial work, including typing and mail shots, etc., I am NOT prepared to take on the National Secretary's role as well.

Dave Clegg has agreed to stay on until Saturday the 24th of January 1998, when our first National Meeting of the New Year will take place.

Unless a suitable candidate has come forward by then I can only assume that the Members have no interest in the continuance of the TRF, or are lacking in confidence in their National Officers, and I will therefore seriously consider standing down as National Chairman at that Meeting.

Your elected National Officers have poured heart and soul into this Club, particularly in the last 12 months and are entitled to your support.

Whilst I was pleased and honoured to be re-elected for a further term, it was BEFORE I realised that we were going to be without a National Secretary. Come on - surely somebody out there has the time, capability and interest to take on this important, but not too onerous role.

Our Bulletin Editor, Mike Pedley is expecting to have to stand down soon due to other commitments, so please by the 24th of January can we have a volunteer to take over as Editor.

May I also re-iterate my wish for us to have a Deputy Chairman - as in the past - both as a stand-in for running Meetings or making decisions in my absence and for continuity as a prospective future Chairman.

Come on guys (or gals!) don't be apathetic, let's have some volunteers for these three posts. They say that one volunteer is worth three pressed men!

Tony Stuart

AMAZING BUT TRUE

MISAPPROPRIATION OF FUNDS BY FORMER TREASURER IN 1995 AND 1996

At the October 1996 AGM Members were advised by the chairman, Tony Stuart, that there had been serious misappropriation of TRF funds, and that the Treasurer Tim Ley had been found dead. When the extent of our financial problems became known there was generous response from individuals and Groups, which enabled the Fellowship to keep going on a month by month basis, but our financial reserves - the Fighting Fund - had been lost.

I became involved in investigating the misappropriation of funds and in negotiations for their recovery. This proved to be extremely time consuming, as no historical records existed (or if they did no-one passed them to me), and so I had to attempt to reconstruct the pattern of TRF finances for the years 1995 and 1996 from photocopied cheques and un-annotated statements provided by Yorkshire Bank.

The result of this exercise in forensic accountancy was a Detailed Claim, with Explanatory Notes, proving that a total sum of £23,000 had been misappropriated from the Yorkshire Bank Account in a 21 month period. A breakdown showed that £15,000 had been drawn on cheques pre-signed by Richard Marshall when Chairman, and other cheques had been countersigned by General Secretary Dave Clegg.

It was obvious that the responsibility for a high proportion of the loss lay with the TRF and not with the Bank. Richard Marshall told me during discussions, and subsequently confirmed in a letter, that he had always pre-signed the cheques and had left all financial matters to the Treasurer. He had not looked at the Bank Statements for a long while, nor had he arranged for the accounts to be audited during the three year period he held office.

Even after his inept and quite bizarre attempt to present the accounts at the 1995 AGM, and the change of Chairman, Tim Ley continued to enjoy unsupervised control of TRF finances for a further 10 months - until the money ran out and the Bank Statements were at last looked at by someone else. It was too late - far too late.

My Claim was based on the evidence recorded at the Coroner's Inquest, namely that throughout the period between being dismissed from his post as a clerical officer in the Inland Revenue office late in 1994 (Tim Ley was not a Tax Inspector as he encouraged people within the TRF to believe) and his suicide in September 1996 he had made regular Fake Salary Payments from TRF funds into his own bank account.

Giving evidence at the inquest, Mrs. Ley had stated "Money appeared monthly to have been paid into the Bank Account. This was after 1994. This money had come from the Bike Club... of which he was a member and treasurer."

I was able to trace all of these payments, including those diverted through another account, and to provide cheque clearance dates and other supportive information to form a complete claim for processing by our solicitors.

Reference was made to the fact that it had so far been impossible to trace the Building Society Accounts controlled by the late Treasurer.

Although denied by former Chairman Dave Giles at the 1996 AGM, it is a fact that Building Society Accounts holding large sums of money *had* been opened in the names of *individual members* not in the name of the TRF. This very unwise practice goes back many years. I visited Ian Thompson in Cornwall and we were able to identify a Bradford & Bingley Account which had been in the names of himself and Tim Ley in 1992. A sum of £5,000 had been invested in March, and £4,990 had been withdrawn by October of the same year. There is no record of what happened to that money. (My investigations had to be confined to the 21 month period of known and provable misappropriation of funds prior to Tim Ley's death in September 1996).

The tracing of Building Society Accounts was extremely difficult, as the Societies simply said that they had no accounts in the name of the TRF. However with the assistance of Yorkshire Bank I was able to ascertain that large lump sum payments into our Account had come from the Halifax Building Society, and we had a meeting with them in August to obtain details of an account which was in the names of Tim Ley and former Secretary Peter Ballard, who had moved to Germany some years previously. Information could only be released upon his authority, since there was no reference to the TRF in the account records.

Examination of the Halifax (formerly the Leeds) Account showed that between November 1994 and March 1996 nearly £22,000 had been transferred to the Yorkshire Bank Account.

Note that this sum equates to the £23,000 misappropriated from the Yorkshire Bank account - the Halifax was used as a feeder account to provide the funds for the "Fake Salary Payments" - we have not lost the money twice.

After the 1995 AGM, Tim Ley found himself without the supply of cheques already *pre-signed* by Richard Marshall, for the first time in years. He then devised another method of diverting funds, this time involving the new General Secretary Dave Clegg. The Treasurer asked for counter signatures on cheques for the transfer of excess funds from the TRF Bank Account to "The Building Society Account", and Dave signed these cheques (the first for £2,000, the second for £2,500) which were simply made out to the Alliance & Leicester Building Society.

The cheques were paid into Tim Ley's account at the Alliance & Leicester, not into a TRF account. By this simple deception £4,500 of TRF funds were lost.

THE SETTLEMENT

I am pleased to advise members that the following funds have been recovered following the misappropriation of £23,000 by Tim Ley during 1995 and 1996.

1. Nett amount recovered after deduction of Solicitor's fees approx. £7,900
The funds are invested in a 60 day Notice Account and will be paid to the TRF at the beginning of January 1998.

2. Negotiated settlement with the Yorkshire Bank including ex gratia payment £5,000

This amount has already been credited to the TRF Account.

TOTAL AMOUNT RECOVERED TO DATE £12,900

Negotiations are currently proceeding with the Halifax Building Society Legal Department and with Peter Ballard in connection with the residual balance and Share Entitlement, and we can expect to recover the following amounts:

Account balance approx. £1,360

200 shares worth approx. £1,400

Potential extra amount to be recovered is thus £2,760

PROJECTED TOTAL AMOUNT TO BE RECOVERED £15,660

I was extremely pleased that my proposal that the recovered funds should be allocated to the Fighting Fund was approved at the AGM.

I wish to acknowledge the assistance and understanding of Jon Williamson, Customer Services Manager of Yorkshire Bank, Derby, throughout the past year, and for demonstrating continuing support for the Fellowship by incorporating an ex gratia payment in the negotiated settlement.

On the legal side Tony Stuart bore the brunt of the pressure, and his solicitor Roger Parvin of Berrymans at Nottingham could not have been more helpful.

Our Chairman and Treasurer have implemented strict controls on TRF financial procedures since the dreadful events of a year ago.

Lessons to be learned from the Tim Ley Fraud should be noted by all TRF members who have responsibility for financial matters. Group funds could be misappropriated in a similar way unless sensible procedures are followed.

Do not open accounts in the names of individuals. Many Building Societies operate Treasurer's Accounts specifically for Clubs and Organisations.

Do not "pre-sign" blank cheques - this removes the safeguard of a counter signature.

Ensure that at least two officers look at Bank or Building Society Statements regularly, and relate them to known expenditure.

When writing cheques to be paid into a Building Society make sure that the TRF Account Number is shown - do not just write Loamshire Building Society.

Jeff Ward, South Northamptonshire Group

The Treasurer's Report to the AGM showed that the generous donations from Groups and individual Members in response to the Chairman's appeal for funds totalled nearly £9500.

Without this vital support the Fellowship would not have been able to settle outstanding accounts and to continue to produce TRAIL in the months which followed the discovery that our funds were so severely depleted. Our thanks are due to everyone who acted so promptly and generously a year ago.

RoW NEWS

RoW OFFICERS REPORT

Loss of BOAT in Cheselbourne, Dorset

Streetway Lane was a footpath, known to Dorset County Council as vehicular Inclosure public carriageway. It was considered 'unsuitable' because it was blocked by fences. The route was claimed by local non-user enthusiast and eventually won as BOAT. A request for stopping up was made at once, backed by a petition saying "we do not want this footpath to be a BOAT and if it is upgraded please stop it up".

Several months later the landowner was persuaded to remove the obstructions as it was felt he might not win if they remained.

Some use followed but not much, by the TRF and a local 4 x 4 driver. No-one else knew about the new status, as it is still a footpath on the definitive map and OS maps and not signed as Byway either. But the users who had used it were described by the magistrate as a very small special-interest group. Funny that because I recall that vehicular users were recognised by various planning inspectors as being members of the public. I seem to recall that the High Court has said that trail riding is a legitimate pastime and should be recognised as such. If we were of ethnic origin and a magistrate said "...it's only black people who use this lane and they are a special-interest group..." all hell would break loose. As British citizens I was under the naive impression that we all had the same rights. After all are Ramblers Association or Country Landowners Association members, part of the general public? The Orwellian quote, "all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" springs to mind. We were told on oath by DCC that there were 140 miles of unsurfaced UCR in Dorset, along with 10 miles of BOAT and the magistrate thought that offered a reasonable alternative and also that stopping-up was better for the environment. These were not a matter for consideration under the law.

Dorset County Council are well out of order in failing in their legal duty to assert and protect our rights. This has happened before on another BOAT and it needs to be stopped. Already half the lane has been ploughed. Perfectly legal for a footpath or bridleway; not so for a byway. What is needed is a concentrated effort by all Dorset and district users to investigate every inch of the 140 miles, including the dead ends. They should all be published and made widely available. All obstruction should be reported as formal complaints to the highway authority and the Police and they should be followed up.

But as with many rights of way issues we cannot do this from a distance, it relies on local support. Ride your local lanes and don't just rely on other better marked counties. My experience of Dorset whilst mountain biking during a family holiday are that many rights of way are in a sorry state through poor way-marking and agricultural vandalism.

LARA are awaiting the magistrates decision letter. We may be of the opinion that an appeal should be lodged on the grounds that the criteria for the Highways Act s116 were not met. If so we will take the same steps as we have at Norton Malreward in seeking legal advice and taking the issue to the High Court.

Norton Malreward

The appeal is going well and we have around £20,000 not including the TRF Fighting Fund; but keep those pledges (from last months TRAIL) coming in.

Fighting Fund

Thanks to the efforts of Jeff Ward and others a substantial sum has been recovered following the Tim Ley affair. The Fighting Fund is now well into a five figure balance. But I want to make it work for us. This is not just for the big showcase appeals like Norton Malreward but also those smaller incidents for which members may need to seek legal redress from a third party. Contact me if you have a problem and we will see what can be done.

Steve Neville

GLOUCESTER RoW NEWS

MBL36 has reared its head again. As I have said before this was the subject of a public enquiry a year or so back and was left as a RuPP. The council have issued a consultation document to reclassify it as a bridleway. We have objected!! For those who don't know where it is, it runs north from France Lynch past Bournes Green towards Bisley.

One of the farmers on this route has been causing some trouble again by obstructing the route (locked and nailed gates) and it has also been noticed that the RuPP sign has disappeared. The Police have been informed about the obstruction but the County Council will only say that it has 'at least bridleway status' so there is not much they can do. However, if somebody on a mountain bike or horse reported the obstruction to the Police...

Charlie Morris has also been looking into a lane near to Stoke Orchard. It is called Dog Bark Lane and the Ramblers Association have put a right of way claim in on it. The main problem is that it crosses a high speed mainline railway and there is currently no crossing. There may be a compromise possible which would mean we use the nearby road bridge, but it is still early days. If anybody would like more information on this please call Charlie on 01453 885323.

CONCERN AS RAMBLERS' INJURIES PROMPT FARM PESTICIDES BAN

Confusion and inadequate consultation about Government plans to ban spraying pesticides on public rights of way have been criticised by local council access bosses.

The Censure follows last week's Health and Safety Executive report on hazards caused by pesticides, which highlights that a walker's clothing was burnt by sulphuric acid sprayed on a potato crop. In an earlier incident, a pet dog's mouth was badly blistered by chemicals applied to oil-seed rape.

Since the stringent 1990 Rights of Way Act, farmers have been under pressure to stop their crops from blocking public paths. At present, they routinely achieve this by spraying paths with pesticides - but new HSE rules going before Parliament specifically ban this practice.

President of the Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers, Helen Blenkhorn, said; "We are very concerned about the serious implications for farmers and path users. Landowners need to know about this proposal now and make plans to keep paths clear by non-chemical means. Otherwise they risk prosecution by access managers or the HSE. Unfortunately, although the HSE proposed the ban in July 1996 - if not before - many local councils are still telling farmers that spraying paths is an acceptable and safe practice. This is because access managers were not consulted about the new rules; our institute only found out by accident a few months ago. Even today, booklets freely available from the Government's Countryside Commission list spraying as a legitimate operation. Farmers may also fail to recognise the risks because the proposed ban will, I understand, not stop local councils from using the same pesticides for weed-killing on pavements and in parks. We share landowners' demands that timely, accurate information should be made available to avoid the potentially very serious consequences of the present uncertainty. Even after the ban, the drifting of pesticides onto rights of way will still present a hazard. I hope we can all work together to agree a safe, practical solution that is understood by everyone".

Sent in by the Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers

**British
Motorcyclists
Federation** **News**

NEW CHAIRMAN

TOP MARKS FOR MAJOR CHANGES!

Henry Marks, a 45 year old business consultant, is the new chairman of the 110,000 strong BMF that will also see a major change to its structure during 1998, including the principle of one member, one vote (OMOV).

Elected unopposed at Saturday's Annual General Council (AGC) meeting held at the University of York, ZZR1100 riding Henry was previously the BMF's Director of Government Relations. Married with two children, Henry brings a wealth of business and political lobbying experience to the BMF.

AFRICAN TART

see front cover pic

I know the Honda Africa Twin XRV750 is not what most of you would call a real trail bike, but as I have been riding one for the last few months I thought you may like to know what I think.

After breaking my leg in March and having my DR350 nicked (on the same day... thanks), my doctor said no trail riding till after Christmas!

Whilst hobbling around I managed to sell my FZ750 Yam and when the insurance money came through (5 weeks later, my value minus excess, well done Devitt DA!) for the DR I had a fair bit of cash burning a hole in my pocket.

I fancied a big trailie and decided to go for a twin as they are better for cruising at speed than singles. I had my eye out for a BMW GS, Yamaha Super Tenere, Cagiva Elephant, Honda Transalp or an Africa Twin.

Well the usual hunt around the local dealers only revealed overpriced bikes as usual so when a private Africa Twin came up in the private ads at the right money I took a trip with a friend to take a peek. Now unfortunately I was still on sticks at the time, but I also knew you don't see many decent Africa Twins at the right money so off we went.

The funny thing is I had never even sat on one of these beasts never mind ride one, so good old Leigh had a test ride for me and came back raving on how good it was in front of the seller... Shhhh!. Anyway after a bit of haggling the deal was done and I had a 1995 model with 4700 miles on the clock for £4800. Well a few weeks later I was on it for my work run (32 miles round trip) and I have now done 3500 miles on it.

So what's it like? First off you must understand I am 6'3" tall so it's height was not a problem. It is a long way up to get on and off but once on board it sags a fair bit. If you're under 5'10" beware of cambers when you stop or else! The whole bike has that feeling of good design integrity that Honda seems to be so good at. Everything falls to hand nicely and the riding position is just right. It's a lovely high viewing position and with those twin headlamps on, I tend to get seen by car drivers much more than previous bikes I've been on. You can see behind you at any speed as very little vibration gets to the well placed mirrors. The on board computer is very fancy having 3 trip meters, a clock, and a count up/down timer and is pretty easy to operate on the move. I must admit it's a damn handy bit of kit. The smooth (for a twin) engine is nice and grunty with the torque coming on strong at anything over 3000 rpm. It has a 5-speed box. Personally all think it could do with a slightly lower 1st gear and a slightly higher 5th. The bike is happy bombing along twisty back roads using the torque to gun it out of corners, or sitting on an Autobahn at 80 (6000 rpm) all day. My bike came fitted with Michelin T66 roady trail tyres (the rear is a radial) which are excellent on the road and lasting well (rear good for 9000 miles, front 12000?). Because of it's weight the bike may not steer quite as quickly as a big single but it is still easy to chuck it into

bends and it handles very very well. The advantage of it's weight is that it is much more stable at speed both in a straight line and in bends (on the road of course). The suspension is excellent at soaking up bumps but keeping firm enough for good handling.

This bike is heavier dry, than a Fireblade, even more so with its 5 gallon tank full. The weight does seem to drop off it once on the move but I don't really fancy picking one up on the dirt!

The bike comes with twin front discs and one rear disc. The front end pulls up OK but it's not good as some other bikes I've tried recently. It could possibly be contaminated pads or hoses so I'll have to check later when I get round to servicing the brakes.

Servicing is a bit of a chore, lots of plastic to remove, then tank, and then loosen the radiator to get to the tappet covers. The big bashplate has to come off to get to the awkwardly placed oil filter at the back end of the engine. It's all straightforward but time consuming. I have a Scottoilier fitted and the chain and sprockets have not needed any adjustment since I've had it. Luckily they are supposed to be pretty reliable and I have seen one with 83000 miles on the clock. The overall finish is pretty good with only the spokes showing any sign of real corrosion. My one has been ridden through at least one winter and will be used this coming winter as well so I'll have to see how it looks next spring.

And how does it cope on the dirt? Mmmmm... I've taken it down a couple of

easy local Byways and we coped OK but when I came across a fallen tree, I had to yank it round in the lane and I realised it's a heavy old beast. The tyres did have road pressures so in any mud you will have no chance of any control. On a dry Ridgeway in the summer it would be fine (you could even take your partner in relative comfort), but throw some water and rocks in the equation and things could get tricky.

What have I forgotten? ...average about 45mpg and the seat is good for about 140 miles before it starts getting painful.

On the whole I'm very impressed, a genuine allrounder. No wonder the Euro's love em... knock ein bier bitter! See you at the Stella Alpina Rally next July.

Tony Steel, Bath

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NATIONAL TREASURER'S REPORT

Audited Report and Accounts were presented at the AGM on the 25th October and I am pleased to report that the TRF is on a sound financial footing with a very healthy Fighting Fund. If you were unable to attend the AGM but would like a copy of the Report and Accounts, please send me a S.A.E. quoting your membership number.

Alan Wilkinson, National Treasurer

• GROUP NEWS •

HERTFORDSHIRE SETTLES IN NEW LOCATION

The Hertfordshire group has now had a couple of meetings at their new venue and will stay as the landlord and locals seem friendly. Please make a note of the new venue:

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BOOK REVIEW

Not everyone is lucky enough to persuade a regular publisher to take on their *Magnum Opus*, but there are ways round this. One is to go to a vanity publisher who will print, publish and sell your book if you pay them a negotiable sum of money. Recently there has been some bad publicity where they have been taking your money and doing nothing further. So the safest way is to go to some printers and get prices and then when the book is delivered to your home you get out on your bike and do all the selling to all the reviewers and the bookshops. The following books are all self published and if they make a profit it goes entirely to the writer, ditto with a loss.

Motorcycling Through The Thirties Jack Gray, 9 Brook Road, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex, RM2 5QS. Price £6.99. Post free.

The Yellow Motorbike Paul Quinn, 32 Windsor Way, Polegate, Sussex, BN26 6QD. Price £2.75. Postage included.

A Large Helping of Yorkshire Pudding Wilf Green, c/o Jack & Jill, Eckington House, 98-100 High Street, Eckington, Sheffield, S31 9DQ. Tel: 01246 436991. Price £9.95

Motorcycling Through The Thirties by Jack Gray

Jack is remembered for being the Gray half of Gander and Gray but he does not touch on this in this book. It starts from him being a farm worker's son near to Romford and walking one and a half miles to school and wanting a bicycle, which he bought with money from his paper round. That led to him delivering 'The Motor Cycle' where he read about *AJS*, *BSA*, *Brough*, *Cotton* through to *Triumph* and *Velocette*. After starting work on the farm he managed to save enough to buy a 350c *Royal Enfield*. Life was hard, often starting work at 3am taking deliveries to London markets and at weekends going to races, trials and just touring to *Edinburgh* and *Wales*. Several different bikes are purchased and discussed and finally working on shifts at *Fords* at *Dagenham*, then the war and joining the army. Of course a sequel is called for, giving details of the setting up of the retail shop, and any help and support from *Royal Enfield* and what happens when the make that you have supported goes to the wall?

John Higgin, Hampshire

LAND'S END TO JOHN O'GROATS REPORT

What a brilliant network of local expertise the TRF truly is! I am very grateful to many individuals and groups countrywide for their assistance in the organisation of my recent End-to-End charity trail ride Across Countries for Oxfam, which raised a huge sum of £1,900.

633 out of the total 1744 miles were ridden on green lanes, (the maximum possible given the need for legality and some kind of North Easterly direction), using Serows kindly supplied by the Container Company.

Various TRF members sponsored me, marked maps, led for the day, provided meals, accommodation, equipment, contacts, local knowledge and moral support, not to mention letting me swap for a ride on their bikes!

Liz, Flip and I would like to thank all those who helped to make the trip such a success.

Jacky German, Glos. & W. Midlands TRF

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE AGM OF • OCTOBER 25TH, 1997 •

1. It went on too long - as usual
2. Some Officers spoke for far too long - others not long enough.
3. The Chairman didn't move business on quickly enough.
4. Tim Stevens tends to dominate and tenify speakers especially on constitutional matters. Was he practising for a P.L.I.?
5. The attendance was abysmal - less than 4%?
6. D. Clegg's motion(s), whatever their merits, were railroaded by someone (Richard Marshall?) moving "next business".
7. I sensed the AGM did not like that at all. Not democratic.
8. Jeff Ward was, for me, the star turn and has recovered 60% of the TRF's stolen monies. Let's make him Chairman in 1998.
9. The P.R. Officer is clearly working very hard and is very brave to go to the GLEAM AGM. Could we hire him or lend him a suit?
10. No-one wants the Vice Chairman's or Secretary's job - who can blame them!
11. I didn't put up for election either, so I'm as bad as the rest of you fellows.

Gwyn Thomas

Battle for bridleways launched as mud flies

MUD is flying over plans to open up some of Herefordshire's most picturesque green lanes to traffic.

'Battle for Bridleways' has been launched in the Aymestrey area by local people angry over the proposed upgrading of unclassified roads at Upper Lye.

Their fear is that, as Byways Open to All Traffic, the lanes and their delicate flora and fauna will be wrecked by an invasion of off-road vehicles.

Objectors are staging a public meeting at Aymestrey Village Hall at 7pm on October 31.

Dating back at least 2,000 years, the ancient ways were originally used by pack horses and carts. They form part of a network link-

■ BY GEORGE CHILDREN

ing Upper Lye and Old Shop with the 'Lingen loop' section of the Mortimer Trail.

Leading protestor and local farmer Ian Brown said: "Part of it runs on my ground. No neighbours of mine want to use the lanes for tractors and no cars would be able to get through, so they are only going to be used by 4x4s."

County archaeologist Malcolm Atkin said: "The lanes were intended for very different traffic from that intended today. They head straight for the nearby Iron Age camp, which suggests they go back to that period."

Hereford and Worcester County Council has now agreed that, legally, the lanes are as much public roads as the A49, and an order has been made to add them to the definitive map and statement as BOATS.

Following the granting of the order there will be a period of six weeks within which objectors can make representations. The Secretary of State can then either confirm the order or call for a public inquiry.

The council's rights of way manager Andy Turner said there was no problem in the county with such lanes being overused by off-roads.

"This really is a miniscule problem compared with the time and effort that goes into talking about it," he said.

Article from The Hereford Times sent in by John Russell of Cheshire.

HON SEC'S JOB SPEC!

by Dave Clegg

Some while ago our Chairman asked if I could compile a "Hon Sec's Job Spec" to guide the next National Hon. Sec. in the exacting(?) task of assisting the Chairman and National Executive in the running of the T.R.F.

What is really needed is; ALL National Honorary Officers write "job specs" because ALL National Honorary Officers posts are "up for election" every year at the AGM. In case you hadn't noticed, the TRF has not had a Deputy Chairman since the beginning of 1997. And surprise, AGM surprise, the everlasting and endearing (or should that be enduring) Ed, Nettlebed, is quitting. So, not wanting to deter anyone from volunteering from any of these tasks. "One volunteer is worth two pressed men!"

One TRF Nat. Hon. Sec job spec, for the use of:

- a) Attend all Nat. Exec. Meetings and the National AGM.
- b) Agendas; compile for Nat. Exec. Meetings and the Nat. AGM.
- c) Minutes; make arrangements for minutes to be taken at Nat. Meetings. Format minutes.
- d) Photocopy and circulate (b&c) to those entitled.*
- e) Arrange and negotiate for suitable room for Nat. Meetings.
- f) Ensure that the ad hoc membership are kept informed of Nat. Meetings via TRAIL.
- g) Encourage, monitor and promulgate Annual Group Returns.
- h) Liaise and co-ordinate with all levels of the TRF.

*(or whoever bothers to send an SAE)

However, here follows some Hon. Sec. experiences (slightly tongue in cheek) and was obviously not appreciated by (some of) the attendees of the AGM. Can't understand why no-one had come forward at the time and as everyone knows that the Hon. Sec. has very little to do and gets a vote on the National Executive. (But why bother to get elected onto the Exec. when you can just turn up and vote anyway?)

- 1) Don't have a job (dictionary definition: public duty performed for private profit) as a PAID JOB interferes with all TRF related activities. (but don't expect to get paid by the TRF - that's been tried already)
2. If you do happen to have a job make sure you can use your time at work to the benefit of the TRF, i.e. compiling agendas, Xeroxing, making phone calls, acquiring stationery, etc.
3. Be computer literate and technically competent to enable updating and adding extra fields to the TRF membership database and to replace defective disk drives and sundry other hardware components that fail in the TRF computer.
4. Do not have any other hobbies outside the TRF (especially not one that is

also "under threat"!).

5. Do not own any property - you can then get Legal Aid (which is now really "Legal Loan" - ask me about this) to fight ROW cases all the way to the High Court.
6. If you do own a house make sure it is large enough with a spare room to store all the TRF archives, brochures and THE TRF FILING CABINET etc.
7. Have a partner who will do ALL the shopping, cooking, washing, cleaning, decorating and gardening, etc. (Again, all the above interfere with TRF activities).
8. Be prepared to write out endless envelopes to mail shot everybody and his brother with agendas and minutes. (Law of the Microchip: Someone is bound to be left off any computer generated address label list).
9. Do not agree to put your name and home address* in any journal or directory unless you really want to get phone calls and junk mail for the next 5 years. (refer to Peter Ballard on this subject). *This is why the TRF has a P.O. box!?
10. Instigate a system to encourage every TRF group to send its Rep (with Voting Card - see Hon. Sec. Report at the 1997 AGM) to the Nat. Exec. Meetings - just so long as it doesn't involve money. If I attend so should you Group Reps! We don't want to have ad hoc members moaning that the TRF is not well organised.

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AGM**

Wednesday January 21st
at The Blacksmiths Arms,
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Bumper Raffle

LETTERS

A VERY ENJOYABLE YEAR

You may remember a year ago I wrote as a new member of the Lincolnshire TRF and recounted on a wonderful trip to the Lake District. Well, since then I've had a very enjoyable year. We usually have a club run once a month and we have ridden the grassy lanes of Lincolnshire, the rutted lanes of Northamptonshire, across the rolling countryside of Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, and those challenging lanes of the beautiful Derbyshire Peak District. On the first weekend in October this year ten of us headed back to the Lake District for what turned out to be a challenging and very enjoyable weekend...

All year it has been a standing joke at my expense that until one has ridden Gatscarth Pass, which goes from Haweswater Reservoir to the north to the Hamlet of Sodgill to the south you ain't a man. (Despite me being 30+, married with two children and another on the way!!) So I was determined this was going to be it - manhood beckoned!!

Saturday morning and after a good breakfast we split into two groups. The man's group consisted of Stewart and Steve Dickinson, Julian Winspear and myself. The other group - shall we call it the granny group for the more elderly amongst us (whom I should add have all done Gatscarth before) comprised of Rodger Masheader, Alan Wilkinson, Pete Spence, Mike Lord, Dave Newby and Paul Leafa.

Our Group headed North on the A6 out of Kendal (from where we were staying) and started relatively gently, riding the Breasthigh Road before heading by road to Haweswater Reservoir and the start of Gatscarth Pass.

Amongst the four of us we had a variety of bikes between us, Stewart on an XR600, brother Steve on a 1981 DR400, Julian on a KDX200 and myself on a KMX200 fitted with very low gearing and a recently fitted fan to keep things cool, which was a great success. Thanks go to Brian from the Black Country TRF for his advice on that matter.

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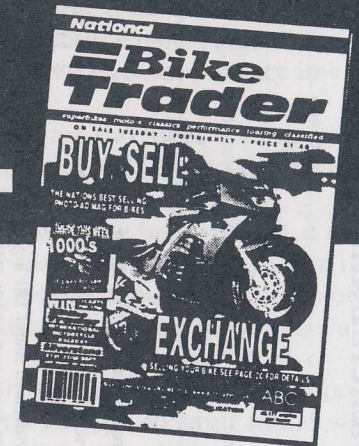
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Stewart led the way from the first gate and onto the second which he opened. I was riding no. 2 and he shouted to me to keep going. This is where it gets tricky. Large loose rocks, a very steep gradient and a few ramblers to negotiate for good measure. After much padding with the feet I reached the top. The very low first gear a big help as I was able to keep engine revs very low and keep off the clutch.

The others eventually made it to the top. Stewart and Steve coping well on the big 4-strokes but Julian really struggled with the KDX - it's power far too harsh for the climb. At the top he was absolutely exhausted.

After a rest we set off for the descent which was my favourite bit, a series of hair pin bends going very steeply downhill - wonderful. After this we rode along Stile End and over the Garburn Pass to Troutbeck where we met the other group for lunch. They had had a much steadier, but all the same enjoyable, morning.

After lunch us men headed off through Grizedale Forest and on to Coniston where we rode over Walna Scar which I've got to say I found some parts more tricky than Gatescarth - although on Walna the difficult sections are relatively short and you get a chance to get your breath back in between. From there we headed back towards Kendal riding a few gentle lanes on the way.

The Granny Group had had a good afternoon riding over Garburn Pass, Stile End and the Breasthigh Road amongst others, having fun trying each other's bikes out - Rodger's XL250 degree proving very popular amongst a couple of KMX200s and a brace of XR250s and an XR200.

Saturday evening and after a hot bath we all sat down for dinner together during which Alan Wilkinson stood up to say a few words. He turned to me and said until today, despite my age, my family and my wife (who was sat at my side in a very expectant state), technically I was not a man - until today! He then handed me a framed Certificate which Paul and his wife Dianne had had done. It reads: 'This is to certify that Stuart Alford is now a man, having successfully completed the crossing of Gatescarth Pass on the 4th day of October 1997' and is signed by Steve our run leader and Alan our group rep.

Well I didn't know what to say - it was a lovely thought.

Sunday morning we split into two groups once again. This time Paul Leafé leading one group comprising of Paul, Julian, Mike and myself - Rodger led the others. Today we all headed for the west side of the Yorkshire Dales. Our group rode along the A65 to Clapham where we rode through the caves and over the moor to Horton in Ribblesdale where we picked up the lane which goes over Foxup moor - this took quite a time as some sections were very boggy and very entertaining as we all got stuck to varying degrees at one point or another. With time pressing on we headed off back towards Kendal. The other group had a good day: Stewart and Steve wanted some bog, they had some; Pete wanted a rocky climb, he had one of those; Dave was quite happy as long as he could have a fag every five minutes; and Rodger was more than happy to lead the way!!

All in all an excellent weekend. Thankyou to Pete Spence for organising it for us all, Rodger Masheader for being our local guide, Stewart and Steve Dickinson and Paul Leafe for being our run leaders and every one else for making it such a memorable and enjoyable weekend.

Stuart Alford, Lincolnshire

INDIVIDUALITY

I would like to reply to the letters that have appeared in TRAIL in recent months. There have been views expressed about the bikes that members use, and use of finances within the TRF. Rowland (XT350 rider October 1997) says that trail riders should ride trail bikes with trail tyres. It amazes me how some people can be so dictatorial. Has Rowland tried to ride some of the more 'testing' trails using a trail tyre? I have and it's no fun! There are some lanes where a trail tyre does not provide enough grip. Furthermore, the members of our Fellowship have the right to use the tyre of their choice, providing they are 'suitable for use'. I have not the time or the inclination to resurrect the old MX/Enduro/Trail tyre legal minefield at the present time. But... try and work this out... the tyre fitted to the '95 XR250 was an IRC Vulcandro and did not have 'NHS'. The same tyre was fitted to the '96 XR250. This tyre has 'NHS'. Try to explain that one!

ALL TRF members are different. There's 'old buggers' like me, and 'younguns' alike. You should also realise that it is not always young = flash gear/enduro 2-stroke/boy-racer types and old = wax cottons/C90/old has-been types. In my experience the members of the TRF are **different** individuals, like any other club. We choose the bike we ride for our own personal reasons. I remember the time when, because of a lack of funds, I needed a dual purpose bike. I used a trail bike for riding to work and trail riding. This bike had trail tyres. I was pleased when I could afford, (in my opinion), a more capable machine, with enduro tyres. However, I do not think that everyone should use the bike I use, or wear the riding gear I use etc. I would not be so presumptuous. Everyone is entitled to their opinion, providing they don't shove it down MY throat. If we all subscribe to trail bikes for trail riders where does the trials bike and trials tyres fit into this equation? I know quite a few trials riding trail riders. Should they be pilloried by TRF members? I don't think so.

The other letter referred to a BBQ run by the Glos. Group. Wayne complained that the course was too difficult and that he felt that he was subsidising enduro practice. The money is a club issue and should be sorted at that level. Wayne, why not propose a two level entry. One price for the BBQ only and one for the BBQ plus ride. The letter does not say whether this option was available. From the tone of your article you felt that the group should not subsidise enduro practice. If the course was easier then would it be OK for the group to subsidise this activity? This seems to be your implication! Presumably the BBQ and the hire of the land was financed by the club. Surely the issue is

regarding the subsidising NOT the speed of the motorcyclists.

My message to Wayne and Rowland and their ilk is: live and let live. Bikers are a minority! Off-tarmac bikers are an even smaller minority. We need to stick together. Mocking someone because they are different doesn't help! Remember Henry V's speech before the battle?

We few, We happy few,
We band of brothers,

Remember protecting our heritage is just like a war. Remember the adage about an enemy divided? We should concentrate our efforts on the battle to keep this heritage. This petty in-fighting is not helping!

I'll get off the soap-box now... see you on the green stuff!

Alan Hodson, Manchester

CLASSIFIED

HONDA CM250L HELIX Super Scooter, "H" reg, FSH, tax & MOT, £2000. **TS185C** 1978 in green lane trim but all original parts available, £375. Tel: 0831 476839 mobile or 01254 209683 after 6pm.

BRENDAN CHASE B & B Lake Windermere from £14.00 each x 4 sharing, bike lock-up, parking, all rooms c/h, CTV, H & C, pub and grub handy. Tel: 01539 445638.

HONDA XR250 1979 twin shock, very original, 12000 kilometres only £650. Tel: Derby 01332 519575.

DR350 "N" reg, one owner, 4600 miles plus spares and almost new single bike trailer. Injury forces sale, £2550. Tel: 01276 33847.

FREE TO COLLECTOR Copies of TRAIL magazine. Complete set from June/July 1986 (issue 114) to latest issue. Tel/Fax: 01322 288242.

YAMAHA SRX600 Super Single 4000M, silver, gleaming, new tyres, £1550, possible p/x trail 250-350cc. **YAMAHA XJ900** Diversion, 10800M, 1995, Datatool, full set of Givi Panniers, superb condition, £4550, poss p/x trail 250-350cc. Tel: 01298 26201.

CHRISTMAS GOODIES Stocking fillers to huge presents: MSR Lite-Ning Pro jeans - a few blue pairs still available @ £145.95. Pro Racing ISDE Jacket £169.95. (All sizes in blue/purple/red). Front Fender bag from £19.95; Map Cases from £14.95; Handguards from £29.95; Heated grip inserts (like a car heated window) £24.95. Maier Plastics & Pro Racing - full ranges available. Best prices for accessories and clothing imported direct from the USA, we will try to special order ANYTHING you can't find. Phone OwenSport for a free catalogue and price list on 01670 852384 (evenings). Order early in December to ensure Christmas delivery.

YAMAHA XT225 SEROW "G" reg, bought from Container Company for girlfriend - used twice! E/start and kick-start. New tank, wheels, Renthals and MT21s. Lots of spares. Cost £2500, sell £2000 to clear as unwanted. Call Laurence on 01784 420554 (days), 01784 470438 (eves).

"K" REG YAMAHA DT125R 3900 genuine miles from new. Good condition. Taxed & tested Aug. '98. £1195. Tel: 01200 424026 after 6pm.

YAMAHA DT175MX "W" reg, £575. Sensible trail mods, spare wheels, tyres, etc. Good condition. Tel: 01332 551816.

CZ 125MX 1995 "M" reg, type S19. Full enduro spec, bark busters, Acerbis plastics, green lane use only. As new, £1000 ono. Tel: 0181 953 2756.

YAMAHA TT250R "M" reg, fully sorted. Every extra, Acerbis Renthals, alloy bash plate, etc. Excellent condition, £2600. Lowering links for XR400 £30 or £55 including bearings and seals. Ring Neil 01788 811919 (Rugby).

HONDA CRM250R T & T, good condition, Acerbis Brush guards, 'O' ring chain, MT21s. £1595. Tel: 01203 618183.

YAMAHA DT125R Black, Feb. '97, "P" reg, 1000 miles as new, £1850. Suzuki TS125, 1989 "G" reg, blue, 11000 miles, £950. Tel: Grantham 01476 402447 any time.

HELMET White Lazer MX4 with visor and two peaks. Worn twice, misfit. Small size. £35 (retail £110). Tel: 01453 751560.

HONDA TL250 wanted preferably in reasonable original condition. Tel: 01442 870213.

1958 250cc BSA (O.H.V.) with Ariel Colt cyl. head and timing gears (lots of compression) very reliable. Good pre-65 trials or green lane bike. £475 ono. Tel: Paul Weston 0117 942 1780.

SUZUKI DR350S (trail bike). 1994 "L" reg, big tank, 11000 miles, perfect condition. Trail and road ridden only. Loads of spares (new), £2000. **SUZUKI RMX250** (Enduro). 1995 "M" reg, only 600 miles, bought end 1996 from dealer new. Immaculate condition, £2600. Must sell before January as I'm emigrating to West Africa. I want to buy/swap a Honda XR600 (must be around 4 years old for importation reasons!). Phone Ian on 01603 661385 (Norwich).