

GROUPS

AXE VALE Gwyn Thomas, Tel: 01749 675294
2nd Mon, The Star, Star (A38), Nr. Shipham, Somerset

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

BRISTOL Martin Harding, Tel: 01179 696674
4th Mon, Keynsham Rugby Club, Bristol Road, Keynsham

CAMBRIDGE John Brooker, Tel: 01767 692805
1st Thurs, Golden Ball, Boxworth

CHESHIRE Tony Bramah, Tel: 0161 366 6813
2 & 4 Mon, The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport

CORNWALL Tony Stuart, Tel: 01208 862960
3rd Thurs, The Ship, Wadebridge

CUMBRIA Richard Smith, Tel: 015394 33470
2nd Tues, Derby Arms Hotel, Witherslack, Nr. Kendal

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE
Kevin Marsh, Tel: 01246 237910
2 & 4 Tuesdays, The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire

DEVON Richard Arscott, Tel: 01803 400937
2nd Tues, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton Abbott

DORSET Paul Jackson, Tel: 01305 772208
1st Tues, 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 Tues, Boot & Shoe, Gowdall, Nr. Snaith

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

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

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

HERTFORDSHIRE Colin Adlam, Tel: 01727 875618
1st Wed, The Old Guinea, Ridge, Near Potters Bar

HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES
Simon Lowe, Tel: 01298 70680
1st Tues, Stafford Arms, Bagnall & 3rd Tue, Cheshire Cheese, Buxton

ISLE OF WIGHT Mark Gregory, Tel: 01983 867730
1st Thurs, The Royal British Legion, Pyle St., Newport, IOW

KENT Gary Westbrook, Tel: 01843 590184
2nd Wed, Pied Bull, Farningham, Off A20, Nr Brands Hatch

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

LINCOLNSHIRE Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 01529 460793
4th Thurs, The Queens Head, Kirkby-la-Thorpe, Sleaford

LODDON VALE Bernard Green, Tel: 01344 450289
2nd Thurs, Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading

NORTHUMBERLAND Steve Bertram
Tel 0850 863620 11am-6pm Tel & Fax 0191 261 9629
1st Tues, 7pm, Just Harleys, Sandycroft, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

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

OXFORDSHIRE Kevin Lindsey, Tel: 01993 841179
3rd Thurs, The Red Lion, 127 Cassington Road, Yarnton

PEAK DISTRICT Simon Mason, Tel: 01773 713188
1st Thurs, 8pm, Travellers Rest, Ashbourne Road, Derby

RIBBLE VALLEY Peter Higham, Tel: 01200 424947
2nd Tues, Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)

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

SOMERSET Kevin Parfitt, Tel: 01935 472343
Last Thurs, Ring for Details

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

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY
Steve Sharp, 0181 773 4204
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 Thurs, Welsh Institute of Sport, Cardiff, 8pm

SOUTH WEST WALES
Mark Rowntree, Tel: 01792 844316
1st Wed, Lodge Gorseinon, 7.30pm

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
David Crone, Tel: 01325 258252
3rd Wed, 8.30p.m., 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, Woolston, Wellingborough

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

WEST YORKSHIRE Gordon Carr, Tel: 01729 830569
1st & 3rd Thurs, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd), Odsal, Bradford

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

WORCESTERSHIRE David Gunster, Tel: 01905 616400
3rd Tuesday, The Fox at Bransford, Worcs.

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



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

TRAIL

JANUARY, 1999

No. 245

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

EDITOR: Fred Ellison.



John Gardner & Marc Vipond riding The Golden Pheasant, Berwyns, N. Wales. Photo by Alan Hodson. ('Nevada '98' in last month's TRAIL).

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

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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.



THIS IS YOUR LAST BULLETIN!

Thankfully this will only be the case if you haven't renewed your membership for 1999. However, as always, there is a solution to your problem - just return the enclosed membership form as soon as possible along with a cheque or postal order to John Pritchard, our new Membership Secretary and ensure delivery of your Bulletin for the rest of the year.

1998 has been a good year for the TRF. Membership has grown to over 2,100 members. We need to maintain this momentum if we are to carry on the work of preserving the United Kingdom's green lane heritage and that we can only do with your help and that of other trail riders. Just finding out where lanes are will not do this. Rights of Way work is essential and must go on. This is why we ask you to renew your membership and also to persuade other riders that they ought to join our Fellowship. Having persuaded them to join, or even if they don't join, encourage them to ride within the spirit of our new Code of Conduct, a copy of which is also enclosed.

If we can do all of this we will be on track to achieve our declared objective of 10 years ago. That is to ride as many lanes in the Year 2000 as we did in the Year 1990.

Happy trail riding and all the best for 1999.

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EAST MIDLANDS TRF GROUP MEMBER
Please phone for more detail or copy of my Free Illustrated price list

Telephone: **01949 850530** (anytime)

FROM THE NEW MEMBERSHIP SEC.

Just a quick note to let you all know that I have taken over the position of Membership Secretary from Graham Stratford.

The change over should go without a hitch, thanks to Graham going out of his way in coaching me through the intricacies of the TRF's data base and documenting in a sequence things that need to be done and how to do them. That is not to say I will get it right straight away, but I am confident in the knowledge that if all else fails Graham is only a phone call away.

Graham tells me he has enjoyed his tour as Membership Secretary, but he intimated to me his main problem was deciphering the different styles of handwriting. Some being more legible than others. Please spare a thought for me when you fill in your membership renewal form.

To save Graham forwarding loads of mail, could all Reps and members with membership forms for new members please make sure that they change the address on them, or get some new ones from Aelwood. Or if you only need a few, let me know when you renew your membership and I will send them on.

If I can be of any help to anyone on membership matters, please don't hesitate in contacting me. All details are in the usual place in the TRAIL.

Once again, a huge thank you must go to Graham and Helen for all their help. Kindest Regards, *John Pritchard, Hertford Group and National Membership Secretary*

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NOTICE BOARD

Anyone interested in **REGULAR STEADY RIDES** around the Rossendale area please contact Bruce Cape on 01706 211230.

FOR THOSE WITH INTERNET ACCESS
There is a newsgroup called uk.rec.motorcycles.trailriding and John Rusworth has started a 'rides' E-mail list. If you want to go for a trail ride and want others to know post it to this list!
For more information contact info@motorcycle.co.uk

LOCATION OF TRF EXEC. MEETING 23rd January 10.30 a.m.
Directions:
From South, East or West approach junction 3 on M42 signposted A435.
Turn to Birmingham. 1 mile to roundabout. Immediately prior to Roundabout turn left into Becketts.
From North take A435 South to Evesham and Redditch. Beckett's Island is situated 4 miles south of Maypole Island.

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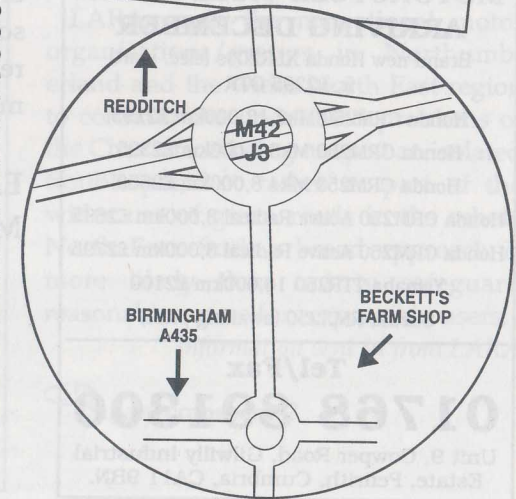
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HONDA WARS - BMF RESPONSE

In response to Honda UK's recent action against parallel imports, the BMF has stated that it is in favour of the best deal for its members and the consumer and would prefer manufacturers (including those of UK origin) and importers to market products at comparable rates, rather than subsidise one market by inflating prices in another.

In support of this it has welcomed moves by all manufacturers and importers in recent months to make significant cuts to their advertised recommended retail prices to the point where the UK price is more comparable to those elsewhere in Europe.

Commenting, BMF Chairman Henry Marks said: "The BMF represents motorcyclists, not the industry and Honda's action will in the long term restrict the availability and supply of Powered Two Wheelers in the UK. It should also be borne in mind that the interest regarding this issue is throughout the motor sector too.

Penrith Motorcycles

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Suzuki RMX250 (awaiting price)

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Unit 9, Cowper Road, Gilwilly Industrial
Estate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 9BN.

BMF TACKLES THE TREASURY

The Government's policy on all forms of motorcycling taxation was under scrutiny this week when BMF representatives were invited to a meeting with Treasury Officials.

EARLY BOOKING FOR BMF MEMBA RALLY ADVISABLE

MOTORCYCLES IN THE CHEVIOTS

Is a Hierarchy of Trail Routes a viable management solution?

For the past two years LARA has been part of an ad hoc working group concerned to regulate illegal motorcycle use in the Cheviot Hills of Northumberland and Southern Scotland.

On 4th December, Geoff Wilson (LARA's deputy chairman and the ACU's chief executive) and Alan Kind met Catriona Mulligan of Northumberland National Park for further discussions to explore possible solutions. This meeting touched on the possibility of importing the successful Lake District National Park Hierarchy of Trail Routes (HoTR) processes as a way of spreading the load of motor use and engaging users and land managers in a positive way (copies of the HoTR report are available from LARA on request).

The 'core area' of the Cheviots, where the reported unacceptable level of (probably unlawful) motorcycle use occurs is itself probably too small to be amenable to a HoTR approach. But the hierarchy approach could well be successful if applied to the whole of Northumberland (and perhaps the fringes of Cumbria, Durham and Borders Region), and taken on board by all recreational motor groups.

Taking the Northumberland region as a whole, the overall picture becomes more like that in the Lake District: sustainable routes, unsustainable routes, and every point in-between.

LARA urges the recreational motor organisations/groups in Northumberland and the wider North East region to consider the undoubted problems of the Cheviots as being not just an isolated troublespot, but rather as part of the wider use of green roads in the whole North East. Such a broad approach is more likely than not to safeguard reasonable access for responsible users.

Information sent in from LARA

Ed. Any comments?

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Geoff Wilson was asked to contribute a short article for the promotional newspaper of Yorkshire Dales National Park. Geoff couldn't say all that he wanted to say in the space which the editor provided and an abbreviated version of the following appeared in the Park paper. As TRF Members we are often asked to explain our activities to others. The full text of what Geoff said to the Dales Park pretty well sums up the TRF's corporate view on the subject.

A CASE FOR VEHICLES ON TRAIL ROUTES - ROADS DON'T STOP WHERE THE TARMAC ENDS!

Geoff Wilson - Deputy Chairman, Motoring Organisations Land Access & Recreation Association; Chairman, Lake District Hierarchy of Trail Routes Working Group; Chief Executive Auto-Cycle Union; and TRF Member.

Vehicular trail routes are part of our national heritage. They are all that remains as a glimpse of how the country's road network was before the tarmac machine sealed most of our roads against the ravages of water. If these old roads were buildings many would be protected by listing. In the absence of such protection they are open to destruction from all quarters. At one extreme, from sporting vehicle users who regard trail routes as the sort of challenge which they should more appropriately face on specially prepared circuits. At the other extreme from those who would have vehicles removed from the deep countryside so that the old roads would become only bridleways or footpaths. Both extremes are destined to remove a small, yet important, piece of our heritage jigsaw.

Many old buildings survive because they have new walls on the inside and have been converted to accommodate late 20th century technology and tourism. Just a few are maintained as museums.

Many very old footpaths are sustained by walkers in spring-healed footwear and brightly coloured weather protection. Few, if any, are now trod by walkers shod in clogs or hob-nailed boots or wearing oil skins.

Just like the two examples above, the old trail routes can no longer be sustained by the mode of traffic for which they were originally intended. Only carefully managed use by careful vehicle users can maintain these rare examples of how our roads used to be back in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. The Yorkshire Dales has more than a usual share of old trail routes. We can only imagine what Oxnop and Buttertubs passes were like in those times. Yet Stake Moss, Cam Fell and Highway (Mallerstang) remain as classic examples.

In the Lake District we are trialling possibilities to manage vehicular trail route use in the same way that other access issues, such as crag and river access, have been successfully managed. Twenty-five years of trying to address the issues through legal tampering have failed. With little prospect of policing total exclusion will lead to disrepute. Fundamental cultural change through partnership protection and joint time and space management by land managers, users and Park Authorities remains the only solution.

Only 4% of our rights of way network is not footpath or bridleway. LARA maintains that retaining this very special 4% through recreational use is a serious responsibility for us all. Walkers and horse-riders who are offended by vehicles may be encouraged by good mapping, information and signing to use the other 96%. Vehicle users in turn are encouraged to rely more on responsibilities than rights, and to walk or cycle in places beyond which vehicles are not appropriate. In the Lake District it is vehicle users themselves who are being given the chance to set the standards of which routes are appropriate to what level of vehicular use ... if any. Vehicle users are being given the chance to own the problems and to solve them. The problems will remain for so long as vehicle users fail to address the problems or whilst others presume to solve them unilaterally.

Geoff Wilson, 1/1/99

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Derbyshire Weekend Event 1999

The event will be held at the 'Bull-in-Thorn', situated on the A515 Nr. Buxton, Derbyshire. Anyone wishing to go but isn't sure where exactly it is please don't hesitate to phone 0115 9300414 and a map will be sent on to you.

The repair work that we are looking at this year on the weekend is Totly Moor and possibly Pilsbury Ford, where there is much erosion. At this stage Ray Clayton of G.L.A.S.S. has been in touch with D.C.C. about the project and over the next few months it will become clear to us what support they can give. Equally, the Peak Park Range Authority will also be involved to help with advice on conservation on the areas we may be covering.

We are not arranging to book the 'off road' course at Newhaven, though anyone wishing to use it will have to book it individually. There will be a 'Disco' on the Saturday night.

Karen Wilson, Peak, District Group TRF

Derbyshire Weekend Event 1999

30th April to 3rd May

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Vehicle, Caravan/Tent £10.50 £ _____

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TOTAL £ _____

Please make cheques payable to either: GLASS/DORA c/o Ray Clayton, 30 Boweswell Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 8EE, Tel: 01159 326692 or PEAK DISTRICT TRF c/o Karen Wilson, 69 Nottingham Road, Trowell, Nottinghamshire, NG9 3PJ, Tel: 01159 300414.

ENTRY FORM FOR
Coast-to-Coast '99

This event will run from Scarborough to Hawes and from Hawes to Morecambe on the weekend of 15th and 16th May 1999. All riders will receive a T-shirt and run leaders will receive a free sweatshirt. Anyone else requiring a sweatshirt can buy one for £14.

- Places will be limited and will be on a first come, first served basis.
- Any profit made goes to the TRF Fighting Fund.
- Don't forget you must be a paid-up member of the TRF and your bike should be road legal.

NAME _____

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Please indicate type of riding preferred, e.g. scenic/difficult/with lunch stop/without lunch stop _____

It is best to be honest as your weekend might not be as enjoyable if you end up in the wrong group and have to push yourself too hard.

Accommodation information required? If so, please tick the box.

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'98 Day 2 of Coast-to-Coast with Leo Crone

Any thoughts of a lie in went out of the window as soon as I agreed to lead on both days of this year's Coast to Coast. So it was up at 5.45 a.m. to take the dogs out, a quick bite to eat and out of the house by 6.30 a.m. Round to my parent's house first to pick up the trailer then to my brother's house to load up his bike, a grey import DR250 electric start, my mount for the second day of the 1998 Coast to Coast.

My XT was not looking too well, the voltage regulator strapped to the frame with zip ties (since remounted), an old split link holding the new chain together (since replaced) and oil all over the place, which was traced to a porous weld on the top mounting bracket for the oil tank (now welded up).

By 7.45 I was on the A1 heading south, followed by an hour of westbound roads to eventually bring me into Hawes to be first in the car park. Even at full speed I still seem to spend ages getting ready. By the time I closed the rear van doors and put my helmet on, the car park had filled. My band of merry men had almost assembled when Phil Fawcett asked if I would mind taking along our German entrant Volker Heins on his TUV approved German registered XT350. He had abandoned Phil's group late Saturday morning declaring "Phil, he is in a great hurry". This should be tempered with the knowledge that on the second trail of the day he had dropped his bike in a large DEEP puddle/pond/lake (depending on which version you heard), submerging both himself and the bike.

By now it was 9.00 and all my group seemed to have arrived. As I did the rounds, cajoling muddy figures onto muddy bikes, I heard a whisper that my merry group of 6 on Saturday were in a three way split about the days riding. Two wags thought the day a tad slow, two thought it just right, while the remaining two teddy bears thought there was too much salt in the porridge and it was altogether too fast. Talk about pleasing all the people.

More by good luck than organisation I had my group following me out of the car park well ahead of time, riding West towards our first trail, Lady Anne's Highway. As we snaked our way of of Hawes, we made a brief diversion in Appersett. Most road users traverse the stream by the majestic old single span bridge which dominates the hamlet, but there is another way across. Yes, it's a chance to get your feet wet really early in the day. The ford, whilst not particularly deep, is quite long over smooth rocks, so a feet up crossing is quite an achievement. Everybody's boots suitably wet we set forth once more in search of green lanes.

The start of Lady Anne's Highway is a half-mile climb to a very small gate on a one in three hill. Followed by a further one hundred feet of zigzag trail up the same one in three hill. At the top of the climb we stopped to drink in the view of Wensleydale, bathed in sunlight from a cloudless blue sky. The five minute

wait for Rueben and Keith flew by, though I'm sure it seemed like an hour of hard labour to the two teddy bears. Watching the struggle I made a mental note to have frequent stops and offer words of encouragement whenever possible.

Meanwhile the two wags were making encouraging noises about "this being a bit more like it". A further 20 minutes of easy riding brought us to a part of Highway, which, while a little narrow, has the added thrill of a forty-foot sheer drop. Keith on his XT600 Tenere was starting to feel the cumulative effects of a hard day's ride the day before, a night sampling Yorkshire's finest sherbet and a rotten head cold. Hence a tense five minutes was had by all as our group watched Keith negotiate thirty yards of hard trail. Shortly afterwards Keith and Rueben made their apologies and left the run to return back to Hawes, but not before we had all seen Hell Gill from Hell Gill bridge, reputed to be the spot where the noted highwayman Dick Turpin gave local officers of the law the slip when he and his trusted steed Black Bess leapt the then unabridged Gill. History lesson over, we split, 6 going West, 2 East.

It had been a while since I'd ridden Highway, so the sight of a twenty foot tall block of stone stood on it's end at Mallerstang Head was quite a sight, which called for a stop. I've got to say it wasn't long before I'd had enough of the stone and instead let my eyes rest on the view. The landscape has remained unchanged in the 17 years I've ridden the road, yet it is still a beautiful vista, which seemed to put the sculpture in it's context, of a full stop in a Shakespeare play or footnote on War and Peace. You know it's there but if it wasn't would anyone miss it?

The 10 minute descent of Mallerstone Common brought us onto the B6259, our next trail but a mile South of us. It starts near Pendragon Castle, yes it's supposed to have been the birth place of Arthur Pendragon, but it's a myth. The castle is of Norman origin, pillaged twice by the Scots, eventually to be rescued from complete ruin by Lady Anne Clifford. Over the cattle grid near the ruins we turned right onto a well-defined track, following the contours of the River Eden to our East. I had picked this particular lane because it had a ford. I like fords. Today while not particularly deep, it was quite lively underfoot, but by now the lads were getting wise to my ways, so I didn't have time to get the camera out to record bikes being dropped and recovered.

Back onto the B6259 and I'm starting to cut lanes out and it's not even 11.00. A brief flirtation with the outskirts of Kirby Stephen brought us onto the A685, but it was only a mile before a right onto Waitby Common and we lost white lines in the road. Another half mile and a left through an unmarked gate took us off tarmac altogether and over Smardale Fell. A lane definitely best led on as it's more of a general direction than defined route. With tractor ruts all over the common, any well ridden path is obliterated at regular intervals. Once over Smardale Bridge it's a gentle green lane until it's finish at Friars Bottom Farm. Back onto the A685 we doubled back on ourselves to Ravenstonedale where a bewildering series of left and right turns eventually got us onto the single track

road to Howgill Fells. 2 miles of narrow twisting road brought us to the edge of the fells, at which point we hung a left which I missed as usual, over a small ford and around the edge of Harter Fell.

We dropped down to the A683, but only to cross it to get to Dovengill. The start is a long, yes you've guessed it, ford which all the Anglo Saxons crossed without too much trouble, but our European Brother had a slight mishap resulting in a snapped clutch lever. Five minutes of mixed European oaths had the new lever fitted while a further 30 seconds with a 10mm spanner ensured a better than good chance that on the next fall the lever and mount would spin on the bars. I caught the end of a conversation where Mr. Ramsden on his KLR650 commented on the 8 inches of slack his chain was currently running and assured us that all was well with this level of play.

One mile brought us to Rawthey Bridge on the A683 from whence our next lane was clearly visible climbing up onto Bluecester. A mixture of rock, ford and bog. It was the bog that had the last say on just how much slack a KLR final drive chain should have. The group gathered around the stricken KLR to examine the front sprocket locked solid with 2 or 3 folds of chain gripping it tightly to the surrounding casing. The ensuing 20 minutes reminded me of the game we all play as children. Cross your arms over palms while facing each other, now link your fingers and turn the whole lot back towards yourself. The game is then for someone to point to a finger and for you to try to move it without moving another by mistake. Having put Humpty Dumpty back together again questions were now being raised about lunch. My policy is always to relate the pub to number of lanes to ride and not to a time, so spirits lifted when I said two more lanes would have us close to dinner.

We re-joined the A685 for a 2 mile southbound blast before a left turn beckoned. The road has the peculiar trait of getting narrower the higher it climbs the fell side until the road to Fellgate Farm is barely wide enough for a single car. By now the surface was two concrete strips axle wide with a stream running down the middle. Waiting at the farm gates was the usual reception committee of 5 sheepdogs barking their hearts out. 3 of the dogs are content with just barking, but 2 prefer the more direct approach of biting the heel of your boot. Once we were through the gauntlet we bore right, meandering over Bough Fell towards Garsdale Foot, down the narrow road, over the river Clough to meet up with the A684, a brief 20 yards of which brought us to the foot of Tarn Hill, a pleasant enough climb made all the more interesting by the recent addition of 2 large drainage ditches.

Once on Lony Moor I picked up the landmarks which guided us towards Rawriding Farm, some of which included a small reed bog, rocks and a little ford, which the KLR managed without losing it's chain and Volker traversed without breaking any more of his bike. We advanced to the Sun Inn at Dent. By now bathed in sub-tropical temperatures and sunshine, a leisurely hour later we

remounted. The West Coast, a tantalising 23 miles away by tarmac, beckoned. Trail 1 of the afternoon was a steep rocky climb starting about 200 yards from the pub, so there was no time to let dinner settle as varying types of ascent brought the group onto the Coal Road and we turned West away from the bike swallowing bogs on Blea Gill.

As we reached the road in Barbondale one of the wags realised he was about 15lbs lighter than he should be and could we please hang on while he went back to the pub for his bum bag? We spent a leisurely 15 minutes watching hand gliders riding thermals on Weather Ling Hill edge, before the XR600 rejoined our merry bunch and we started the roller coaster of a ride which is the tarmac road leading to Barbon village. Good air can be achieved on at least 3 occasions as the road faithfully follows the contours of Barbondale. As we followed the contours of Barbon Low Fell towards Castleton, a quick look back confirmed we were together as the next lane approached, a well concealed left almost doubling back on the road. The DR250 managed the lane with little difficulty, but at the lane end we were four. Two down. Five minutes later still no sign. I retraced my steps to find the Kawasaki and DR650 still at the start of the trail. Feeling not unlike Bo-Peep I shepherded my two errant sheep back to the flock and broke out sheet 97 as I now planned to ride a lane I had never done before.

The entrance to the lane is opposite Hipping Hall Hotel. "You can't miss it" Roger Preston assured me. Sure enough I couldn't. After a tarmac start it begins to meander through green fields near Laithbottles. To my delight I was not the first through so I followed the line of grass turned a lighter shade by the previous tyres, lost my way only once and finished in the village of Cantsfield. By now I was torn between Hest Bank by road or a couple more trails. To hell with it, two more trails than an ice-cream at the finish. Just out of Wrayton we passed Roger and his group repairing a puncture as we headed for the penultimate lane, finishing at Melling. Our last trail was unknown to me but KLR man had local knowledge so he led us on and through the last trail, past his house-boat moored near Bolton-le-Sands and onto the finish at Hest Bank for about 4.30ish.

No cheering crowds, flagging us in at the finish or even a bottle of champagne to be sprayed over bike and rider. Just a two minute queue at the cafe to get cans of anything cold and an ice cream. As I signed off I accumulated a number of names and addresses to send sets of prints to. A brief fifteen minutes of chat and I'm ready for the hour's ride back to Hawes followed by another hour plus back to Darlington. All in all not a bad two days.

We had two days of beautiful weather. All the bikes performed well with no major let downs and in the two days I estimate we met three walkers with no problems on any of the trails. It's my brother David's turn to lead next year so see you on the Coast to Coast next millennium.

Leo Crone, Darlington

ANDEAN ADVENTURE

Flavio rides to the edge of the plateau and with a blip of the throttle is lost to view. It's my turn next and my heart leaps to my mouth as I commit myself to the void. It's something I just can't get used to, but each time it does become a little easier as we learn how trustworthy our leader is. We, that is Todd and Jim from America and myself from the UK are on the second day of our 'Inca Moto Adventure' trail riding holiday in Peru.

The holiday started in Lima, that mist and smoke clouded capital of one of the most fascinating countries on earth. We flew in and met up with Flavio and his driver/mechanic/cook/handyman Oscar for the three hour drive down the coast to Paracas.

After lunch at our hotel we went into the yard to become acquainted with our bikes, beautifully prepared and equipped XR600's. If, like me, your usual mount is an MTX125 then at first sight an XR600 is a bit daunting, but once you have the knack they start just as easily as a 125 and on the move the extra weight is so well balanced that you just don't know it's there.

That afternoon we rode out onto the Paracas Peninsula to familiarise ourselves with the bikes, the terrain and one another. Todd I already knew from a previous trail riding holiday in the Baja. Jim, a friend of Todd and Flavio, our trail boss, were both new to me but we soon welded into a riding team who looked out for each other and helped each other if ever help was needed.

That first afternoon, after the initial trepidation wore off, was enormous fun, a vast area of hard packed sand dunes which we flew up and over and down and round and across until we really felt at home with the bikes, the terrain and one another.

The evenings were spent yarning over dinner in some little cantina sussed out from many previous visits by Flavio and sure to provide good local food, drink and atmosphere at a very reasonable price.

It was not to be all fun in the sand though. The next morning we were up early to take a boat out to the Ballestas Islands, the 'poor man's Galapagos'. These islands are stuffed with sea lions, penguins and more sea birds than you could shake a stick at. The boat man would cut the motor and let the boat drift in stern first amongst the jagged rocks just to let us have a close-up of the basking sea lions and their harems. A quick burst on the engine would shave us off the rocks just as it seemed we must founder.

After lunch we kitted up and boarded the bikes for the ride through the first part of the Great Ica Desert. This area of Peru gets less than one inch of rain a year unless of course El Nino strikes, when it may well get disastrous floods, which accounts for its barren but at the same time deeply eroded watercourses. It was on this part of the journey that we were doing our 'follow my leader' over the dunes. These dunes, which are anything up to 300 feet high, are very rideable, but once up on the tops which are flat, you can't see the descent until you actually drop over the edge. OK, so Flavio had done it a hundred times before, but for me, the first time, boy was I scared.

That evening we rested in our hotel in Ica and the following day we journeyed on through the Great Ica Desert on roads that varied from the tarred but busy Pan American Highway to a ten mile stretch of deserted beach where we lunched on beer

and sandwiches brought up to us in the Oscar driven support truck.

Later that day we stopped to look at a looted pre Inca cemetery. It looked just like pictures I've seen of a WW1 battlefield. An area about as big as four football fields, covered with hundreds of craters where the graves had been dug out and the whole lot covered with human bones, skulls, fragments of cloth and broken pottery. The huaquero (looters) had only been interested in the gold objects and fine pottery buried with the bodies. These items find a ready market on the international art market although, of course, the huaquero get only a fraction of their value.

That afternoon, after riding 150 miles, we arrived in the town of Nasca, world famous for the enigmatic Nasca Lines.

We were woken at 7.45 the next morning to be told to get ready immediately as the conditions were perfect for our flight to see the Nasca Lines. (I told you it wasn't all fun in the sand) The air field was only about a mile away so we were soon up in the air in a tiny four seater plane which, flying at about a thousand feet, gave us all a breathtaking view of these puzzling pre-historic markings. The area that is marked is a plateau of about 500 square miles which is covered with wind polished brown stones. Under the stones is yellow sand and the marks were made by collecting up the stones to expose the sand beneath. The stones were then used to edge the marks made. What is so intriguing is the scale of the 'lines'. Some, which appear to be pathways, run as straight as a ruler for anything up to 20 miles. Others are rectangles or triangles, again many hundreds of yards across. Still more are animals, birds, whales, monkeys, etc. and finally spirals. Various theories have been put forward to account for them from Eric von Dannikens nutty notion that they are landing sites for extra-terrestrials, to more probable ideas that they are in some way connected with sun or moon worship.

After our flight we once again set off on the bikes to visit a very remote bay where we were told the sea lions were so unused to human beings that it would be possible to walk among them. To begin with the trail was hard and rocky, but later it turned to sand and sand that sloped steeply to the left with a drop off to the sea at the bottom. I had great trouble with this trail and found myself sliding down the slope and getting nearer and nearer to the drop off. Just as I was about to give up, the track levelled out and we were soon down at the bay. Unfortunately the sea lions were not at home that day so after a rest and a stroll round we set off back. When I told Flavio of my problems on the way out he just said "Gain height, hit it hard and keep up momentum". I did all those things and soared home in triumph.

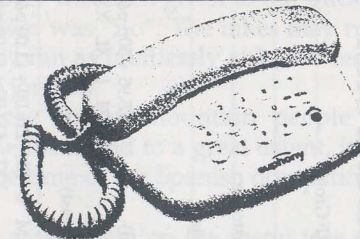
Day four started early as we had a hard days journeying ahead of us. We breakfasted in the dark and after stowing our overnight bags in the support truck jumped on the bikes and sped away up towards the town of Nasca. Just before the town we turned off onto a road which would take us high into the Andes to Cusco over 400 miles away. The road was well surfaced and we quickly began to climb. It was certainly one of the best mountain roads that I have ever ridden, well surfaced with one hairpin after another with short straights in between. We would blast up the straights, change down and brake into the corners and then accelerate hard up the next straight. This went on for mile after mile and in the first three quarters of an hour we have climbed 4,500 feet. The views were staggering.

Eventually the tar gave out and we were back to dirt, but hard packed dirt on which we could easily keep up 50 to 60 mph. We went over a pass at around 14,000 feet

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where the air began to feel decidedly thin. An answer was then given to our question "do you have to re-jet at high altitude?". The answer was "no". The bikes may run a bit rich but they still pump out the power and they ran as faultlessly at 14,000 feet as they had at sea level and as they did on the whole journey.

We were now in Quechua country. These hardy mountain people are descendants of, and still speak the language of, the Incas and to a great extent, in the remote areas, live a life very little changed from the time of the Spanish occupation of Peru in the 16th century.

Lunch that day was again in a cantina, but a new item on the menu was coca leaves. These are the leaves from which cocaine is extracted, but in the mountains are commonly chewed as an antidote to altitude sickness. I tried them and found that the taste was foul, but that after a while one's lips and gums began to go numb just like the after effects of a cocaine injection at the dentists. I can't comment on their ability to stave off the effects of altitude because, fortunately, I never really suffered from it.

We soon began to see herds of Vicuna, those strange, gentle, wild animals that look like a cross between a sheep, a deer and a camel. We also saw herds of Llama. These were domesticated animals with gaily coloured ribbons in holes in their ears to denote ownership. We then began to meet with gangs of workmen, busy improving the road. Some bits were easy where they were nearly finished, but other parts were a nightmare of stalled trucks, bulldozers, boulders and milling workmen. At one point we had to wait nearly an hour while the rock blasters finished their work and the bulldozers pushed enough of the boulders out of the way to enable us to get through.

Of course, we on the bikes had an enormous advantage over everyone else as we could work our way up to the front of the queue and were always first away. Poor old Oscar in the support truck was miles behind. That night we camped for the first time. Oscar had finally caught up, but it was dark before we found the spot we were to camp at and it was a weary party that crashed out on the air beds that night.

The next day was to be another marathon, altogether nearly ten hours in the saddle, but what riding, still at over 12,000 feet, still plenty of road works but plenty of good trail in between. So much trail in fact that I think we were all secretly a little pleased that the last three hours of riding brought us tarred roads once again. At last the red roofs of Cusco came into sight, lying in a valley below us and half an hour later we were in our hotel sipping coca matte, an infusion of coca leaves that the Quechua people use for every kind of malady from altitude sickness to hunger, hardly PG Tips but very welcome just the same.

Cusco, the ancient capitol of the Inca empire is a town one could easily spend a month exploring. Inca ruins, buildings and cathedrals of the Spanish Conquistadors and present day Quechua homes and workshops. We had one day, but as the Winter solstice was only a few days away were lucky to see rehearsals for that great event, for although the population is nominally Catholic it is Catholicism that incorporates a large element of the old Inca faith. Life size statues of saints on massive litters are carried into the cathedral from the surrounding countryside to be blessed and carried in procession on the great day. Armies of Inca warriors march and countermarch, bands play and over all the great bells of the churches and cathedrals tolled incessantly. It was pure paganism subtly modified to satisfy the Christian church.

The next day required no motorcycles. Breakfast was at six and soon after we

were away to the railway station for the ride up the Urabamba valley to Machu Pichu, that amazing stone built Inca city that was lost for nearly four hundred years. It sits on top of a ridge of rock in almost inaccessible jungle. All around on the mountain slopes are terraces that were cultivated to provide food for the population and incredibly there is a spring of water just where you least expect it, right in this town on the mountain. My words can't do justice to it. You must see it for yourself. Our guided tour ended all too soon and it was back on the train for the three and a half hour ride back to Cusco.

The last two days of our Inca Moto Adventure were to take us down the other side of the Andes into the rain forests of the Amazon basin. The track down was hairy to say the least, a steep winding descent with a mountain on one side and a sheer drop on the other. As Jim said to me when we arrived at the bottom "Man that was some ride. If you missed your braking point you were one dead motorcyclist." Camp that night was on a bamboo platform way off the ground with a thatched roof over us. We were lulled to sleep by the sound of a massive waterfall that crashed into the jungle just across the way.

It was a weary but exultant party that made it's way back to Cusco the following day. When the bikes that had carried us so effortlessly over so many miles were loaded into the back of the support truck we felt we were being parted from faithful old friends and it was with great regret that we knew that we would never see them again.

The next day we all flew back to Lima while Flavio and Oscar started the long haul home by road. After one more night in this fascinating country we all went our separate ways. The adventure was over but the memories will last long after the bruises have faded.

How much does all this cost. Well in round figures the KLM flight from Heathrow is about £600 including Airport Tax and Flavio charges about £165 per day, which covers everything but a few meals and after dinner drinks.

To learn more ring David Grist of HC Travel on 01256 770775 for a brochure and current price.

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MOTOCROSS BOOTS Gaerne SX Evolution. White and Purple Size 11. Good condition. £60 Cost £180. Suzuki RMX 250 owners service manual £10. Tel: 01200 428844.

SUZUKI DR350 Enduro 1997 435 conversion. Rental bars, bark busters, green laned only. £2300. Tel: 01376 550989.

HONDA XL 250S 1981 T & T Aug '99. V. good original condition. 'O'-ring chain. Ideal intro. bike to green lane trail riding with an easy to ride bike. £700 ono. Tel: Bob on 0181 992 9204 (work) 0966 241365 (mobile) Surrey.

WANTED HONDA CT125-C Trail Bike. Official import circa 1982. Can collect from anywhere. Tel: Paul 01254 209683/0831 476839.

HONDA XLR250 BAJA 1988, 1 years T & T, spares, excellent condition. £1150 ono. Tel:

01707 396943 (Herts).

WANTED TRAIL BIKE in exchange for a wheel horse tractor, 10 horse power with trailer and spare tyres. Tel: 01608 677546 (Oxfordshire).

SUZUKI DR250 Upside down forks, ride height adjustment, road and off road tyres, very good condition £1600. Tel: Paul 01332 519575 (Derby).

WANTED 125 TRAIL BIKE Cheap, old. Anything considered, even a non-runner. Tel: 01270 665578 (Crewe).

DR350 PARTS FOR SALE Plastic (Enduro) tank, brackets and new decals £75. Carb 33mm F/S (14D01) £50. Engine to break. For details Tel: 01244 533855 (Chester).

WANTED FRONT & REAR WHEELS for XT350, also large size chest protector with shoulder parts. Alex Penrose, 5 Ormerod Road, Priory Road, Hull, HU5 5TU.

YAMAHA SRX600 super single 4000M, 1986 silver, gleaming, new tyres, £1550. Possible p/x trail 250-350cc 4-stroke. **Moto Guzzi 750** sports/tourer, 1986, low miles, appreciating classic, £1995. Possible p/ex trail 250-350cc 4-stroke. Tel: 01298 26201 (Derbyshire).

HONDA XR600RW 1998 "R" reg, one owner, excellent condition with bike trailer. £3750 ono. Tel: 01748 836541.

SUZUKI TS200R 1989 "F" reg. 12,200 miles, T&T, VGC, standard black and blue colours, DEP tailpipe, brand new 'O'-ring c&s. £1275 ono. Tel: 01908 242678.

YAMAHA DT175MX "B" reg. 16,000 miles, T&T, Gianelli Expansion chamber, DEP silencer. £400 ono. Tel: Rupert 01252 792672 (Surrey).

JL125 4-stroke trail bike (very similar to XL125). Still under warranty. 2,200 miles. Well looked after and good throughout. £990 for quick sale. Tel: 01538 383181 or Fax: 01538 381644 or E-mail: g.dalgarno@keele.ac.uk

WANTED XL, XR OR RS 250 ENGINE inc. carb and coil. Tel: 01772 617941 (Lancs.).

WANTED for Honda MTX200/125 - gearbox, whole motor or bottom half, consider whole damaged bike. (This is a Help the Aged Appeal!). Tel: Tony 0181 953 5702 (Elstree).

KAWASAKI KLR250 "L" reg, '93. 7900 miles, mainly road use. Tax & Test October. V.G.C. £1650. Tel: 0161 794 8758.