

## GROUPS

**AXE VALE** Malcolm Preece, Tel: 01275 844757  
2nd Mon, *The Star, Star (A38), Nr. Shipham, Somerset*

**BLACK COUNTRY** Nick Hammond, Tel: 01384 221520  
1 & 3 Tues, 9pm, *The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton*

**BRISTOL** Paul Andrews, Tel: 01179 659255  
4th Mon, *Keynsham Rugby Club, Bristol Road, Keynsham*

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

**CHESHIRE** John Stansfield, Tel: 07899 844872  
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: 01709 367332  
2 & 4 Tuesdays, *The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire*

**DEVON** Rob Williams, Tel: 01626 364564  
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 YORKSHIRE**  
Howard Wadsworth, Tel: 01405 860904  
1st Tues, *Boot & Shoe, Gowdall, Nr. Snaith*

**ESSEX**  
John Lay, Tel: 01206 263912, Mobile: 0831 886032  
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 Wed, *The Winget Social Club, Tuffley Avenue, Glos.*

**HERTFORDSHIRE** Colin Adlam, Tel: 01727 875618  
2nd Thurs, *The Old Guinea, Ridge, Near Potters Bar*

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**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** Chris Moody, Tel: 01207 506333 6-10pm or 0860 302001 (mobile)  
1st Tues, 8pm, *The Swan Inn, Heddon on the Wall*

**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** Neil Walker, Tel: 01788 811919  
1st Thurs, 8pm, *Travellers Rest, Ashbourne Road, Derby*

**RIBBLE VALLEY** John Hargreaves, Tel: 01254 721897  
2nd Tues, *Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)*

**SHROPSHIRE** Rob Latham, Tel: 01952 592324  
2nd & last Wed, *White Horse, Shrewsbury*

**SOMERSET** Steve Hounsell, Tel: 01460 66452  
Last Thurs, *The Bell Hotel, Currey Rivel, Nr. Taunton*

**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** Keith Owen-Bines, Tel: 01793 751129  
1st Wed, *The Carrier's Arms at South Marston, Swindon*

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

**TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS**  
Mark Bieganski, Tel: 01904 656469  
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, Woolaston, Wellingborough*

**WEST MIDLANDS** Colin Bott, Tel: 01386 834105  
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** Alan Yandell, Tel/Fax: 01225 864187  
1st Tues, *The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford*

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



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

# TRAIL

JANUARY, 2000

No. 257

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

EDITOR: Fred Ellison.



Roger Harris riding at Melberley near Alston. Photo by Stephen Brass, Cumbria.

## CONTENTS

Editor	3	LARA News	9
Sharing	4	Minutes of last Exec. Meeting	10
Notice Board	5	Who's Fault?	14
Executive Meetings	6	One Man or Woman's Trail Bike	15
RoW News	7	Letters	20
Group News	8		

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

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TRF Website <http://www.trf.org.uk>

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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.*

## E D I T O R

Hope you all had a good Christmas and greeted the third millennium  
As it should have been with wild abandon and an excess of  
everything followed by a really good trail ride to clear the cobwebs or  
anything else left lurking after all that food, drink and merrymaking.

The February edition of TRAIL will be an updated 'Members  
Handbook' plus a small supplement for essential news and **as such will  
only be sent to paid up members** so if you haven't already renewed your  
membership then fill in your form and return it with your remittance to  
John Pritchard, Membership Secretary, for the best bargain available to the  
trail riding motorcyclist.

Lastly thank you to all who submitted their photographs for the TRF  
calendar competition. Some good photographs made it a difficult  
decision. The winner by a short head was Kev Lindsey from Oxfordshire  
with an excellent photograph of the 'Laughing Trail Rider', obviously  
enjoying every minute of his trail ride. Some of the other entries will  
appear on the cover of TRAIL over the coming months.

Yours riding into the 3rd Millennium,

*Fred Ellison*

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# Sharing

Working on the old saying "If the mountain won't come to Mohammed, then Mohammed must go to the Mountain", in

1999 I invited the Chairman of every Group

in the country to meet with me within their own

region and I travelled there to meet with them. What happened

makes a pretty good place to start a review of the TRF as I see it today.

Not all came, some because of a last minute hitch, some because they couldn't get anyone else to stand in for them, and some never told me why. But those who did come all said, without exception, that it had been worthwhile. In every case we talked about what the Chairman wanted to talk about. If I talked at all it was in response to a question or to a request. Each agenda was different, yet every meeting covered similar ground. The concerns were common at both Group and National level and in every case there were answers to be found, or support to be gained, from just listening to the experience offered and modifying it to your own situation. There was a lot of support for getting tougher with the 'hangers-on', those who just wanted to ride using other people's experience and not to help in any way, those who just wanted to take and not to contribute. As Officers no one should become 'the only one to organise things'. That was being a mug. Officers finding themselves in this position should stick up for themselves more.

Reject the hangers-on, give the offer of a fair but firm partnership and then such people would either have to begin to help or choose to go their own way. In the end, we agreed we reap what we sow, so there is a new resolve to set standards and to stick to them. And that includes learning to say no!

The better Groups ran a variety of activities at their meetings, and succeeded in keeping the necessary rights of way business - 'business like'. Some Groups had no problem with group size on the trail because they had enough Run Leaders. They bred them: newcomers were helped to read a map, and to learn the trails on beginners runs, and about rights of way, and were expected to be competent enough to lead a run within 18 months. Most Groups had good relationships over map marking with neighbouring Groups but

that only occurred where there was trust about the way in which the information was used. The best way to retain that trust was to ensure that new members learnt to respect the principles and codes of the TRF.

As one might expect I was asked most about what was happening on the national scene. Government department initiatives and thinking - as the TRF sees it - were discussed in the open and frank way that is only possible amongst friends and face to face. As was what had been happening in recent court cases, both in court and behind the scenes!

In short we talked about the past, the present and the future of trail riding and if your Chairman wasn't there then your Group missed out. It wasn't a 'talking shop', there were solutions to problems to be found, and explanations of the current trail riding scene - soon to affect everyone.

What do I take from the year past, how do I see things? What is my message for the new Millennium? Well I'll be blunt: the membership has to do better. The TRF is about maintaining our network of trails first and riding them second. Do it the other way round and you will lose them. That is my message, I cannot say it more clearly.

I am not asking of anyone that they do something that I am not willing to do, or that they do more than I do. Like you I suspect, I joined the TRF to ride green lanes, but now I see I have to do more than that to ensure the future of green laning. If we share the load it's not that much, so at your next Group meeting ask what you can do to help.

See you on the trail.

Dave Giles

## NOTICE BOARD

### CHESHIRE TRF GROUP AGM

will be held on  
Monday 21st February,  
starting at 9.00 p.m.  
at the Robin Hood Inn,  
High Lane, Hazle Grove,  
Stockport.

### CHAIRMEN'S E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Would each Group Chairman please send his E-mail address (or failing that the address of one of the Group's other Officers) to John Pritchard, the National Membership Secretary. This will enable swift communication of important matters when the need arises.

### CHAIRMEN'S MEETINGS IN 1999

Notes of all these are available to current Group Chairmen from Dave Giles on receipt of an A4 SAE.



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## EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

I am writing this independently of the minutes of the Executive Meeting of 4th December 1999 and my Sharing column in this issue because I think it is so vitally important. The dates of the Executive Meetings for this year and that of the AGM are printed below and I wish all members to take note of them. I particularly wish to request that all Groups ensure that they have a Group Representative for the Executive Committee and that he attends (as per the requirements of our Constitution). There is a great deal of very important things happening in the world of trail riding at the moment and it does not seem unreasonable in a democratic organisation where all the Officers are volunteers to expect this minimum level of support. You need to hear the full facts about what is happening so that you can understand and be part of the decisions that are made. We, the rest of the TRF need your experience, we need your contribution. Meetings are interesting and dealt with efficiently, everyone gets the chance to speak. Every afternoon last year was given over to working groups on some important aspect of business where everyone got involved. It is intended to continue with their pattern. To encourage representatives who have not been before the afternoon of the March meeting will take the form of a Question and Answer Session so enabling everyone to get up to speed. Help will be available for any representatives needing overnight accommodation.

Will Group Chairmen please see that this is discussed at their next Group Meeting and the outcome made known to the National Secretary.

**The Executive Meeting Dates for the year are:  
4th March, 3rd June, 2nd September, 2nd December  
and are currently scheduled for the Birmingham area.**

**The AGM has been booked for Sunday the 29th October 2000  
at the National Motorcycle Museum, Birmingham.**

*David Giles, National Chairman*



## RoW NEWS

### NATIONAL RIGHTS OF WAY OFFICERS REPORT

#### Countryside Bill 2000

Many members may think "what's this to do with me and being able to continue trail riding? Its only those BOFs who like attending meetings bleating again." Well I for one would rather be riding than sitting around a table talking during my very valuable leisure time. However the Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament indicated that the government will be introducing a Countryside Bill in the current parliamentary session. The major part of this will be the 'Right to Roam' for walkers, but will also include proposals coming out of the 'Improving Rights of Way' consultation paper. These potentially pose a significant threat to our pastime, so we all need to be vigilant and prepared to lobby MPs to ensure that the impact is minimised. For our part the Executive Committee will keep you informed and briefed on developments so you swing into action at the appropriate time. If you make time to brief your MP before then, so much the better: see October and November TRAIL for further information.

#### Prosecutions in Derbyshire

I am delighted to report that following a three and a half day trial in Chesterfield Magistrates Court, eight members of the East Midlands and Derbyshire and South Yorkshire Groups were acquitted of riding motorcycles on a Bridleway, namely Grimsell Lane, Holmsfield, Derbyshire. With support of the Fighting Fund we engaged leading highway solicitor Michael Orlik to defend our members. The Crown Prosecution Service wheeled out top highway barrister David Braham QC to argue the case for the prosecution. What is significant is that this lane is an Unclassified Road (UCR) as well as being a Bridleway and although the magistrate stated 'Dismissal of these charges does not in any sense establish that the route does in fact have vehicular rights. The question remains as open now as it was at the start of the case.' It does however send a clear signal to the Highway Authority that the process of reclassification of UCR/Bridleways they have adopted is seriously flawed, something we have been telling them for some time.

What are also of concern are the lengths that the CPS and the police went to over this case. For example the police took an aerial film of the lane using the force's helicopter and sent a copy of the video to all the defendants, possibly to intimidate them. The question of using a high cost asset to pursue what is the equivalent of a parking offence is clearly questionable. We will certainly be taking these matters up with Derbyshire County Council at the highest level.

At the moment we do not know if the prosecutions over Frith Hall Lane, Brampton or Lumb Lane, Belper will be dropped or not, following the Grimsell Lane acquittal. In the meantime riders still need to ride with caution and consideration in the county. We may have won a battle, but we have to win the peace. Riders travelling too fast or in large groups could easily undo successes such as this and give the highway authority just the excuse to place a Traffic Regulation Order on this and other lanes. *Richard Marshall, National Rights of Way Officer*

### ATTENTION TRAIL RIDERS IN BERKS.

The following lanes in the Knowl Hill area have been lost: RUPPs 9 and 22 (Warfield), RUPPs 19 and 22 (Binfield) with prohibition orders on RUPPs 1 and 4 (W. Waltham) - all Bridleways from 1/1/00. Next to go will probably be RUPP 11 (Bracknell), RUPP 1 (Winkfield) RUPP 12 (Crowthorne) - this has recently been 'flownover' by a massive carriageway reroute!! (It's part of the Devil's Highway). Our objections came to nought!! *Colin Patient*

## • GROUP NEWS •

### TRF AXE VALE GROUP - Y2K Compliance?

With inspiration and thanks to Sam Watt, (and no help from others), members of the TRF Axe Vale Group have, in the interests of promulgating validated Rights of Way Data for the benefit of all committed TRF members nationwide, created a web site containing Definitive Map Numbers and Map References issued by the responsible Highway Authority. Access is controlled by alpha-numeric code, which will only be issued to TRF members who send a large cheque, folding money or buy any Axe Vale Committee member several pints of real ale and hot meal. (Times are hard down South West). Maybe our new National Treasurer can get the Row Bursary Fund ring-fenced and up and running as Somerset still has 400+ RUPPs that need researching. We need Byways, Byways, Byways - sorry. I've been listening to too many politicians recently, but where else can you drive your Discos and Shoguns with total impunity? Maybe we TRF'ers should all ride push bikes on bridleways?

TRF Axe Vale Group has started 2000 as we intend to continue - RIDING MOTORCYCLES.

And if they see this copy of TRAIL, ('cos we all know it's circulated outside the TRF?) it was great meeting with George and Julie up on a very damp Dundry RUPP, enjoying a decent pint, plus free scoff, with some Bristol lads at the lunch stop; "The Druids" - you don't even have to wear a white sheet, moto-cross boots and max day-glo kit will suffice in this super TRF-friendly boozery with some of the biggest portions you've ever seen and a Byway within pit stop distance.

Happy New Year to all Trail Riders.

*TRF AVG*

### TWO PRINCIPAL ITEMS OF INTEREST:

- Durham County Council's intention to apply what looks like a reasonable management regime on 'byways'.

- Durham County Council's response to the DETR proposals on rights of way legislation - which is very scathing indeed on the proposal to 'cap' the definitive map.

On the way to the meeting I drove to Wolsingham and up on to the eastern end of Middleton Lane. No TRO signs. No nothing except a couple *in flagranti delicto* in a Rover 400 300 yards up what they thought must be a quiet bridleway... I hope my passing by didn't cause a premature ejaculation.

I asked at the meeting - the TROs quietly lapsed in July and there has not been a whisper since about 'abuse', Hell's Angels, damage, or anything else...

DCC is now intending to proactively examine other archive evidence turned up during the first round of research. One DCC representative observed quietly 'the landowners will NOT like that'...

There will be a workload for LARA member organisations in participating in this management forum. It might be a good idea if all local groups wrote to DCC (address it to Mike Lowe, Environmental Services) and asked to be included.

*Alan Kind*

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ED04 (for 250 bikes and above)	120/90-18	£45.95
ED12 (USA spec Enduro tyre)	120/90-18	£45.95
ED15 (as ED12 front fitment)	80/100-21	£34.95
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## Minutes of the TRF Executive Meeting held at: Becketts Island, Wythall (S. Birmingham) on 4th December 1999.

**Present:** As attendance book.

### **Welcome and Outline of the Day:**

The Chairman, David Giles, opened the meeting and outlined the Agenda for today. The morning would be spent on TRF business and reports. The afternoon session would be given over to updating the TRF Handbook for 2000. All agreed to this timetable.

**Apologies:** received from: Gwyn Thomas, Tony Stuart, Richard Marshall, Chris and Peter Higham.

### **Notice of Any Other Business:**

Tim Stevens reported the death of Geoff Brookes from Shropshire.

Request for formal authorisation to speak on behalf of the TRF: Tim Stevens.

Re-structuring the TRF, report from S W Region: Karen Wilson.

At this point Dave Giles felt it was necessary to discuss this straight away. He explained that following the South West Region meeting, concern had been expressed about the failure to elect new officers at the TRF AGM. The S. W. Region felt that maybe the TRF needs restructuring and suggested a way forward might be to devolve power to the Regions with a pool of Officer roles. Dave Giles felt there were some good ideas coming from the South West, but they would need to liaise closely with other Regions and bring their findings to the next Executive meeting. He was concerned that there was no-one from the S. W. Region here to explain the background to this proposal. Wayne Little was here, but knew nothing of the content of the S. W. proposals. Colin Patient suggested putting an article in TRAIL so that members can be part of the discussions.

Dave Giles also pointed out that since the AGM he had proposals for a Treasurer and 12 names from volunteers to be Deputy Chairmen. He would go into more detail later in this meeting.

Wayne Little offered to take this meeting's ideas back to the South West Region.

Dave Giles wished to thank the S. W. Region for their efforts and hoped to hear more at the next Executive Meeting on 4 March 2000.

Action: S. W. Region to pursue its ideas. Wayne Little or another to bring more information to next Executive Meeting.

### **Approval of minutes of previous meeting:**

These minutes had been printed in abridged form in TRAIL magazine. John Gardiner proposed they be accepted. Seconded by Mark Holland. Accepted.

### **Matters arising:**

The Chairman asked those who had actions from the previous meeting to update us on progress.

**Training:** Richard Hawker reported that he had tried to contact Worcester County

Council Offices to set up a venue for a training session, but the offices had been closed for a few days and he apologised for not getting back on to it. Mark Holland reported that the South West Region had carried out training at their Regional Meeting recently, but they had not been very encouraged by the numbers interested.

Charlie Morriss felt that there was a need to travel to groups and take the training to them, rather than trying to organise special events. He felt this would have a better reception from members. Tim Stevens suggested that perhaps it needs a Training Officer to do this as no-one is responsible for training at present. Dave Giles suggested a small working group to take this on. He felt there were pockets of good practice in the TRF, for instance in the Southern Group.

Action: Richard Marshall to continue set up a working group to sort out training programmes.

### **New Executive Officers:**

To be dealt with later in this meeting.

**DETR Proposals:** The TRF had made a good response to these proposals, with a good number of members writing or visiting their MPs. There was further discussion on approaching MPs and other bodies to counter the Antis propaganda.

### **Officers' Reports:**

**RoW Report:** In the absence of Richard Marshall, Dave Giles reported on the recent court case in Chesterfield where several TRF members had been taken to court for riding on a Bridleway/UCR. The case was dismissed and the TRF should receive some of its costs back. There followed discussion on general RoW issues and the way forward.

**LARA Report:** Richard Hawker reported from the recent LARA Steering Committee held on 2 November. There are concerns that progress in the Hierarchy of Trail Routes initiative in the Lake District is being held back by commercial users and others who are not part of the process riding in an unsympathetic manner. Richard Hawker also reported that Green Lane Day would be on 26 March 2000 and hoped members would be out clearing and maintaining their local lanes.

There had been a meeting with Mr. Meacher Secretary of State for the Environment and Tim Stevens had been invited by the National Federation of Bridleway Associations to attend. He felt that the meeting had rather been usurped by the British Driving Society, because they were not fully in accord with the other users there, this had taken some of our strength of unity away.

**Membership Report:** In the absence of John Pritchard, Dave Giles reported that membership was currently 2,450 with 600 renewals for year 2000 already received.

### **Other necessary Reports:**

**BMF:** Derrick Collins had circulated his report to this meeting. Richard Hawker asked what the RoW Liaison groups 'Best Practice' is all about. Derrick Collins explained that the Local Authorities were asked to respond to the DETR Proposals and now have to create RoW Liaison Groups, this is what is known as 'Best Practice' and means brown points for the Local Authorities.

#### **Actions from the AGM:**

Richard Hawker asked that these minutes report that, in his opinion, the money the Groups hold belongs to the Group and not the National TRF.

Dave Giles requested an indication of what they would pledge because the Finance Sub-Committee needs to know what monies it has to budget with in year 2000.

**Archiving:** Karen Wilson reported that TRF material from the previous Secretary is in an archive close to her home. She requested that any TRF records which anyone feels should be placed in a safe place could be added to this archive. The information would be readily accessible should the need arise. Karen would put an article in TRAIL requesting members to check what TRF records they have. Richard Hawker wondered if the TRF could go further and perhaps set up a digital record of map information of local and other areas where we ride, although this would mean groups would have to find a member with a computer. Mark Holland was concerned that many older members of the TRF might consider giving instructions to their relatives, so that the TRF could collect information should it be necessary.

**Membership Subs:** Dave Giles asked the Finance Sub-Committee to look at issues of subscriptions.

**Training:** Karen Wilson to write to the RoW Officer to set up Training or to delegate, but please get something moving.

**Membership Questionnaire:** There had been 9 forms returned so far from a mix of old and new members. Dave Giles explained that the TRF is looking for clues as to what members want.

#### **Election of Officers and Ratification of Co-opted Officers:**

**Treasurer:** John Gardiner was nominated by Tim Stevens and Seconded by Colin Patient. He was duly elected.

Jeff Ward proposed a vote of thanks to Alan Wilkinson for his hard work over the past three years. All Agreed.

**Vice Chairman:** Dave Giles explained that a number of members had shown an interest in this position, but were not ready to take it up immediately. He felt that maybe several Deputy Chairmen could take Area responsibility and he had 12 delegates for this type of system. This also works in well with the Working Groups system discussed earlier. Some discussion took place on how this would work and that it would spread the load in a positive way.

Everyone agreed with this way forward.

**London Gazette:** Richard Hawker reported that GLASS had offered to support the London Gazette subscription at £120. All agreed that this was acceptable.

**Co-opted Officers:** All Officers as last year except:

**BHS Head Office Liaison:** Jacky German (to liaise with Colin Patient).

**Display Material:** Leo Crone.

**Merchandising:** There were two people offering to look after Merchandising as part of their own business. Jeff Ward was concerned as to whether the TRF really needs this service at all. He reported that Merchandising had lost £1000 over the past two

years and felt that the take up of goods was not financially viable. The present stock of goods was felt to be not really saleable (small sizes, etc.) except that there were some enamel badges which might sell eventually.

Dave Giles suggested not to appoint anyone yet but to take this information back to the interested parties and for Jeff Ward to continue negotiations, look on it as a service to members, maybe. Come back to the next Executive Meeting with decision.

#### **Any Other Business:**

Dave Giles expressed concern about TRF advertised rides, for example the Coast to Coast run. He is concerned that the TRF does not have adequate insurance cover in case of really serious injury or even death. There was also the added concern about rides which run through National Parks which at present are becoming hostile to our recreation. Discussion took place on how to overcome some of these concerns, perhaps set up a working group to look at co-ordinating short runs with groups all over the country. As next year is the 30th Anniversary of the TRF it was felt that a day be set for trail runs in all areas and called the 'John Ebrell Memorial' run.

#### **The Afternoon Session discussed the TRF Handbook:**

The Handbook needs to give a clear message about what the TRF is all about. A document which is really useful and informative and not just for TRF members only. The meeting split into three groups to look at what is needed.

#### **The Groups reported back their discussions which included:**

Produce a Mini Trail with Handbook inside as the February issue.

Website details in prominent position, on frontispiece.

TRF Code of Conduct printed on inside front cover.

List of Groups and Officers on inside rear cover.

TRF Constitution should be included.

Asterisks – Footers throughout emphasising points of interest.

Illustrations and photographs throughout.

Bibliography.

And lots more.

Dave Giles summed up by asking Fred Ellison to gather illustrations and produce an extra 500 copies for distribution to outside organisations etc.

Dave Giles and Tim Stevens will pull together the suggested ideas and let Fred Ellison have it for printing by end January. Fred Ellison to fit in suitable illustrations.

**Actions:** Dave Giles, Tim Stevens and Fred Ellison to produce Handbook.

**Date & place of Next Year's Executive Meetings:**

4 March 2000, 3 June 2000, 2 September 2000 and 2 December 2000 all at Beckett's Island, Wythall, at 10.30 a.m.

The TRF AGM will be held on 29 October 2000 at the Motorcycle Museum, M42 junction 6/A45.

# WHO'S FAULT? WHO'S FAULT? WHO'S FAULT?

Dear Ed, a few observations from this neck of the woods.

Being retired has its disadvantages but on balance it's a good deal if you can afford it. Naturally the money is not so good but the hours are most congenial. Don't for a moment think that you will have time on your hands, nothing could be further from the truth. You will be busy, so busy that you will wonder how on earth you ever had time to hold down a job!

I have a handy, versatile workshop and you'd be amazed at how many people present you with opportunities to use it. "It will only take you five minutes" jobs are a favourite. "Can you fit a new spade handle, make this clock work, fix this loose pan handle, cut up this plank, stop this chair wobbling, solder this brooch, make me some foot rests for my special, can you sharpen this combine harvester?" The list is endless, time-consuming and quite fascinating.

The rewards are equally diverse, from goodwill to bottles of wine or even money! Spending three or four hours, fixing something that would only cost a couple of quid to buy may not be economic but is ecologically sound and intensely satisfying. Spending 10 minutes to repair something that could cost upwards of twenty pounds is even more worthwhile. "Sorry Sir, we don't sell that little bit, we only stock the whole unit!" Yeah, yeah!

DIY is frequently a source of hilarity and patronising condescension but in an increasingly commercial climate it is a system that can defeat built-in obsolescence and short lived trendy innovations; in other words it will keep your bike, car, furniture and what ever going for a few more days, weeks, years till you can afford to upgrade or replace the item with something that is really worthwhile!

Don't bother with all this if you are:

- a) rich and intent upon using up the earth's resources.
- b) a poser who must have the latest bike and riding gear, just because it's this year's colours.
- c) bereft of any practical skill.
- d) living in a bedsit with no facilities.
- e) a brain surgeon or concert violinist and your insurance policy forbids you to use a circular saw or angle grinder.
- f) a dedicated rider but can't bear to get your hands dirty.
- g) accident prone with only one eye and eight fingers to prove it.

If you are one of these, then go ahead - buy, buy, buy, spend, spend! Just make sure you get Air Miles with everything you purchase!

Otherwise, consider this - saving a few quid on some household item means more to spend keeping your DTX185 Yamasaki in chains, sprockets, tyres and other essential supplies! Just be sure that you get Air Miles with everything you purchase!

I used to make New Year resolutions but not any more, now I'm older, and perhaps, wiser I have a more flexible approach, I have intentions.

I intend to eat less, swear less, drink less (but better) wine, ride my bike more often, get fit, keep fit, spend more of my offsprings' inheritance on worthwhile investments like London Pride, Woodfordes Wherry, Tim Taylors Landlord, "O-ring" chains and brake linings! (See above) And - oh yes - be more tolerant (except of riders pulling wheelies at every opportunity on a trail run!)

To finish off, a late 20th century joke.

A hot air balloon with a worried looking middle aged man aboard descends to near the ground; below, a lone trail rider, stopped and taking in the rolling moorland scenery.

Man leans out and asks: "Excuse me, I'm lost, can you tell me where I am?" Rider looks up and says "Certainly, you are hovering about 10 metres above the North Yorkshire moors in a hot air balloon.!"

"Thank you, you must be an engineer" says the balloonist.

"yes, I am" says the rider, "how did you know that?"

"Well you see, your answer was technically perfect but it doesn't help me one little bit!"

"Ah yes" says the rider "You must be in management then."

"I am indeed" came the reply "How do you know?"

"Let's see now" explains the rider "I gave you my answer, you are still lost, but now it's my fault!"

Best wishes to all.

*Tony McCusker, Hertfordshire Group*

## ONE MAN OR WOMAN'S TRAIL BIKE

Have you ever looked objectively at the bike you are riding? A crude device isn't it? The three things I hate most are:-

**Chains** Don't you just hate having to clean, adjust and maintain them and then shell out for a new set of chains and sprockets. Wouldn't it be great to have a clean quiet transmission hidden from view (without the weight of a shaft drive)?

**Gears** All that furious changing of gears, wearing your left toe out and still you never seem to have the right gear for the job. What price a stepless automatic transmission? I once rode down to Plymouth to lead a weeks riding in Spain one week after breaking two bones in my gear changing foot, so perhaps I am biased.

**Storage space** Ever tried to cram tools, spare inner tubes, sandwiches, a Thermos flask and a change of clothes into that little bag bolted to the rear mudguard. And where do you put your helmet when you leave the bike? Hanging upside down from a helmet lock? Have you noticed how it invariably rains when you do that? Thought so.



Fear not, the answer to these problems is at hand or rather all around you in the form of brightly coloured, hi-(or lo )tech buzzing machines called scooters. Before you go all macho on me, read on.

My wife has always wanted to try bike riding (without pedals) but did not want to be bothered with tests, gears or unnecessary controls. So she bought a scooter from TRF member Les Thomson (Les deals in all sorts of bikes yet is reluctant to advertise in Trail, so I will do it for him.)

It is a Piaggio Typhoon in Formula One Benetton colours. Within 30 minutes she was riding it with total confidence. Supporting Benetton in F1 these days is about as rewarding as supporting Manchester City. Love the team colours, though and the boys, Fisicella and Wirtz, need all the support they can get.

This Summer we have been venturing along easy trails and single track roads with me on my trail bike and, more recently, on a scooter of my very own. A 20 year old Honda Melody rescued from the back of a garage. (Thanks Brian). It was immediately christened Mabel and my wife said she would not be seen anywhere on it due to its total lack of something called 'street cred'. Even adding pink camel stickers and Cool as a Moose stickers apparently did little to supply this commodity. I, however, was impressed with its practicality. A glove compartment which could carry two bottles of wine, a shopping basket which would take 6 baguettes, two melons and a picnic lunch and a top box big enough to take a case of beer. No gears, no chain and an electric starter, 100m.p.g. and the bonus that the rider becomes invisible. Riders on Fireblades not only ignore you, but even look the other way.

What a wimp, I hear you cry, but, obviously you have not tried to ride a twisty lane with the throttle WFO on a bike with no damping and so twitchy that a sneeze would send it leaping into the bushes. Mabel has done quite a remarkable number of green lanes, but ground clearance and water are the main limitations.

However, Walna Scar was conquered (notice I avoided the word ridden), but I draw the line at Foxup. It is also amazing how you can ride the most sensitive of lanes and make any confrontation sound ludicrous. You can't call this a motor vehicle.

There are now so many scooters on the market you are spoilt for choice. J. & S. have off road styled Hondas for £995. P.G.O. scooters (Valley Scooters of Bolton) have radical off road styling and a compass! I hope to borrow their demonstrator for testing, hence the plug. I am working on a Cagiva City 50 with Lucky Explorer graphics just like that company's 900 Elephant. I wonder how long it will be before someone comes up with a big wheel scooter with all the goodies needed to make a useful trail tool? No gears or chain, storage space for helmet, butties, maps and flask, electric boot, fuel gauge, clock, GPS, spare wheel, electric tyre inflator, phone, microwave oven, etc.

In Spain there is scooter moto-cross and racing, so why not scooter trail riding over here?

Will scooters ever shake off the parka wearing, Mod image? Not in my generation.

Rodger Davies, Lancs. Group

## DINOSAURS AND URANIUM

"That's it. Incoming calls only", she said, "you are either on that computer or in that garage playing about with that bike". No hello how are you or nice to see you just those lines then silence. So it was not really the time to tell her that I was going to Moab in Utah, USA, trail riding with an outfit I had found on the Net.

A couple of days later I walked through the door to be hit (not literally) by, "So you are off to America are you?" "Er, yes", I replied, somewhat taken aback. The travel agent had rung up to say my tickets had arrived so she said. Ah well, saved me telling her. Anyway after a couple of weeks the dust had settled and all was sweetness once more (all I had to do was a little bit of shopping for her).

Finally October 6th arrived and I was off. An early start to catch my scheduled flight to Atlanta then to Salt Lake City where I would overnight before flying down to Moab. The flight to Atlanta was pleasant enough but the U.S. Immigration Service left a little to be desired (slow). I caught my connecting flight with three minutes to spare thanks to a nice old English woman who kindly let me go before her. Accommodation is very easy to find and fairly cheap (about \$40 per night per room). I was glad to get my head down and rose refreshed the following morning for my flight to Moab and my first view of the desert I would be riding in the following day. The small plane was empty so it felt like my own private jet for the

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*We welcome old  
members and new!*

50 minute flight. Arriving at the tiny airport I was met by Mark who runs the B&B I was staying at (arranged from the net also). You really need to arrange for someone to meet you as the airport is a bit out of town and there are no taxis.

As we drove down the highway Mark (who used to be a professional cyclist) asked if I would be riding the famous Slick Rock Trail on my mountain bike. I explained that I was riding a motorcycle not a MTB. By this time we had entered Moab and I got my first impressions of the town that was going to be home for the next week. The town is a typical small American touristy, outdoor type of place with plenty of food outlets, MTB shops, motels, Souvenir shops and gas stations. Also there are two Micro Breweries which brew a very palatable pint (just like home). The only down side is the six lane highway through town and the rather large trucks thereon.

Friday morning dawned. Like nearly every day clear blue sky a little chilly but would soon warm up to about 70 - 75F, and after a substantial breakfast of fresh juice, coffee, French toast and eggs, I was off to meet Dale, dirt biker and owner of Elite Motorcycle Tours. He picked me up at around 8am, introduced me to Marco our guide for the next couple of days after which it was into town to pick up the rest of my riding buddies for that day. The group consisted of two lawyers from Chicago and a Swiss guy who used to spanner at GPs back in good old days of Noyce, Thorpe, etc. After a twenty minute drive we finally arrived at an old homestead which was going to be our base for the day. While we dressed, Dale and Marco got the bikes ready. All the bikes are 1998 KDX200s with full FMF pipes and bars and all are in top notch mechanical order. All you do is get on and ride!

Then we were off. Me, the Swiss guy and Marco. The other two who hadn't a lot of off road experience went with Dale for a lesson or two and the agreement was to meet for lunch and take it from there. The riding area for that day was called Canyonlands and consisted of dirt roads, sandwashes, cow tracks and some rocky climbs. Our first stop was a ridge above a place called Hidden Valley. This was the first of many photo stops so don't forget to take the camera and plenty of film. Then it was off down another trail that looked just like the last one we had ridden but Marcos' experience as a guide for ten years took us to yet another fantastic viewpoint with the added bonus of preserved dinosaur footprints in the rock! This was the way the rest of the morning was spent. Ride a trail then stop for photos at places like Green River, Tombstone Rock and White Rim Road, then back for lunch which consisted of salad, cheese, cold meats, bread, crisps and various spreads all washed down with ice cold soft drinks or water.

Our group increased for the afternoon ride. One of the Chicago lawyers joined us feeling confident after his lessons. Boy was he in for a surprise! Marco led us down a cow trail (single track) at a good lick then into a sandwash (dry creek bed). Our lawyer bailed, I nearly followed. This sand was about a foot deep and like talcum powder. A quick word with Marco, who just said "third and keep the gas on and get your butt back over the rear", and I was sorted. Not so our erstwhile

legal friend who sampled the desert sand several more times that afternoon. All the rest of the day was spent riding sandwashes, totally brilliant! Day one finished at dusk around 7pm, then a twenty minute trip back to town to shower, have food and bed.

Day two dawned much as the previous day and after a half hour drive we set up camp on the banks of the Colorado River. This day's group was a little larger with a husband and wife from Denver and a likeable Californian guy called Eric. We left to ride the Kokopelli Trail taking us from our start point at Dewey Bridge out on a loop of about fifty miles returning for lunch after seeing Indian Caves, fantastic rock formations and most strange of all a Uranium mine complete with real live raw Uranium. Marco told us not to lick the rock as some people had done in the past. Some weird people out there! Also on this morning's run we got our first real taste of the famous Slickrock (a type of sandstone). It was just like riding on tarmac, the grip was fantastic, more about Slickrock later.

After lunch we went to another length of the Kokopelli Trail and arranged with Dale to be picked up at the Slickrock Trail car park. A total of about 70 miles. This run would take us up in to the Manti-LaSal national forest through the Aspen trees in their full Autumn colours and finish near Moab. Although I have not mentioned him Chicago's version of Rumpole was with us again and apart from a couple of minor tumbles in the morning he had by his standards been having a good day until that six foot boulder appeared by the side of the trail. We all missed it (not hard really) and stopped for a photo, then our man who was lagging a little behind decided to go for it which he did in spectacular fashion. We heard him coming and saw him mount the boulder. If only he hadn't pulled the clutch in on top of it he would have made it and been a hero but instead he crashed in a most painful way sacrificing his body to save the bike. Ah, well. Anyway after a recovery period we were off again to a hill called The Rose Garden (it was not!). The descent of this hill gave me nose bleeds it was so severe. It was littered with loose rocks the size of bowling balls and a long drop-off to the side. I was happy to be at the bottom with just one mishap and clean underwear!

Time was getting on and people were getting tired so the pace upped slightly to get us back in time to meet Dale. Spectacular crash number 2 involved Eric who had been riding very well all day until he missed Marco signalling a turn and threw the bike away in good style after a 30 yard skid. Anyway it was minor damage to both parties so we got going again onto the world famous Slickrock Trail (if you are into Mountain Bikeing you will know of it). The mountain bikers were like ants on the huge sandstone formations, then we joined them and rode the trail. It was an unreal trip up very steep rock faces with lashings of grip then down the other side. Everyone was friendly and when we stopped for yet more photos, the mountain bikers came over to chat and asked how we liked riding slickrock on the bikes. We said we liked it big time and that was the end of day two.

After a couple of days away from the bikes, doing my shopping and

sightseeing I was suffering withdrawal symptoms so it was a welcome phone call from Dale asking if I would like to join a group doing a day's singletrack riding in the Mantila Sal National Forest at elevations of 11,000 feet. This group consisted of four guys from Texas and some from New Jersey and after a sixty mile drive we arrived at Foy Lake and made camp. Dale led this ride and the pace was hot after a couple of miles of dirt road and a breakdown of Bobs 1985 XR350 it was onto singletrack and up into the mountains.

This was a little like riding back home in the Lakes but on a much bigger scale. The trails just rolled into each other and all too soon it was back to the camp for food and fuel, then out for another loop down to Indian Creek. More rocky climbs, stream beds, sand and roots all done at a hectic pace, then all too quickly it was all over and we headed back to town to say my farewells to Dale and have my last meal in Moab. I dined with the Texan boys at Pastor Js where all the talk was of when everyone was coming back to this off road Mecca. As I strolled back to my B&B under a starlit sky my thoughts turned to home and the two day trail ride that was waiting for me. It was strange but I was actually looking forward to being stuck in a cold Dales bog. But as big Arnie says "I'll be back".

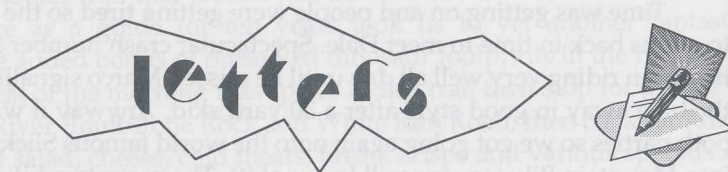
I stayed at Pioneer Springs B&B - a non smoking place that offers good food and is clean and comfortable. The charge is \$55 + tax per night. Motels charge approx. \$70 - \$90 per room which sleeps 4 in two double beds. This price does not include breakfast - that is around \$6 - \$10.

For the motorcycle hire that is \$250 per day and includes everything. It may sound expensive but I assure you it is worth every single cent.

Other things to do include 4 x 4, white water rafting, trekking, mountain biking and various other outdoors activities.

Pioneer Springs can be contacted on 001 435 259 4663 and Elite Motorcycle Tours on 001 435 259 7621. Or ring me on 01539 567095 and ask for Martin and I will tell you more information and send you a brochure. Also check out the Moab Website on <http://moab-utah.com>.

*Martin Moore, Cumbria*



## BE ALERT IN SOUTHERN CUBA - LOOK OUT FOR THE MAD AXEMAN

Sorry, no tales of daring trail riding in hot and sweaty climates.  
CUBA = Counties, Used to Be Avon.

(Incidentally, talking of sweat - 10 out of 10 to Mark of the Ribble Valley Group - now there's a man who gets his priorities right! A fine example to us all!) But having read TRAIL No. 255, page 20 and in compliance with the National

Executive and Constitutional requirements the TRF Axe Vale Group implemented the elected officers recommendations and held an AGM.

The TRF AVG Year 2000 Committee is as follows:

Cast in order of appearance (or whoever arrived/came first).

- G.B. "No Tax, No Ride" Thomas Esq: Rights of Way Practitioner and Officer, Full time OAP and Meetings Attendee: including numerous push bike/peddalling organisations (SUCKTRANS and alike) CRAGS/CRAFS and Parish Councils.
- Malcolm "Maintenance? What's that?" Preece: Hon Sec and Treasurer
- Rob "Mars Bars for lunch and Marianne Faithful Fan" Stevens: Run Co-Ordinator.
- John "I'll do that - Database" Waters: Rights of Way Database and Web Site Organiser".
- Dave "No Kick Start" Clegg: Group Rep and Chair, Broken foot and scar. Full time job seeker and purveyor of fine four stroke motorcycles to other keen trail riders - see small ads at back of this copy of TRAIL.

Unfortunately there is still a vacancy for The Holder of the Tool, Lane Clearing for the use of. However, we intend voting *someone* into this vital post, possibly combining it with Minutes Taker - but it's difficult to find a TRF Member with the necessary skills.

*Dave Clegg, TRF Axe Vale Group*

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## NOT FORGOTTEN

I find it very interesting to read TRAIL every month. It is pleasing to see that John is not forgotten by the T.R.Fellowship. Many of your members will not have known him.

It is hard for me to realise he would have been 70 on January 8th.

All good wishes for the future.

*Eileen Ebbrell*

## RE: 'SHARING' DECEMBER 1999 ISSUE OF TRAIL

As I was the first ever TRF member to be prosecuted by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) - later withdrawn and costs awarded against the police - for using a motor vehicle on a "bridleway" with vehicular rights, I feel qualified to comment.

The TRF has only itself to blame - for it's policy of not claiming byways. I am surprised there have not been more prosecutions. In my case I had a byway claim pending. Did our Derbyshire members have a claim pending? To magistrates, such a claim would have merit and help the defendants' case. We all know that the Definitive Map is far from definitive. If TRF members are challenged more than once it is imperative a Definitive map Modification Order (D.M.M.O.) claim goes in. This is my view and it has not changed.

Of course, you may argue, as does Colin Seymour of the Byways and Bridleways Trust, how can you modify something that in law already exists? If you agree with that you'll need considerable legal skill and the TRF's money to go to the High Court, perhaps even beyond. Your choice.

The Chairman asks what we look and sound like. I'll tell him. We look intimidating and frequently sound too noisy. We're also too smoky. Over Christmas I watched a group of TRF riders (or at least I tried to) behind a smoke screen. Public Relations (PR) is being perceived as whiter than white. And that includes not stomping into a pub's lounge bar in trail gear, muddy boots and all!

Gwyn Thomas

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