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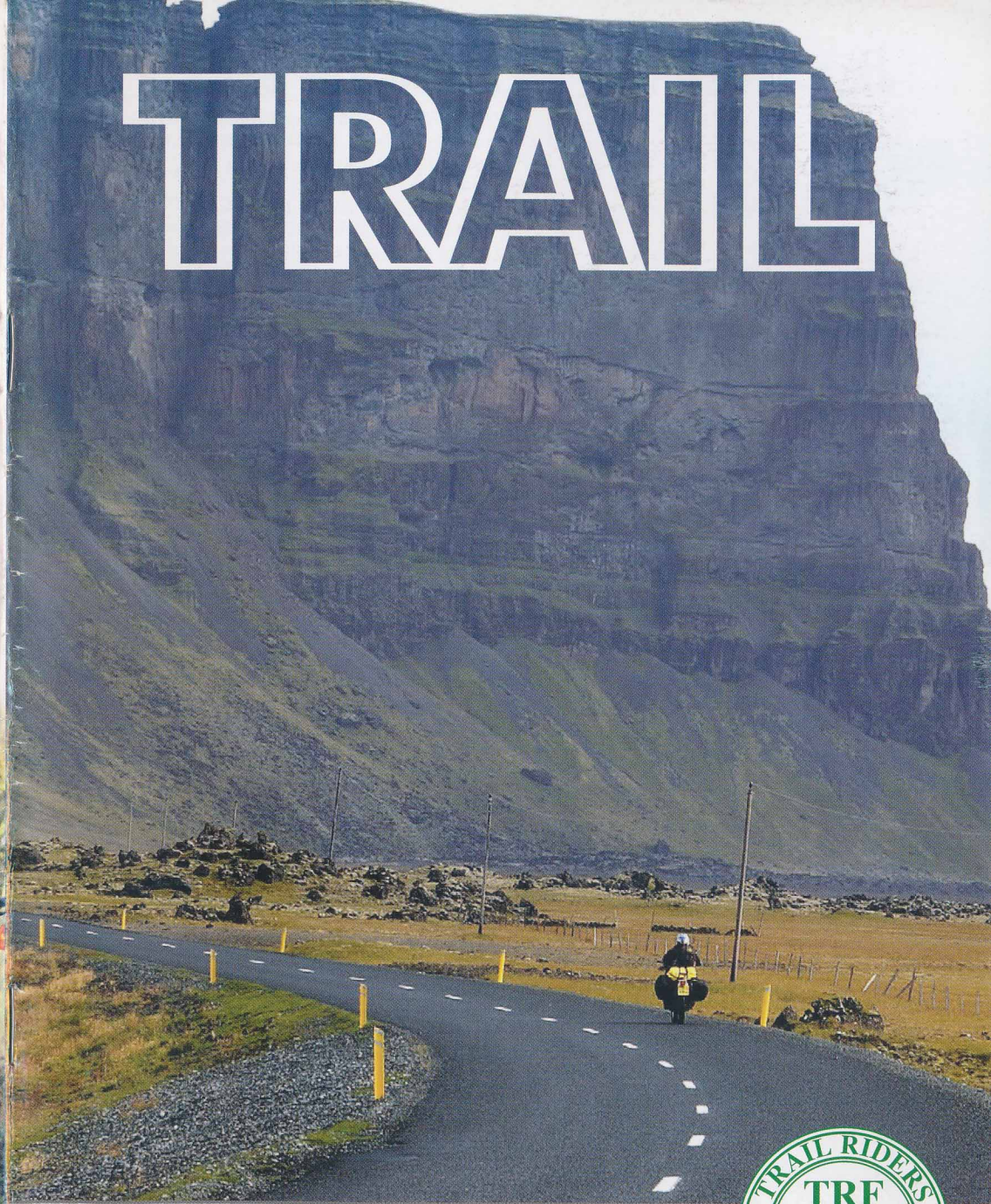
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TRAIL



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

NOVEMBER 2008 No. 363 EDITOR: FRED ELLISON



Patron: Lord Fairfax

TRF OFFICERS & CONTACTS

Chairman:	Andy Gerrard	01525 717634/07803 600571 agerrard@btconnect.com 52 Conway Drive, Flitwick, Bedfordshire MK45 1ST
Vice Chairman:	Tim Stevens	01547 529946 timLARA@aol.com 5 Offa's Road, Knighton LD7 1ES
Membership Secretary:	Debbie Hutchinson	07966 438907 debbiehutchy@btinternet.com Marcliff, Bakers Hill, Exeter, Devon EX2 9TE
Secretary:	Polly Cody	01525 717634 secretary@trf.org.uk 52 Conway Drive, Flitwick, Bedfordshire MK45 1ST
Treasurer:	Arnold Brewer	01865 741410 treasurer@trf.org.uk 16 The Croft, Old Headington, Oxford OX3 9BU
Editor:	Fred Ellison	01254 823893 Fax: 01254 887999 editor@trf.org.uk Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe BB7 9DG
PR & Comms :	Simon Bingham	01295 251648 (day)/01295 711311 (eve) Pr&Comms@trf.org.uk 27 Peveril Road, Greatworth, Banbury, Oxon OX17 2DN
RoW Officer:	Robin Hickin	01926 817060/07890 550847 row@trf.org.uk 42 Model Village, Southam, Warwickshire CV47 9RB
BMF Liaison:	David Giles	01332 552288 dl70@tiscali.co.uk 22 Ford Lane, Allestree, Derby DE22 2EW
Lara Rep:	Charlie Morriss	01453 885323/07710 336528 charlietrf@aol.com The Bell, Brimscombe Hill, Burleigh, Stroud, Glos. GL5 2PU
CCPR Rep:	Dave Tilbury	023 80618937 dave@dave-tilbury.co.uk Oakbank Cottage, Oakbank Road, Eastleigh SO50 6PA
Equestrian Events Liaison:	Mark Holland	01989 565249/0845 3308892/07941 427774 (mob) Corn Farm, Devauden, Chepstow NP16 6NS
TRF Website:	www.trf.org.uk	written & supported by Bill Richards, web@trf.org.uk

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REGIONAL RoW ADVISORS

Wales & West Midlands	Tim Stevens	See above for contact details
South & South West	Dave Tilbury	See above for contact details
Eastern	Richard Sugden	01354 651390 home@rlsugden.fsnet.co.uk 122 Station Road, March, Cambridgeshire PE158NH
East Midlands	Robin Hickin	See above for contact details
North of England	Brian Thompson	briant950@aol.com 55 Warkworth Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE15 8ED

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

EDITOR

NOT A TRAIL TALE BUT...

This is not strictly speaking a trail-related story but I feel the need to tell it.

A tale of two honest German motorcyclists, a good cop and a lost wallet - mine.

The first day of my annual overseas road trip, which this year started in Zeebrugge and took in Germany, Lichenstein, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and France, got off to a really bad start when I dropped my wallet at a filling station just outside Strasbourg. I went to the local gendarmerie with little hope of ever seeing the wallet, the money or credit cards ever again. The only person who could speak English was Chef Huber Daniel who took the details and promised to investigate further.

Two days later he had checked the CCTV at the filling station, got the numbers of two German bikes and the addresses of the riders - such efficiency. But not necessary. The German motorcyclists had already sent an email to say that they had found the wallet and were posting it back to me. Thanks to Chef Huber Daniel, Marcus Hahn and Ralf Berkowitz. The holiday started then. My faith in human nature has been restored.



TRF CALENDAR COMPETITION 2009

Post your photos or send your high resolution digital images to:

**The Editor, Fred Ellison,
Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane,
Wiswell, Clitheroe BB7 9DG,
editor@trf.org.uk**

The TRF reserves the right to use photographs submitted for other TRF purposes.

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WANTED:

- Product Reviews • Bike Tests
- Long Term Reviews • Cover Pictures

COVER PHOTO:

From Bev Davies
Bev and Serow, dwarfed by the cliffs of southern Iceland. See article p17.

All contributions to THE EDITOR
Fred Ellison, Sheepcote Farm
Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe
BB7 9DG editor@trf.org.uk

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NOTICE BOARD

SUSSEX TRF AGM

November 27th at 20.30 hours,
Ashington Social Club
Rear of Red Lion (off A24).
All TRF members welcome.
Martin Hill

RIBBLE VALLEY GROUP AGM

9th December at 8.30 p.m.,
Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, near
Clitheroe.
Mince pies will be served.
Fred Ellison

KENT GROUP AGM

10th December. Meeting at the 'Horse and Groom' pub near the top of Wrotham Hill just off the M20, near to Brands Hatch. Meet at 8.30 p.m. - commencing at 9.00 p.m. Any topics for discussion or further details please contact:
Tim Gooderson email: tmg.tng@virgin.net

NORTHUMBERLAND TRF

Change of Night Wednesday

As of January, our club night will be the first Wednesday of the month. Venue:
The Travellers Rest, Burnopfield.

Contact Details

For information on Northumberland TRF contact the Chairman:
Tony Whitehead on 07876 598515
before 9.00 p.m. please.

Slaley Forest A Section 59 coming your way soon

The police will continue to have a heavy presence in Slaley Forest and WILL issue riders with Section 59s if you are not on the correct route. The TRF are supporting their actions by identifying the legal routes for them. The council have indicated any abuse of the legal routes or illegal use of the forest WILL result in widespread TROs. If the routes are wet, consider riding in another area please.

HONORARY MEMBERS

Our Constitution says 'Honorary Membership is the highest honour the Fellowship can bestow on a member'. At the 2008 AGM the Meeting was delighted to bestow this honour on Tim Stevens, Mary Stevens and Fred Ellison for the outstanding services they had rendered the TRF over many years.

Well Done and warmest congratulations from everyone.

Andy Gerrard

TRF Chairman

TRF RoW WORKSHOP REPORT

Once again a well supported event for the TRF. 35 plus individuals attended from across the UK and many groups supported the event directly or indirectly with members feeding back information to their own area.

As the day opened we were able to welcome three representatives from the Green Lane Association who were interested to understand more fully the implications of the Winchester Case (*Warden and Fellows of Winchester College and Humphrey Feeds Limited*) v. *Hampshire County Council and SoSEFRA*). A case which has ongoing implications for a number of DMMO applications made on behalf of the TRF by its many local ROW workers to their Local Authority.

It was important in the first part of the day that the judgement of the Court of Appeal was understood and why they had come to the decision they had. Dave Tilbury explained to those present the effect of the wording in two different Acts of Parliament *Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981*, (WCA) and the *NERC Act 2006* (NERC). I have tried to summarise the basis of the case below.

Firstly that craftily drafted piece of legislation that although drafted by government legal bods

they can not properly interpret what it really means and how it should be implemented some two and a half years after it was passed into law by a lied to parliament. One does wonder if the allegations that the Country Landowners Association, assisted by Gleam, had a major influence in the drafting of part 6 of the act are true or just boasting. It is remarkable though, after the TRF's involvement in this part of the act, that it should be so radically different from what was proposed in the consultation and what had been discussed over the months preceding the bill being presented to parliament. Anyway we've got what we've got. The wording in part 6 of the NERC act, and specifically 67.1 which effectively extinguishes unrecorded vehicular rights, unless one of the exceptions in 67.2-8 applies, in effect guillotines all MPV rights.

Well 67.3 a provides an exception for all routes that have a DMMO claim for Byway status made under 53(5) of the WCA.

And 67.3 b provides an exception for those claims where a decision has been made by the authority under schedule 14 of the WCA.

Both of which give the implication that applications should have been made taking into consideration the schedule 14

requirements of the 1981 WCA for these exceptions under NERC to apply.

Schedule 14 (WCA81)

An application shall be made in the prescribed form and shall be accompanied by-

(a) a map drawn to the prescribed scale and showing the way or ways to which the application relates; and

(b) copies of any documentary evidence (including statements of witnesses) which the applicant wishes to adduce in support of the application.

In this test case which related to 67.3 b NERC as the order had been made prior to commencement of the NERC Act and as such the Judgement applies to that particular part of NERC and determinations made.

It is generally applied to all claims although this is not strictly correct application of the Court of Appeal Judgement.

In this test case Hampshire CC had accepted applications as valid and written to that effect (as have many other Local Authorities for many years) to the applicant accepting the claims onto their claims register. This had been custom and practice across the UK and accepted by Defra as valid under NERC, for claims that listed evidence and gave the reference in the local records office for the authority to verify the authenticity of such evidence. This practice was contrary, in strict terms, to the wording of the WCA81 and it was due to the wording in that Act that the Winchester case succeeded under this legal loophole within the NERC Act. The Appeal Court Judges therefore decided that the claim(s) in this case did not meet the exception 67.3 b under NERC and as such the vehicular rights were not saved thus the order for BOAT Status was an incorrect outcome to this claim.

Now to fully understand the process you need to follow the steps needed in the determination of a claim in this process.

Step 1 a valid (Map to the right scale and copies of the evidence) application is submitted to the Local Authority under 53(5) of 1981 WCA

Step 2 the authority accepts the application and issues a letter/certificate of acceptance

Step 3 the authority has a duty under WCA to

investigate the evidence behind the claim
Step 4 the authority makes a determination of the claim under the 1981 WCA

Step 5 the authority now has to determine if the NERC Act has an effect on the outcome of the claim if that claim is for BOAT status. (This Step is new due to the NERC Act)

Step 6 the Authority makes an order as to the status of the route, either BOAT or Restricted Byway or other.

Step 7 the authority notifies the applicant and advertises the proposed order. etc

Do the authority have a duty to investigate the claim **YES**

if the application is accepted as a valid claim under 1981 WCA section 53, it is only when they have investigated and come to a decision

Defra Guidance V5

The NERC Act does not relieve local authorities of their obligation to process all definitive map modification order applications for byways open to all traffic to a full determination.

They then and **only then** have to determine if the NERC Act has an effect on their determination of the Status for the claimed route as now required by the Winchester Case.

What constitutes copies of evidence, and what constitutes evidence in a valid claim, is a copy of a 1850's OS map evidence or a map or both. There are still questions of how much evidence do you need to submit. Is one piece of evidence enough or do you need to submit all the evidence. Well clearly we will not have ALL the evidence. The 1981 act says "copies of **any** documentary evidence (including statements of witnesses) which the applicant wishes to adduce in support of the application". Then there is the question 'what constitutes a copy?'

A photocopy is a pretty straightforward copy, but is a transcript a copy? is a photograph a copy? or is it an actual document in itself. How much of a document would one need to transcribe before one said 'it is a copy of the original?' What good is a copy of an Award in script, without a painstaking transcript? One might argue that a 5cm square image is a copy of a document, albeit that the contents are

illegible. Copying may be what the Acts require but a list of documents with citations is surely far more use than an image or a selective transcript.

This is, when stripped back to basics, a very simple issue. If your Schedule 14 application for BOAT was not 100% paragraph 1 compliant, you cannot rely on NERC's s.67(3).

These are other exceptions that can apply to existing claims or form the basis of new claims

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply to an existing public right of way if-

(a) it is over a way whose main lawful use by the public during the period of 5 years ending with commencement was use for mechanically propelled vehicles,

(b) immediately before commencement it was not shown in a definitive map and statement but was shown in a list required to be kept under section 36(6) of the Highways Act 1980 (c. 66) (list of highways maintainable at public expense),

(c) it was created (by an enactment or instrument or otherwise) on terms that expressly provide for it to be a right of way for mechanically propelled vehicles,

(d) it was created by the construction, in exercise of powers conferred by virtue of any enactment, of a road intended to be used by such vehicles, or

(e) it was created by virtue of use by such vehicles during a period ending before 1st December 1930.

Much of the rest of the debate of the day centred around the legal arguments for and against what could be expected of our authorities and what was practical and possible for members to do regarding existing claims. This sometimes was tedious and technical in the extreme and it was clear that some delegates at the workshop were puzzled by some of this debate so I will not expand on it here I will leave it like this. Until there is further legal clarification to the act then we will be unable to provide definitive answers to many of the questions that are posed by the Winchester Case.

One small idea - if an application is made and

that includes copies of, say, 5 strong pieces of evidence, that is a valid application. One can then send in a list of other evidence as subsequent material to reinforce the claim. Winchester is overcome, although that will not assist those who are caught by Winchester on BOAT claims.

There are still exemptions we can exploit, but they will mean a different emphasis on the research.

So what do we all need to do to stop the injustices being forced upon us:

If your local authority is trying to reject claims before making a determination, point out that they have a duty under 1981 WCA to investigate and make a determination. They may not take any notice but it then does give you grounds for appeal to SOS.

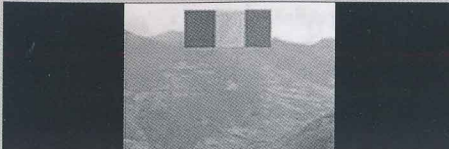
You also have the ability to object to claims for Footpath, Bridleway and restricted byway if they are not made correctly, i.e. they don't comply to Schedule 14 of WCA 1981 although this is a rather futile action as these claims can be resubmitted up to 2026 with no implications.

If you have other evidence that an exception applies to a rejected claim write to your authority to make them aware of the exception, and if necessary submit a new claim citing the exception along with the original evidence.

If your Local Authority is upholding its duty under the 1981 act, it is essential that you notify them as soon as possible, and certainly before the claim is determined, of any evidence that one of the other exceptions under NERC Act apply to the route claimed.

On a wider scale we (The TRF) need to challenge the effect of the Winchester Case and if possible take it to the highest court in the Land, The House of Lords to see if they agree with the High Court or the Appeal Court in this matter. This will take time and will inevitably cost money but it is the only way that natural justice will be restored to the applicants of the claims that for no fault of their own are being victimised by this loophole in the legislation.

If you have any questions that you wish to pose to your ROW Team then Email me row@trf.org.uk and we will endeavour to answer them for you.



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A NEW APPROACH WHAT TO DO WITH THE NOOBS?

I know a lot of this is over generalising but I do believe the overview is fair.

As I see it we have three types of members:

1. The hard working old school who are working their socks off fighting rights of way issues. I'm going to call them the **Miners** for the sake of this discussion.
2. People who have been using TRF for years to ride out with their mates. These will be known as the **Riders**.
3. Newcomers who join to ride out, and either try to get involved or just leave. I'll call these the **Noobs**.

The problems are:

- The Miners are too busy fighting to show anyone else what to do.
- The Riders either choose not to fight or don't know how to.
- The Riders don't always make the Noobs feel welcome.
- Organised rides are often big, distant and fast (at least in the perception of the Noobs)
- The Noobs are often intimidated by organised rides
- Noobs almost always join to find rides either in groups or just the places they can ride, not to fight for ROW
- The Miners resent that Noobs don't want to (or can't) help

The results of this are:

- Noobs don't stay
- Membership drops
- Not enough people are fighting for Rights of Way

What we could do differently:

Keep the Noobs.

This has to be number one priority, they are

the future! The old school need to accept these people haven't joined to fight for Rights of Way, they've joined to find places to ride and to find people to ride with. We need to acknowledge this and nurture them. Take them on a couple of easy local rides. Get them paired up with someone with a place in their van or on their trailer for the more distant rides. In summary make them feel welcome. We need them more than they need us! Make the TRF fun, not a chore.

Now some of the Noobs have become Riders.

Get the Riders working on ROW.

Don't approach it with "I'm doing it therefore you should do it too you idiot". Start off low key "This lane is near your house, have you used it? Can I help you fill this user evidence form in?" Make sure the Miners are mentoring the Riders. I'm sure initially it will seem like more work, accept that, if some things don't get done that's ok, the end result is worth it, many more people working on ROW. When someone offers help for pity's sake don't ignore them!

How about:

"Would you go to the library and look through the local press for ROW announcements? This is the sort of thing you're looking for"

"Would you look online at local council websites and see what you can find like this"

"Enter details of any rides you do on Wayfinder, here's how you use Wayfinder"

End result, keep the newcomers and eventually get them fighting for Rights of Way.

John Kitching

THE TRIBULATIONS OF A BYWAYS RESEARCHER

Most byways research is carried out in dusty record offices and archives and the worst that one suffers is a crick in the neck or sore eyes after a day poring over old maps and legal documents. Occasionally however, one has to go out into 'the field' to do a bit of checking and then things can be very different.

I decided to take a closer look at a lane that I had found clearly marked on Mrs Windsor's Map dated 1743. The name Watery Lane should have warned me to wear wellies but as it was a fine day I decided to take a chance and just wear walking boots. The lane started well with a good firm rocky surface but as I rounded the first corner I perceived that where the lane ran parallel with the River Evenlode it actually became a tributary of that stream. Although to begin with I could keep fairly dry by jumping from tussock to tussock, eventually the whole width of the lane disappeared under water and with dense brambles on either side I was forced to start wading. Soon the water was above my ankles but as by this time my feet were soaked anyway I decided to press on. The water never quite reached my knees and at least it was clean and not too cold.

When the lane turned away from the Evenlode it rose a little and became drier but at this point the bushes and brambles began to

crowd in and soon I was forcing my way through dense undergrowth, ripping my jacket and getting a deep slash across my forehead from a briar. Fortunately although the lane had obviously not been used for a very long time it was still clear on the ground and I managed to follow the route until it emerged from the undergrowth into a field of wheat where it was completely ploughed out.

I tried to walk round the edge of the field to pick up the line again but lost it completely. I could see from my map that there was a footpath fairly near and thought that I would get on the path and walk along it to the point where it crossed the lost trail. The only problem with that was that the footpath was the other side of a high barbed wire fence and another tributary of the Evenlode. I eventually found a place where a small tree grew up against the fence and using this I managed to scramble up and drop down the other side.

I could see that the stream was fairly close to the fence but what I didn't know until I fell in it was that the 'ground' was in fact a two foot deep bog. Well there I was up to my knees in evil smelling muck, unable to get back over the fence as the tree I had climbed up was on the other side and then I found that the stream was considerably wider than I had originally thought. As I was soaked up to the knees and covered in black slime I decided to wade

across. It was then that I found that not only was the stream very wide it was also very deep. It came up to my waist so at least I didn't have to swim and by the time I scrambled out on the other side most of the black slime had gone.

I'm glad to say that after that things began to get better. First the sun came out then I found the lane again and followed it easily through another wood. After climbing a high, locked gate I came out on a decent path that according to Mrs Windsor was the other end

of her lane.

As I completed the survey and looked at the mess I was in I couldn't help thinking about that wonderful monologue 'The Bricklayers Lament' given by Gerard Hoffnung to the Oxford Union in 1958 - "I was now heavier than the barrel and on the way down met the barrel coming up and received severe injury to my shins". If this lane ever becomes a BOAT perhaps we should call it Tribulation Lane.

Bob Combley

PETROL AND CARBON DIOXIDE (CO2)

Until recently, I was a service engineer driving around London - and getting stuck in traffic. My main job was to service and calibrate vehicle emission measuring equipment for MOT testing stations and as such I was able to see how, how well and how badly vehicles run on petrol.

So that a typical petrol engined vehicle runs correctly, we will look at one engine which runs without a catalytic converter and one with a cat. The older non-cat vehicle would run best when carbon monoxide (CO), hydrocarbons (HC) and oxygen (O2) were at their lowest. This means the least pollution from burnt and partly burnt petrol and the best power from that petrol. Carbon dioxide at this low point is at its highest at 15% or so. So at about 14.7 of air to one part of petrol, this becomes our stoicometric value of 14.7 to 1.

With a cat equipped vehicle the unburnt petrol

in the hydrocarbons (HC) and burnt fuel in carbon monoxide (CO) are reduced to negligible amounts by the action of the super heated cat, but only after several miles of running. This level of emission from the cat engine still gives out around 15% of CO2 - a cat equipped engine does not affect CO2 at all.

The moral of this story

So when one looks at the best and most efficient use of petrol with an internal combustion engine, mile for mile, volume of CO2 given out of a typical family car of say 2000cc, is far more polluting than any trail riding motorcyclist; so sleep happy that what you enjoy doing is a better use of our earth's resources than a sightseeing tour of the M25 and I know which I would prefer to be doing.

Tim Gooderson,
Kent Group

THROWING CURVES



PART 2

The second road trip with Harry 2 was to the Continent.

Departing from Newcastle to Ljuiden on a DFDS Ferry we arrived in Holland and bombed the flatlands motorways for 200 miles before entering rolling hills and taking to the minor roads in Germany. We had booked the first night at Cocham on the banks of the Mosel. The rest of the holiday stops were optional depending on where we got to each day. We did not want to be chasing deadlines and accommodation was plentiful, this was the first week in September. Not only that but the minor roads were empty.

We were heading towards Andermatt in Switzerland. Ever since Harry 2 lent me a book on mountain passes I had visualised throwing curves up the mountain passes. I googled the area and the satellite images

were inspiring.

We entered the Black Forest. I was thinking: "Why does Harry want to go to an area that is just full of Trees?"

Well the answer was, he goes for the roads. Wide, smooth, undulating, deserted and above all curvy. An absolute joy to ride, biking heaven, mile after mile.

Around four o'clock the clouds darkened. It became as black as night, thunder and lightning started and the heavens opened. So we baled out into the nearest Hotel at Kniebis "in the middle of nowhere". The restaurant was closed for the day, so it looked like we would not be fed until morning. Despondency set in. I was starving. We at least got rooms.

"Is there a restaurant near by that is open on a Wednesday?" We asked.

Yes about a kilometre down the track to the side of our Hotel. It was still tanking down.

"Do you have an umbrella we might borrow?"

Yes said "mine host" and produced a golfing broly.

So off we trolled through the forest. Then we saw the lights of the Terrace restaurant, a four star Hotel with a menu to die for and prices to match.

I could have spent a week there just sampling the menu. Wild boar, wild deer, wild hare, game birds of every description as well as locally caught fish. High class road kill indeed.

The night was after all, a gastronomic delight, with good wine too.

The next day was misty and wet as we made our way into Switzerland. The area was just like our Lake District, only on five times the scale.

Andermatt is an expensive resort so we stopped at Esfeldt where we found a reasonable hotel. We decided to book in for three nights so we could unload the panniers and make riding the passes, with all their z-bends, more enjoyable.

There are four loops of about eighty miles based around Andermatt and Altdorf. Names to conjure with; the Furka Pass, Grimsel Pass, Susten Pass, Prigel Pass, Oberalp Pass, Nefenen Pass and the St. Gotthard Pass. Most rose above 6000 feet and produced some spectacular views. I could not believe the drop-off on some of these roads, with nothing but a few, foot high, bollards, to stop you plunging down 4000 feet, in some places. Worst of all were the tour buses, mercifully few and far between at this time of year, but brother do they hog the road. When they appear in the middle of the road, coming round a blind bend, they are really scary and push you to the edge.

I stopped taking photographs of the scenery after the first morning in the Alps.

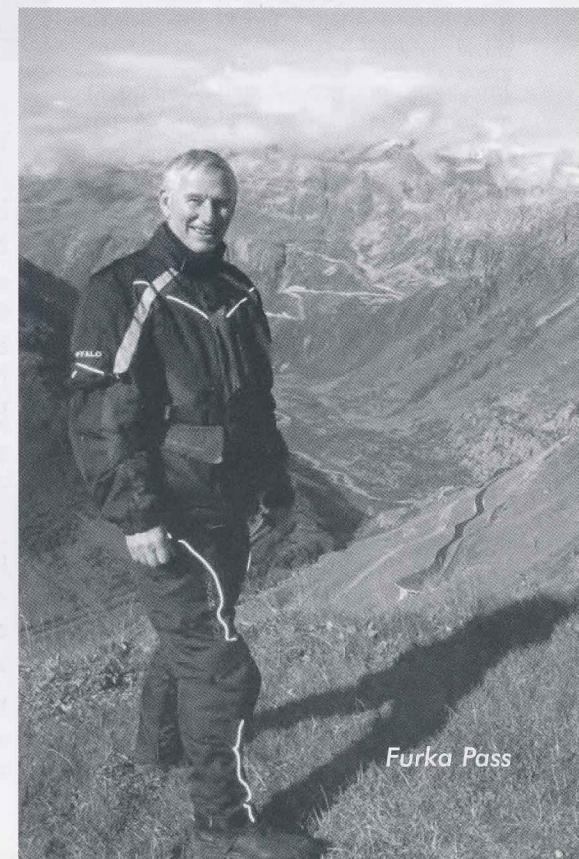
Everywhere we rode was awesome. I decided just to enjoy the scenery and drink it all in.

The Furka Pass, below the Rhone Glacier, was the most impressive because of its steepness. So good we did it twice.

After two days practice, throwing curves became second nature, but nowhere near as fast as the locals.

The highlight of the week was being passed by "Mad Max" from Salzberg. He rides a VFR encrusted machine, that must have taken hundreds of hours to produce this work of Art. The whole incident was Surreal. That weird mask, looking back at me, as he passed, will live with me forever.

When we reached the top of the Pass he was parked up, so we stopped to admire his work. The detail was so precise, every



aspect of the design blended perfectly, with his outfit, to form a seamless spectacle.

On the second day we took the Old St. Gotthard Pass, a cobbled road into Italy, more suited to an off-road bike than a tourer and it was wet, bumpy and dangerously steep. Over the border it was tanking down again so we stopped for lunch at a pizzeria.

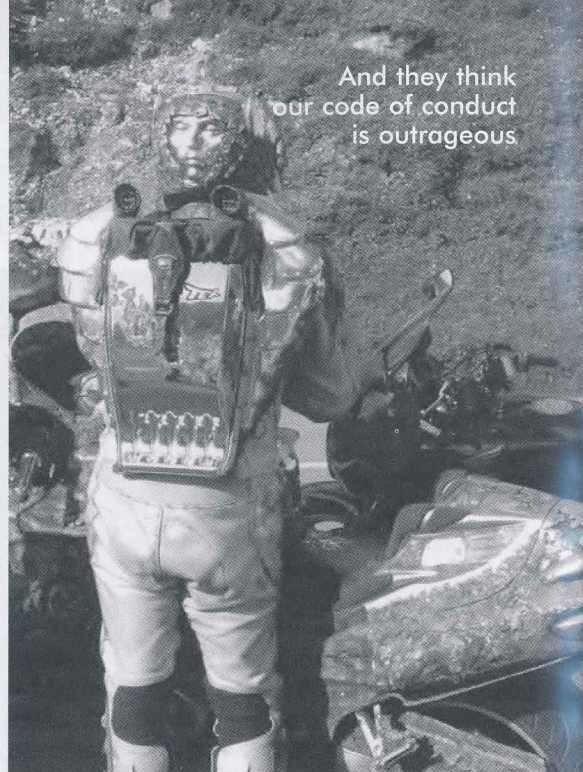
No pizza at lunch, was the cry, only rabbit with a-mash a-potato. It will take a-ten minutes,ok?

We sat and had our drinks, no sign of lunch. The waiter appeared "the rabbit no a-want to die". Another half hour and the rabbit appeared duly cooked.

The mash potato was mixed with olive oil and tasted like thick oily semolina but the rabbit and veg were delicious. Harry even took a photograph of the dish to show his wife.

Time was running out and we had to make our way back to Ljmuiden. We passed through the Black Forest again and popped in to see the Nurbergring, where the Aston Martin Club were having a little jolly. I could never understand the psychology of people paying over a hundred thousand pounds for a machine that can be outpaced by most modern motorbikes, if they have the need for speed. It must be an exclusive club thing for people with low esteem, i.e. I am nothing if not my DB7.

Onward, up part of the Rhine and down part of the Mosel before blasting up the motorway. I think the standard of driving is higher in Germany because there is no speed limit. You have to be aware all the time. Especially when a Merc or Audi is barrelling down the outside lane at 150mph. Maybe drivers in Britain tend to lose concentration, when they cruise along at 70mph, bored to tears.



And they think
our code of conduct
is outrageous

The last night was spent in Holland, as we wanted to go across the Ijsselmeer, on one of the inner dam walls to Wollendam before boarding the ferry for the return journey. The bird life in the sheltered waters was unbelievable. I have seen about five Crested Grebes in this country, there were hundreds of them in the shallow waters of the Ijsselmeer along with thousands of other sea birds. An ornithologists dream world.

The sun was shining again and the trip complete. 2000 miles of enjoyable riding, a lot of excellent meals, the delicious midday pastries and we were both going on a diet.

P.S. I went out on a 120 mile Trail ride, a week after my return and returned home wrecked, thinking, don't road bikes make you lose fitness.

Happy Riding: whatever you are on,
John Robinson, T&NYTRF Group.

BLOOMING MARVELLOUS, WONDERFUL?

Having purchased a BMW 800FS in May 08 I have got to know the chaps at Wollaston BMW Northampton. At a recent Enduroland event (Adstone), Wollaston took three brand new G450X enduro bikes along for prospective buyers to try. Alas I never got a chance to try one but in discussion with Wollaston's "Steve Nash" he offered me the chance to organize a trail ride using the new 450's.

On Wednesday the 22nd of October at 8.30 am four "TRF" members met at Wollaston Northampton greeted by Steve Nash. Steve introduced us to our mounts for the day, two standard 40 BHP 450's and one 50 bhp 450 with flash factory red, white and blue graphics (Stevens own bike). The days group consisted of Andy Field (South Northants TRF), Peter Dennis and Paul Callcotton and his KYMCO 500 quad bike (Staffs TRF), Steve Nash and myself.

After a quick coffee and fettle with brakes, clutch levers, bars, tyre pressures etc we were off. Our route for the day would take us anti clockwise around Northampton never more than 20 miles from the start/finish point. Slightly apprehensive I pulled away on the standard 450. Having read in tests about strange clutch feel (or lack of) I was pleased to find no such thing, no problem or cause for concern here, even later on a rutted rooty off camber climb, no problem.

The first three miles were dual-carriageway. Steve had already informed us he had seen big numbers on the digital speedo and 65 MPH came up very quickly, smoothly with a lot to spare, say no more. The standard bike was easy to mount (I'm 5'8") and all the controls fell to hand almost akin to a KTM, fat bars etc, narrow hard seat, NO Bloody Hard Seat! On the trails the softish suspension soaked up

everything, small ripples, huge deep wallowing holes, it tracked lovely and straight, no surprises. On a trials type off camber steep hill the 450 could be steered and changed direction with ease and confidence. The clutch has a nice light pull and good progressive brakes, plenty powerful enough. The standard 450 motor was very KTM EXC like, smooth, linear power very easy to use, better feel, grip than the 450 KTM though.

Time to switch bikes, the 50 BHP bike had its suspension set harder, and felt a lot taller. Riding it seemed more taught and focused, for some reason it felt heavier than the standard bike, the power more aggressive, less grip, and I'd swear this was a 525 if I didn't know different. As time passed I grew more confident on the 50 BHP, the faster you went the better it got, oodles of creamy linear power, wheelie boys will love it and road manners were good, not too vibey, not as smooth as Pete's TTR Yam 250 though. After about 60 miles, the fuel light on the small speedo unit started to flash, no petrol tap reserve, so beware! Probably 45 MPG.

On return to Wollaston's, over a cup of tea we all agreed the new BMW 450 is a great bike. For trail riding, of the standard 40 BHP bikes, it's probably the best, quieter, easier to ride, lower and more economical. The icing on the cake is a two year warranty, with the BMW build quality and resale value. We all said we would consider buying one, but six grand is a lot of money. Parts prices mirror KTM's, time will tell if they catch on. Really I could do with one on long term test before I buy one. Steve wasn't listening, wonder why!

Many thanks to Wollaston BMW and Steve Nash (contact: wollastonbmw.co.uk).

John Moore (South Northants)

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This is just a snapshot of the vast range of experiences you will get to savour as our guest and as a fund-raising life-saver for the children of SOS Children's Villages, the worlds largest children's orphan charity. Not just an adventure of a lifetime, but also a rare opportunity to really make a difference to the future of some of the least fortunate children in the world. 50% of the profit from the trip will go directly to helping these under-privileged orphans. A trip you will enjoy and remember for the rest of your life. On each trip you will get the chance to visit the orphanage you are helping and meet and play with the children whose lives you are helping provide for. We've seen grown men cry on witnessing the joy that their visit and funds bring to the simple lives of these children.

Some of the 9 days riding are very demanding and the differences in the countries culture compared to the UK are big but it is a sponsored ride and we aim to make your sponsors proud of your effort and achievement. We have 2 full rest days scheduled so we can take time to recharge, interact and explore. There are marked differences between their culture and that of the UK, but these are the things to be embraced and enjoyed, for as we all know, once we have returned home from our normal 2 week break it is not too long before our experiences are just memories.

With eco-systems ranging from snow-topped mountains to tropical rainforest and parched Pacific Coastal plains it is not just the roads that provide a challenge on this motorbike adventure. Ecuador's capital, Quito, at 10,000 feet provides a dramatic starting point and a taster of what to expect for the rest of the



ride.

The ride follows tracks into the Amazon basin where it is hot, humid, lush and green. There are massive rivers that pump rainwater downwards and into the mighty Amazon River. Nature on a scale which we normally only get to see on a BBC documentary.

We are going to take the three best roads through the Andes, with staggering mountains that tower above you. Experience world heritage National Parks and stay next to the beautiful Machililla nature reserve. Here we also have the opportunity to off road it for a day up one of the beautiful rivers heading into the Pacific, expect to get wet! And expect to laugh!!

We ride on the sandy beaches along the Pacific coast and then rest for a day by the sea where you can wash some of the grime and aches away in the crystal clear blue ocean. The Equator crosses Ecuador and we have arranged a relaxing stop-off here so you can stand one foot in the Northern Hemisphere and one foot in the South. We even dig out a kitchen sink to test the theory about which way

the water goes down the plughole on each side of the equator!

The ride is suitable for riders with a medium level of experience. At just over 2500 km some of the days are long and certainly the Amazon section is reasonably challenging but none of the route goes over very steep or difficult terrain. The tour is intended more to take you through some breathtaking scenery than to test your riding prowess to the limit but you will need to be reasonably fit and you can expect to be tired by the end of the day. With flights, bikes, hotels & 2 meals a day provided, all you have to concern yourself with is your petrol costs, where to have lunch, what to look at and photograph, and of course your beer money.

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A Girl called Marina Beu's Story



Bev on Rudland Rigg

The other day my Husband asked me to write an article about my bike, and me. You must be joking I can't write! But the seed was sown, and that night I wrote the following.

After spending six months travelling around South America with my husband on his BMW R100GS, I thought I'd like to ride my own bike (it wasn't personal!)

I used to have a Yamaha Virago years ago, but I never got on with it. I got it because I could put my feet down, but it's not such a good bike for a beginner, as the turning circle is poor. If I didn't set myself up right at a junction I found it hard.

On returning home we started looking for a suitable bike for me. Firstly we had to overcome the problem of an off road type of bike for a 5ft person. I knew I wanted to take the route less travelled so a trail bike would be ideal. We had seen a Serow advertised in the TRF mag, so we went to have a look. Fritz (my husband) took it for a test ride and he knew it was just the right

bike for me. We paid the man the money and Fritz rode it home in the wet - and he just loved it.

We had to lower the forks, so that I could get my feet down - well actually just the tips of my toes, but that was all. The bike has no battery just a capacitor and she only has a kick-start. (The guy we bought it off had so many bikes to use that this was a good way not to have to keep on top of re-charging batteries).

So off we went to the "Old Airfield" to polish up on my skills, as I had not ridden for a few years.

After a few lessons, we were ready for my first off road experience. Up to Rudland Rigg as we live relatively nearby. We joined it from the Cockayne side, Fritz opened the gate and I looked at what I thought was an impossibly steep gravelly track. I could feel my heart pounding and my hands start to sweat. "Off you go then, take it easy and lets see how we go" The first bit was uneven, but once I relaxed and let the bike do the work, I started to really enjoy

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myself. At the top crossroad I waited and watched the BM make it all look so easy. (That's 30 years of experience for you).

I had a smile on my face from ear to ear. We headed off towards the steps at the Bank Foot end. Seeing it was my first time out we knew that I would not be going down them. I did watch Fritz ride down and back again on my bike "Just to test it" a likely tale! What worries me is, I find it hard to touch the ground on the road, so what chance do I have perched on top of a step? I have since gone down most of this route now, but from just below the steps, and I know that the track from Cockayne is not that steep at all.

On this occasion we turned round and went back the way we came. We met some guys who were at the North York's TRF camping weekend as we headed back towards Fadmoor, and a nice friendly bunch they were. They invited us to join them, but we had something on.

So for the first time off tarmac I did well, and had a really great time. (Thinking about it as I write, just makes me smile, I love it!)

The first big ride on the Serow was to the BMF Kelso Bike Show. We had planned the whole route on only taking minor roads. What a great time we had, we really do have some great countryside, with lots of surprises and nice old houses tucked away; it's wonderful to get off the beaten track. It took us five hours to cover the 230 miles, but we both had a really good time. We even managed a route between Edinburgh and Glasgow all on minor roads. I had my first 'off', but only at very low speed making a turn. I bent my brake lever like a ram's horn! How? Well the handle bar went down a gully, but the lever did not!

After Kelso we stayed in Scotland for the week touring round over in the west around Arran and the Kyles of Bute. It was the hottest weather we ever had in Scotland. (Been touring there two-up every year for over 17 years.) By the time we

returned home I had done over 1,000 miles.

Later in the year we went to Belgium for a long w/e and then last year back to Kelso Bike Show. This time I went out with the 'big boys' on their Gses and did some off-roading around the area, I really enjoy the riding.

We like to get out as often as possible and I'll follow Fritz anywhere - though sometimes it's a bit too hard for me. One of the green lanes we found locally was very deep ruts, and that made my heart pound. I felt like the ruts were up to my ears, (they weren't at all). Once in them I stalled the bike, problem - up until this point I have only kicked the bike over on the side stand, but now I couldn't do that, this was the first time I've kicked her over from a sitting position. The ruts came in handy. Now I'm building up my experience and just love getting out, sod the housework!

By August last year we were ready for a first 'real' adventure. A few friends were going to Iceland and we decided this would be a place the Serow could cope with even with its small engine. One friend was taking his DRZ400 in the back of his van and offered to put the Serow in too if I shared the driving. As travelling the 560 miles to Scrabster on the Serow would not be fun I readily agreed - the seat is like a plank of wood.

There was Gerry on his R1150GS and Simon on his 1100GS to complete our group (well, they started the group actually as we joined their



Bev, Simon & Chris in Iceland

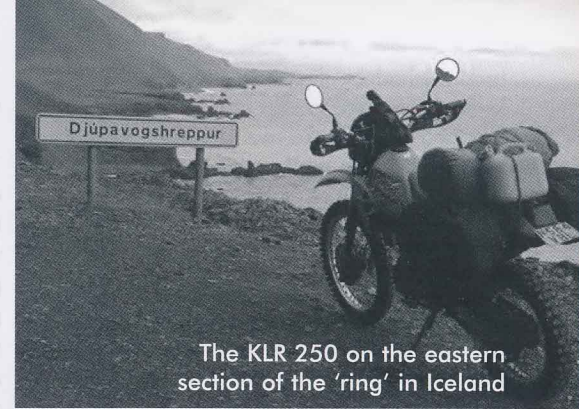
plans!). And so we set off with a leisurely two days to get to the port, Chris and I in the van, Fritz behind following on the BM. Things soon went a little pear-shaped though as at Berwick the BM blew it's gear box - we had to make alternative plans. After contemplating a gearbox rebuild over night (bit unrealistic) Chris kindly offered the use of a KLR250 sat in his garage. So we had to drive back to Yorkshire and spent until the small hours sorting physically and legally Chris's KLR (what a star! We hardly knew each other before initially setting out). We set off again the next day, this time with all 3 of us in the van with the bikes in the back. The story of that 48hrs would make a great story on its own.

After the 32-hour ferry you are ready to do some riding. The Serow is really too small for the very long drags up hill with the head wind, but she's just right for the off road sections. You travel with most of the people from the ferry onto the ring road, but most of them go south, we headed north/east. We were headed for Midge Lake and Detifoss. It was raining and misty as we headed for the falls, but this was a very good off-road section, used by many 4X4, so a nice road and nothing too hard. The falls were spectacular, but it was cold, and we all walked around the site in full waterproofs, lids still on.

Next day started with a nice single track road, which went from tarmac to well compacted mud to what can only be described as a river bed, to sand and gravel, in the pouring rain and then snow. This is summer? Then we came to our first river crossing which was short and clear, so luckily we could see where to go. We had a local off-road rider's guidebook with all the interior routes and descriptions of the level of difficulty.

We were riding the F26, one of the most popular cross-country routes, and the book stated 'two rivers to cross'. By now we must have crossed 10 rivers! Obviously the small ones don't count! In the main it highlights the glacial rivers, as these are ones that need consideration.

I was caught out on a nice wide fairly shallow (well, see the picture and see what you think!) none glacial crossing. Both Chris and Gerry had crossed without any major problem, so it was my



The KLR 250 on the eastern section of the 'ring' in Iceland



Bev & the Serow on an interior road

turn. This was the deepest and widest river crossing I had ever undertaken and I was feeling very nervous.

I started the bike and went round in circles to make sure I was OK with her. Chris was carrying a small video camera and was set up and rolling. I had been told to head for a rock about three-quarters of the way across, then veer to the left and head straight for the bank. Well that sounds easy, but it's not quite how it went. I set off well and headed for the rock, but then I could not take my eyes off the rock. I had target fixation! Instead of turning I ran into the rock and dropped the bike.

Luckily I had hit the kill switch - how I don't know. I managed to step off the bike, but I just caught my leg on the now upright handle bar, tripped, and fell full length into the very cold water. God was it cold; we were wearing our full waterproofs, just because it was so cold (about 7 degrees). That helped, but the water went up my sleeves, down my collar, and in my boots.

Gerry came over to help move the bike, as I couldn't. When I fell, the food bag I had on the back had dislodged and got caught in the chain, so it was all locked up. Gerry got the bike out of the water and freed the chain. Chris being the eminent professional kept on filming and then Fritz made his way safely across the river to join us. I took off my boots and emptied out the water and wrung out my socks. Fritz kicked the bike over just in case I had got any water into the engine. She was fine, so we continued. We were in the middle of absolutely nowhere and had to get somewhere to stay for the night. I was now carrying the moniker "Marina". She was the female star of 'Stingray', the kids program from our youth.

The interior is just like a dessert, but with black sand. Not much grows here and you really miss seeing trees. It is very exposed and windy and wild but has it's own beauty. When you stop and you look the colours are wonderful and there are actually loads of very small plants very close to the ground.

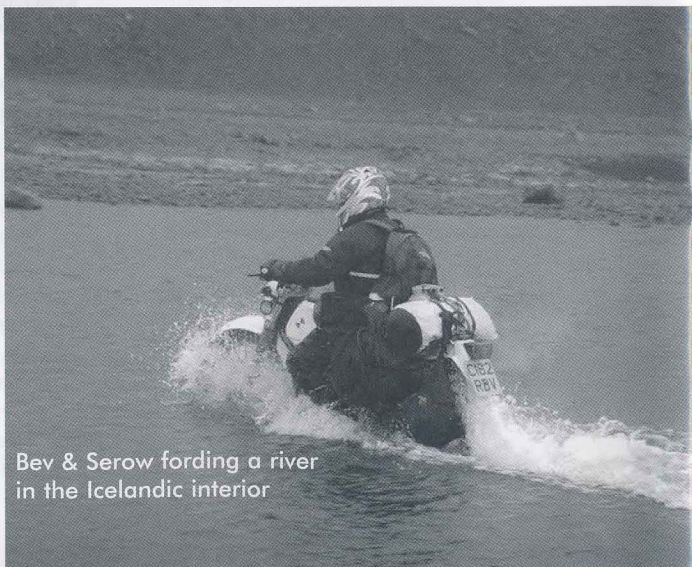
We rounded a bend and came upon a very wide brown, glacial, fast-running river. I just stared at it and stopped dead. Thoughts of my early bath were still in my head and my clothes were still wet - It looked too frightening and I talked myself out of it. At this point an English Land Rover appeared with a Scottish family aboard. This was the largest river crossing they had come across and they thought it was daunting even with the 4x4. I quickly asked for a lift, as we all watched Chris head across. I was taken across

and then they brought Chris back who kindly rode my bike across. Gerry and Fritz had also now crossed. It wasn't too bad a crossing, but it was late in the day, there was a lot of water running and it was a very strong current. I'm not sure, but I think you could hear the rocks moving within the river.

If I hadn't already got the nickname "Marina" and I'd been given more time to think about it I guess I could have done it. Once you lose your bottle it is hard to get back into it though - and I saw a way across in the Land Rover, so I took. The family in the Land Rover said there was another wide-river to cross, and as they were going to camp just the other side of it, if I had a problem they'd come back for me. We thanked them for their help and we all set off for what adventure we didn't know.

So to the last crossing before the mountain hut. It looked fairly shallow, but was VERY wide. Fritz just drove straight through to the other side. Gerry and I stopped at the water's edge. Chris stopped to film and Gerry told me I'd be OK before he set off. I could see the Land Rover coming back to the river from the mountain hut...

"Come on girl you can do this" I started to talk to the bike. "OK then... lets go, you're twenty one years old; been ridden by lots of experienced riders - you know what to do". I



Bev & Serow fording a river in the Icelandic interior



Free camping & simple cooking in Iceland

was convincing myself the bike would look after me rather than the other way round.

Well it was not the most spectacular crossing, the bike twitching around, but we made it across in one piece. I was proud of myself and at the same time a little cross with Fritz, because he knew that if he crossed without giving me time to talk myself out of it, I'd do it. He was right of course. We thanked the family in the Land Rover again.

It was bitterly cold, only about four or five degrees, so while Chris happily sought-out camping the three of us went for the hut. It cost a fortune, but at least we got warm and got our clothes dried. In the morning there had been a frost and it was only just above freezing - the warden told us that they had 'the first snow of summer'. To us the words wouldn't go together, but in Iceland, it somehow made sense.

We had an absolutely fantastic time in Iceland, but even as we left the holiday wasn't over. On the return leg we had three days on the Faroe Islands. The ferry is based there and travels between Scotland, the Faroes, Iceland, Denmark and Norway dependant on the day. We were in the Faroes whilst the boat was making another leg and would pick us up after three days bound for Scotland.

When we pulled into Tórshavn on the way to Iceland it had been glorious weather - when we returned it was back to typical mid-Atlantic shipping forecast headlines. Lashing it down and blowing a gale. We had advance booked an apartment as now we were back to a group

of four and it made sense when considering the fearsome weather. We got the key to our apartment and headed off inland to find the place, even in a short distance we were all wet to the skin.

Fritz and Simon had made plans through the tourist office to visit to the brewery as they do a Black Sheep Ale. I wasn't able to go as the weather was forecast to get even worse with gale or storm force winds. Just a typical Faroes day then! Fritz couldn't easily manage a pillion on the KLR250 and Simon

had no pillion seat. As wet as I was I was happy to stay behind along with Chris who had also had enough of the weather, so the boys went on their own. By all accounts it was a great visit, but at times the journey was a bit too exciting.

The next day we all got out on the road. There were no maps to be had anywhere that we could find. Guess as the Islands are so small, with so few roads, there's really no call for them. The Islands are lovely, great roads, fantastic tunnels and stunning scenery when it's visible. Seems a bit odd though, that the whole place knows the ferry has to do a stop off, but nothing is open. Shops shut early on Saturday, and most are closed on Sunday - that was two of our three days there. Seemed a missed opportunity.

We finally returned to Scrabster, found Chris's van had not been towed away or blown-up by anti-terrorist police, and late at night repacked the bikes and set off south. At 3am we put the tents up near Aviemore and grabbed a few hours sleep before packing up at 7am again and eventually getting back home. What an adventure!

Now I know I definitely want to keep riding and we have just bought a BMW F650GS. We've lowered it, and though I think it will be too heavy to off road, it gives me the chance to travel much further in comfort. And after all, I still have the Serow (when I can get it off my husband of course).

Bev Davies

TRAILING DARN SOUTH

Early October and a phone call from Ray inviting Danny and I up to Town for a few days Trail Riding. Town a euphemism for "that there London" to the uninitiated. A stones throw from Hampton Court and within the catchment area for Heathrow, Ray insisted we stayed at his house since the hotels were rather expensive. Danny, my backup man, when Ray and a few other "Cocky Knees" came up to North Yorkshire in the Summer, had used up all his Brownie Points, trail riding at Roger Preston's residence in Crete, in September, plus he had exams in October which also ruled him out.

Harry 2 was up for it, so we loaded up the trailer and headed south.

You must eat with the family when you arrive said Ray. Caroline and the children, Max and Lia, would like to meet you. We will leave early, each morning, so as not to disrupt their routine (not to mention the bonus, extra hours, on the bikes.)

Suffice to say we embarked on our first trail ride at seven in the morning, filtering along lines of gridlocked traffic, for twenty minutes, before we were in the Countryside. A hair raising experience for us retired Northerners. I had never been in rushhour traffic for at least twelve years. It focused your mind just like trail riding and at times was just as exciting.

The weather was kind.

Occasional light drizzle but warm with sunny spells. The Surrey lanes were a new experience, mostly below ground level, the sunken, tree lined lanes carried a canopy cover of foliage. The Autumn leaves were falling creating some wonderful displays of colour.

Ash lined lanes gave off a lime green glow. The Beech groves produced a carpet of orange and I have never seen so many Sweet Chestnut trees. Their spiky fruit littered the ground, an unusual hazard.

One lane we entered held a heavy, sickly, sweet scent of cider, which was evident, long before the crushed, fermenting, crab apples came into view.

We were told that, agriculturally the land was poor. The predominantly chalk base, with a thin top soil, was only good for grass, so there was little livestock or crop production in the area. Most of the farms had been bought up by the rich. Each had a couple of "Flash Cars" on



If you go down to the wood today...

the forecourts and horses in the stables, ready for their weekend jaunts.

We had brunch at a quaint Tea Shoppe, (not to mention the Polish girl with the "Harry and Paul" accent: Ray's fantasy personified), suffice to say "distance lends enchantment" few things, if any, live up to close inspection. He failed to mention the eighteen stone, six foot four, boyfriend. So no real chance there.

Afternoon brought some cloud cover and I was amazed to see my headlights shining brightly down one lane, which had total leaf cover. Completely different to "Up North" where most lanes afford long open views.

Then we entered the appropriately named Water Lane. About a quarter of a mile long, this lane was a watercourse, wall to wall, running 2" deep, down to the bedrock, with a chalky bottom and rock steps. Very tricky. Ray said after a rain storm it ran like the Colorado, brown and fast.

We took in some beautiful forest trails and made our way back towards London, as the light faded, arriving back at six.

We showered and went out for a meal returning at nine thirty. As it turned out Harry 2 was a perfect foil for Ray: both could talk for England!

In comparison, I am anti-social. I would retire gracefully about ten with "grievous bodily harm of the earhole", not to mention being cream crackered, leaving Ray and Harry chatting into the small hours. Ray's, deeply flawed, psychological conviction, that Triumphs are the greatest bike ever manufactured

coupled with Harry's consummate knowledge of motorcycle engineering, over the last hundred years, made for endless topics of conversation.

Ray reminded me of Mrs Thatcher, not physically, just the fact he could get by on four hours sleep a night. In comparison I suffer from narcolepsy.

Day two dawned. Ray had oiled and adjusted our chains during the night and filled our tanks

from his jerry cans: what a host. He even wanted to jetwash our bikes but they were hardly dirty.

Out on the trails again, we made contact with a couple of lads on Honda XR400s with "out of date" exhausts. It's a small world. One lad knew Ron our runs leader for day three and had arranged a run out the following week with him. You better replace those drainpipe exhausts before you meet Ron suggested Ray. "Tag along with us" said



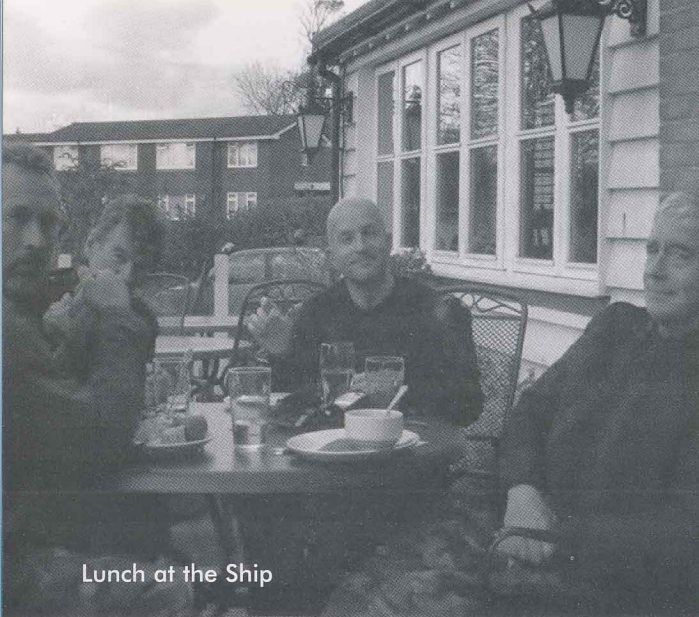
Sunken Water Lane

Ray from which point we gave them a lesson in the dos and don'ts. As was pointed out it was better to take them on board and inform them, rather than leave them to cause havoc on illegal trails.

By the time they left I bet they were thinking: there is a lot more to responsible riding than we thought. We only wanted a bit of fun.

That evening Ray had arranged a get together at the local Indian for a few of the Surrey trail riders and a good night it was to. We found a cash only venue with a half price menu. Guess the credit crunch is starting to bite.

Day three dawned: bikes oiled and jettied: Ray could not resist the temptation. We assembled



Lunch at the Ship

at Newlands Corner, a view point on the North Downs ready for a ride into Hampshire and over to the South Downs.

Ron, who had been on our first ride out, turned up on his Beta 450 looking like a new pin. How did you manage that, you must have spent hours cleaning it after Tuesdays run.

"Not at all", said Ron, "all I do is silicon spray everywhere before I ride it and the muck just drops off". Tips from the top indeed. This from a man who's engineering knowledge helped win the World Rally Championship twice, with Vatanen and Blomquist. Illustrious company indeed and such an unassuming person.

If you think that is impressive you should see what is on the other side of the van replied Ron.

"Hello John got a new mota??" Hidden behind the van was another John, resplendent on a White, BMW, 450 off-roader. The model had only been launched the week before. He knew what to expect and as soon as he started the engine, he precipitated a torrent of "good humoured" abuse. A polite version.....

Where are the ear defenders? Look at that welding, it looks like Bird droppings! Call that an engine, sounds like a bag of hammers....!

was too busy laughing to take in all the rye comments.

John coolly rebuffed every comment in his usual laid-back, inimitable style. It's only on loan, on a "You bend it, you mend it" basis from a Dealership. We thought it was strange that a KTM man, through and through, (Super Duke, RC8 and trail bike) would have switched to BMW.

Enough of this hilarity said Ron and off we headed towards the Chalk of Hampshire and the South Downs.

These chalk lanes were damp and slick, with leaf cover, best ridden at low revs and in a high gear, vis a vis, ice conditions. Any sign of "giving it some" and you were off. No one managed to stay upright all day.

The view from the top of the South Downs over Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight was spectacular. I felt like a coalminer that had been travelling underground all day, then suddenly emerged above ground to this open vista.

Lunch at the Sun Inn produced a photograph worthy of a caption competition. Every picture tells a story. Answers, on a post card, to the Editor.

From left to right: Ray "mine host", Reg "two smoke and avid mountain biker", John "BMW", Paul "a canny Scot, with a bad back and a dry sense of humour"

After lunch John offered any takers a test ride on the Beamer so Ron, Ray and I had a short experience, not wising to bend it.

We all agreed it was weird to ride. I thought it was like riding high upon a horizontal beam, with just a pair of bars and a red dial visible in front. The fuel injected motor throbbed between my legs, like a vibro-massage machine. The gearing was definitely too high

for a trail bike. There was plenty of low down torque which launched you, as soon as you dropped the clutch. Reminded me of my 500 Gold Star's RRT2 box which did 40mph by the time you fully released the clutch. I did not have time (nor the bottle) to test the higher rev range, on these unfamiliar and slippery lanes. Suffice to say the styling is slim and built for easy movement up and down the saddle as in Motorcross. No doubt, it would take a few hundred test miles to master the beast. I can't say I was tempted to dash out and buy one.

Arriving at the end of one lane which contained about fifty whoops, spread over half a mile, some four feet deep, most about two feet deep, Ron called the BMW to the front, saying "Try it out on this lane". Paul who had been listing at an angle of 20 degrees, every time he walked, for the past two days, with his bad back, shot off after him and so did I.

How's your back? I asked Paul, at the end of the lane. Oh it's easing replied the Canny Scotsman, with a twinkle in his eye.

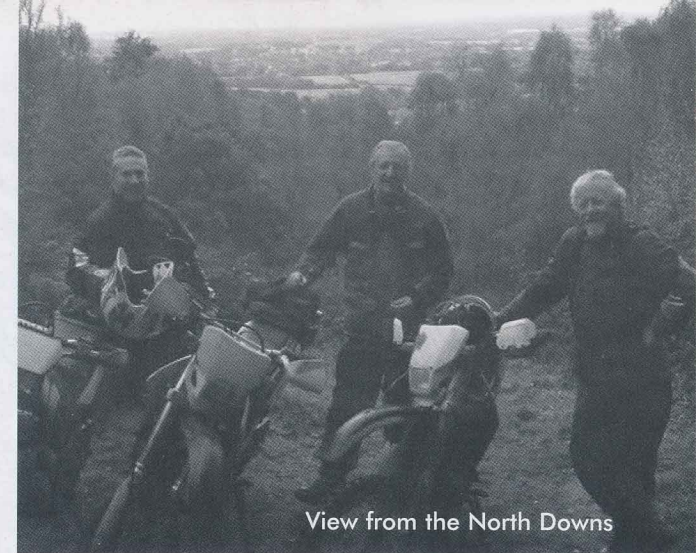
At last something the BMW loved exclaimed John. Obviously a machine for the American market's wide open spaces and Motorcross tracks.

As we approached London on the return ride, riders said their farewells and peeled off, one by one.

Many thanks to Ron and Ray for the guided tours and the rest of the lads for their company. You are most welcome to come back "Up North" anytime.

Our apologies to Caroline, Max and Lia for the sudden increase in motorcycle chatter and disruption to their routine and thanks to Ray for the hospitality, it was great.

The North:South divide is only a myth. Trail riding is a great experience anywhere. More



View from the North Downs

importantly is the genial company and the repartee that goes with it.

We loaded up the trailer and said our goodbyes. Five minutes from Ray's house, Harry and I got a police escort out of London. Luckily, I spotted a motorcycle patrol officer in a side street. As we passed he pulled in behind us. My speed nervously hovered around 28 mph. When I checked the mirror there were seven of them, in formation, dutifully following at 28mph for over a mile. The hairs on the back of my neck were bristling as I thought of all the things I could get pulled for. Then, thank goodness, as we approached the junction with the A4, the blue lights went on and they streamed by, blocking off all the traffic, allowing a squad car, carrying a VIP, to be whisked through. The Officers signalled to each other and disappeared leaving the traffic in chaos. The operation reminded me of a slick routine, at a Military Tattoo. I imagined the smile on their faces as they pulled away. Fortunately the rest of the journey was boring.

Happy Trail Riding wherever you are, John Robinson T&NYTRF Group

P.S.You were right about the credit card fraud at petrol stations. Harry had £600 worth of airline tickets on his card by the time he got home. He had only used it twice, for petrol.

A Shaggy Dog Story

The other day, while walking with my wife along what is now a restricted byway, a German Shepherd (the dog type) suddenly appeared from a nearby farm and, despite all our efforts insisted on coming along with us. This was all right until we got to the tarmac where the dog proceeded to cause mayhem. First two cyclists appeared and the dog got tangled up with them. Fortunately an accident was narrowly avoided but they were not happy. "You should keep your b****y dog on a lead", one yelled. "I quite agree, but that is not my dog".

Remember Peter Sellars and Graham Stark in one of the Pink Panther movies? "Does your derg bite?" "No my dog does not bite". Dog then savages Clousseau. "I thought you said your derg does not bite" "Yes, but that is not my dog" Old joke, maybe, but it is all in the delivery.

Next a car came round the corner and had to swerve to miss the dog. "B****y dog owners" screamed the driver. "Too right, they should all be locked up" I shouted back. Puzzled, he drove on. Then, a horse and rider appeared and the dog (now called Siegfried or Sigg) started snapping at its back legs. The horse reared up and nearly unseated the rider. "Can't you keep your dog under control?" she yelled. "Yes but zat is not my derg", I reply in my best Clousseau accent. I also added, helpfully, that my dog is no bother, since it is called Churchill, made of plastic and resides on the parcel shelf of my car. Sigg then managed to cause even more mayhem

chasing a variety of animals around the pets corner of the local arty farm centre. Again, lots of vociferous complaints from parents of traumatised kids, literally spitting feathers from equally traumatised poultry. Having had his fun, Sigg then trotted off home, leaving us slightly less popular than herpes.

Some time ago a countryside ranger told me a story of a group of walkers who were upset about fir trees being cut down in the woods around a reservoir. It seems that they, allegedly, returned to put sugar into the fuel tanks of the tracked vehicles used to remove the trees, resulting in an expensive and messy recovery operation. My ranger friend said that, he would have happily explained to them about how woods are 'managed' and that, it is necessary to remove trees as a part of this process, but they did not bother asking.

It seems that there has been an increase in the number of people complaining about, well everything really, often without bothering to find out the facts first.

How about the story of the lady who moved into a house in Aldeborough about 100 yards from the church and then made a complaint about the noise from the church bells?

You are now asking yourself, what have these stories got to do with motorcycling?

The answer, in one word is, 'misperception'. The answer in two words is 'misperception' and 'intolerance'.

Sounds familiar? You bet.

Rodger Davies

For the last few years I have managed to squeeze in a late foreign break combined with some trail riding (lets me play and keeps the wife happy) so following the summer that never happened and weeks of rain it was time to do it again.

After riding in Southern Spain for the last couple of years, we decided to try somewhere different this year. I remembered reading a short article in "Trail" about riding in Crete a couple of years ago by Bob Combley and he wrote again in this Junes issue. Also, a letter in a recent magazine from resident Roger Preston offering assistance looked promising, so I contacted my riding buddy John and arrangements were made for a weeks break together with wives in Rethymno, Crete. Further enquiries on the interweb revealed a company called "Greenways" (www.greenways.gr) that would hire Yamaha TTR250's for a reasonable 35 euros per day including insurance and were just a few hundred yards away from the hotel in Adelianos Kampos.

The flight was good and we landed in sunny Crete to temperatures of 32°, a bit warmer than old blighty!

The hotel was excellent and after "settling in" for a couple of days we picked up the bikes and set off on our first day of exploring the trails. I had contacted Roger before we set off, but unfortunately he lived on the opposite side of the island and was not familiar with the trails in this part of Crete. Not to worry, I had purchased a "Road Editions"

1:100,000 map of Western Crete on Amazon and there were lots of footpaths and unsurfaced roads shown. From reading articles and speaking to some people before leaving, it seemed that there were very few restrictions on where you could ride, as someone put it "if you can get a bike up it, you can ride it!"

DAY 1

We eased ourselves in gently and just headed inland towards the mountains. For anyone who has never been to Western Crete, once you get away from the tourist trail it is just a brilliant mixture of small villages, valleys and mountains, with some very impressive gorges thrown in.

After a few hours of short trails and some dead ends, we were back on a twisty tarmac road when John reported that his back end felt a bit "loose", nothing to do with a dodgy tummy, but a screw that had embedded itself in the rear tyre. We decided to head back on the main road to Rethymno and sure enough we found a tyre depot who replaced the tube and we were back on our way.

After this initial setback we settled into a pattern which became familiar over the next few days. Find a mountain with lots of unsurfaced routes around it, ride for a couple of hours, find a taverna and stop for something to eat and drink/eat, then carry on riding.

The little tavernas that you find in the small villages are a real treat. For a few euros you can get a "Nescafe"

CRETE 2008



(white coffee), it usually comes with a glass of chilled water and sometimes various sweet snacks. Quite often there will be a group of locals drinking beer and engaged in animated discussions, which although we could not understand a word was fascinating to watch.

DAY 2

We had spotted some good trails the previous day up to some transmitter masts and set about finding them. It was well worth it, the view down into the Amari valley included the recently completed Potamoi dam. The water is still rising so some roads and tracks which will eventually be covered are still visible, but it will ultimately become the largest lake in Crete.

We continued until our usual mid-morning taverna stop, got chatting to an old guy and I asked him where we could go next. With a mixture of sign language and the odd word of English he pointed us towards Mt. Idi (Psiloritis) which he assured us had the best

views and scenery and would be no problem on the bikes. He was right! This gave us the best afternoons riding with miles and miles of trails, climbing up to 4500 feet (but still nowhere near the 8000 feet summit). Climbing up the endless switchback tarmac road it soon changed to a gravel track. As we were climbing there was an eagle hovering just a few hundred yards to our right and as we continued the bird also climbed with us on the thermals, never beating a wing.

After a couple of hours we found ourselves looking down over the southern coast at the Gulf of Messara and decided it was time to turn back. After a couple of wrong turns we managed to re-trace our steps and rode back through the Amari valley and across the dam that we had spotted in the morning.

Then it was a quick trip down a gravel road to the Prasano Gorge before heading back home via the hire companies workshop for an oil check and chain adjustment. The mechanic seemed quite surprised to see us as I don't think most people hiring these bikes have too much mechanical empathy!

DAY 3

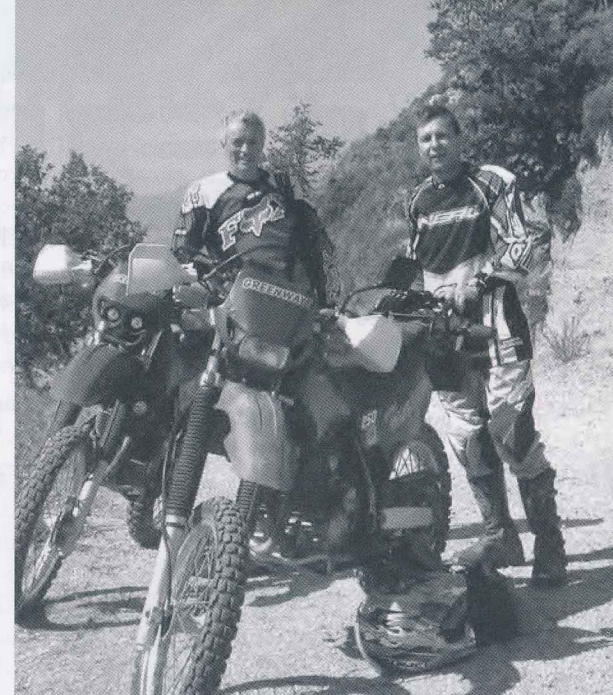
The day did not start too well as I had a "dicky" stomach and it was even hotter than the previous days, but we set off and soon got into the groove. We went back up to the transmitters, back down into the Amari valley and found an excellent trail that was about 6 miles of dusty tracks and gravel climbs up to the village of Karines. Around Karines there were several circular trails that took us back into the village for our Taverna break before we set off again towards Kare. We got lost a couple of times here as the maps are not terribly accurate (mainly due to the scale), but eventually found our way back onto the main road. It does not help that there seem to be three different ways of spelling all the place

names, plus the Greek spelling, so trying to work out where you are from the road signs can be challenging.

We pieced together some trails that we had done previously, including one that started at Oros and went across Mt. Vrysinas to Prasies, but despite two attempts we never managed to find the route across and ended up tracking back to the main road. The views were well worth the trip up to the top though.

By this time it was well into the afternoon and very hot, so we decided to head back to the hotel via a quick last blast up the gravel switchbacks up towards the transmitters.

After a great three days riding we decided to call it quits and return the bikes, as it was just too hot to carry on. The TTR250's performed admirably and I would definitely consider one myself next time I am looking at a replacement. Greenways had a good selection of bikes from the enduro type (mainly KTM's), trials type such as Betas as well as some big trailies and adventure bikes but the TTR was ideally suited to our skill level. There were a lot more bikes available than they show on their web site, so it is worth



asking if you want something specific. Their price includes insurance and a basic helmet, but I would recommend that you take all your own riding gear and definitely a camelback!

Crete is wonderful, nice people, fantastic scenery and I will definitely go back sometime and explore some more of this lovely island.

Tony Davenport

Entrance Exam for Run Leaders

by Tim Gooderson, Kent Group

- Have you got a neck like a giraffe?
- Can you see around blind corners?
- Have you got a sixth sense about what is around the next corner?
- Can you read a map?
- Do you understand and can you explain the basic facts about rights of way law?
- Do you know the difference between a byway and a restricted byway?
- If you can answer yes to most of these questions - then step right forward - you will make an ideal run leader.

POSTBAG

RAISING THE PROFILE?

It is great to see Prince William and Prince Harry doing a charity enduro ride, good on them I say, and surely a great opportunity for the TRF to raise the profile of green laning.

Maybe a future charity ride in the UK involving the Princes or at least drop them a line to let them know the TRF exist. I would even volunteer to take them out and about in Northumberland (wishful thinking?).

Michael Logan



A sign we don't mind at all! A version of the Warboys Committee warning sign c 1950! Near Pateley Bridge, N. Yorks.

REMINDER! This is what a TRO sign looks like! It is an offence to use a motor vehicle on a green lane of any status subject to a TRO.

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Created by Glenn Vieira

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YAMAHA TTR 600 2005, Blue, T&T, v.g.c. £2,400. Tel: 01225 311567 (Bath).

HONDA CRF250X 54 reg, one owner, road registered, SORN Nov, 12mths MOT, low miles. £2000. Tel: 07960 820140 (Bucks).

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GAS GAS PAMPERA MK3 Rebuilt engine (bills), new tyres, chain, sprockets, 12 mths tax & MOT, professionally maintained, now too old. £1425. Tel: 0207 6034665 (London).

SUZUKI DR350 1994, 3440 miles, barkbusters, new tyres/heavy duty tubes, recent chain, geared down sprockets, garage kept for 10 yrs. £1200. Tel: 01298 26122 (Derbyshire).

PAMPERA MKIII Usual scuffs & some cracked panels. New wheel bearings, pads, front tyre, water pump seal. N. Wales. £900. Tel: 01824 750659 or 07785 745593.

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TRAIL GUIDES

The following Trail Guides are available from me by post only. Not available via the net. This is a private initiative.

Re Northern England Maps: These are small marked up maps on a 3 miles to one inch scale showing lawful trails. All information is from official sources.

Re Scotland Maps: Information taken from my own research and local contacts. No problems reported in 3 years! As in England these are small marked up maps.

Please note these are to be used as a guide only and a cast iron guarantee is not possible.

1. **Yorkshire Dales** (showing latest NERC and TRO closures. Replaces all previous Dales trail guides issued by me).
2. **North Yorkshire Moors National Park and East Yorkshire** (2 off).
3. **South Yorkshire** (these are all valid Byway claims accepted by the Highway Authority. South Yorkshire Police accept that vehicular rights may exist. No problems have been reported in 3 years).
4. **Northumberland**
5. **Co. Durham**
6. **Lake District**
7. **Southern Scotland** (4 off) (Scottish Border Regions).

£3 each post paid or £20 the lot! (Eleven maps in total).

Cheques to me at 55 Warkworth Street, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 8ED.

Brian Thompson
brian950@aol.com

GROUPS

AXE VALE David Clegg, Tel: 01275 373652 (Home), Mob: 0793 1220895.
2nd Tues, 8pm, Windmill Inn, Nore Road, Portishead.

BLACK COUNTRY John Oseland, Tel: 01902 656011
1st Tues, 9pm, The Longford House, Watling Street, Cannock.

BRISTOL Glenn Summers, Tel: 01454 619246
4th Mon, 8pm, The Midland Spinner, Warmley, Bristol.

CAMBRIDGE Martin Pinion, Tel: 01353 776252
1st Thurs, Golden Ball, Boxworth.

CORNWALL Adam Hedley, Tel: 01579 349217
3rd Thurs, 7.30 - 8.00 p.m., The Victoria Inn, Roche.

CUMBRIA Roger Harris, Tel: 01539 725198
2nd Tues, The Gilpin Bridge Inn, Levens, Nr. Kendal.

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE
Mick Ellison, Tel: 07780 674192
2nd Tues, The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

DEVON John Heal, Tel: 01626 366860
2nd Tues, 8pm, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton Abbott.

DORSET W. John Williamson, Tel: 01929 553640,
Mob: 07850 727873 1st Tues, 8pm, Greyhound Inn, Winterbourne, Kingston, Nr. Bere Regis.

EAST MIDLANDS Graham Chinnery, Tel: 01332 863433
2nd Wed, The Clock Warehouse, London Road, Shardlow, just off the A50.

EAST YORKSHIRE Peter Hall, Tel: 01405 862616
1st Tues, The Plough, Snaith.

ESSEX Cliff Eves, Tel: 07845 196064
2nd Wed, The Wheatsheaf Public House, Hatfield Peverel.

EXMOOR Andy Petherick, Tel: 01363 776293
2nd Wed, 8pm, The Hartnoll Hotel, Bolham, A396 1 mile north of Tiverton.

GLOUCESTER Richard Simpson, Tel: 07812 402021
1st Wed, 8pm, Wagonworks Club, Tuffley Ave., Gloucester.

HERTFORDSHIRE Stephen Vaughan, Tel: 01438 231571
2nd Thurs, 8.30pm, Shire Park Social Club, Shire Park, Central Drive, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1AB.

HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES
Graham Till, Tel: 01782 510533/07971 477024
2nd Tues, 8.30 - 9.00pm, The Stafford Arms, Bagnall. (2 miles out of Leek).

ISLE OF WIGHT Andy Hawkins, Tel: 01983 617232
1st Wed, 8pm, The Eight Bells Inn, Carisbrooke, Newport, IOW.

KENT Nige Jeffrey Tel: 01795 438769
2nd Wed, 8.30p.m. for 9pm,
Pied Bull, Farningham, Nr Brands Hatch, Kent.

LANCASHIRE Keith Westley, Tel: 01704 893215
1st Tues, Black Bull, Hall Lane, Mawdesley.

LINCOLNSHIRE Paul Vernon, Tel: 01522 889079
4th Thurs, 8pm, Lincolnshire Poacher, Bunkers Hill, Lincoln.

LODDON VALE Patrick Evans, Tel: 01252 660179
2nd Thurs, Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading.

MANCHESTER Phil Kinder, Tel: 0161 339 5343
2nd & 4th Mon, 9pm, Arden Arms, A6017 in Bredbury.

MID WALES Tony Rooney, Tel: 01239 698349
Last Thurs, 7.30pm, The Crown Inn, Rhayader except July & December.

NORTHUMBERLAND Tony Whitehead, Tel: 07876 598515
1st Wed, 8.30pm, The Travellers Rest, Burnopfield.

NORTH WALES Richard Hughes, Tel: 01244 533855
1st Wed, 8pm, Cross Keys, Buckley, OS 117 290 637.

NORWICH Jeremy McNulty, Tel: 07786 426055
2nd Wed, 7.30pm, White Horse, Trowse, Norwich.

OXFORDSHIRE Peter Cole, Tel: 01844 214075
3rd Thurs, 8pm, Royal British Legion Club, Rutton Lane, Yarnton.

PEAK DISTRICT Steve Cartwright, Tel: 01782 848034
1st Thurs, 8pm, Travellers Rest, Ashbourne Road, Derby.

RIBBLE VALLEY John Noblet, Tel: 01254 230347
2nd Tues, 8.30pm, Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59).

SOMERSET Mark Stride, Tel: 07815 062021
2nd Thurs, 8pm, The Crown Inn, Fivehead, Nr. Taunton.

SOUTHERN Lee Wildsmith, Tel: 02380 611110
3rd Thurs, Southampton & District MCC, Woodside Ave., Eastleigh, (opposite Halfords).

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY Steve Sharp, 0208 773 4204
8.30pm, 4th Wed, Nescot Centre for Sports Development, Banstead Road, Ewell, Surrey.

SOUTH NORTHANTS Graham Walker, Tel: 07841 158820
2nd Wed, 9pm, The Old Sun, 10 Middle Street, Nether Heyford, Northampton NN7 3LL.

SOUTH WALES Stuart Dodwell, Tel: 01446 710851
1st Tues, 8pm, Bedwas Rugby Club, Bedwas, Nr Caerphilly.

SOUTH WEST WALES Terry Brooks, Tel: 01639 849272
Contact Terry for meeting details.

SUFFOLK Richard May, Tel: 01787 374073
Last Wed, Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd, Bury-St-Ed.

SUSSEX Julian Flack, Tel: 01306 740586
Last Thurs, Ashington Social Club, Rear of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles North of Worthing.

TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS
John Robinson, Tel: 01287 623588.
3rd Tues, The Ranch House, Thoraldby Farm, Nr Stokesley, map ref 93...493074.

THAMES VALLEY Julian Ogle, Tel: 0208 5799778
3rd Mon, District Arms, Woodthorpe Rd, Ashford, Middlesex.

VIRTUAL PEAK GROUP
Paul King, kingy@virtualpeakstrf.co.uk Tel: 07966 289778.
This is a virtual group at www.virtualpeakstrf.co.uk

WEST ANGLIA Mark Andrew, Tel: 01933 413458
1st & 3rd Thurs, Scott Bader Social Club, opp. Parish Church, Wollaston, Wellingborough.

WEST MIDLANDS David Chamberlain, Tel: 0121 783 3438
1st & 3rd Wed, Wilmcote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon.

WEST YORKSHIRE Richard Hoyle, Tel: 07789 644461
1st Thurs, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd), Odsal, Bradford. Rights of Way 7.30pm, main meeting 8.30pm.

WILTSHIRE Vic Price, Tel: 01380 724651
1st Tues, The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford.

WORCESTERSHIRE
Dave Gunster, Tel: 01527 456095 Mob: 07960 422523
1st Tues, White Hart, Fernhill Heath, Worcs.