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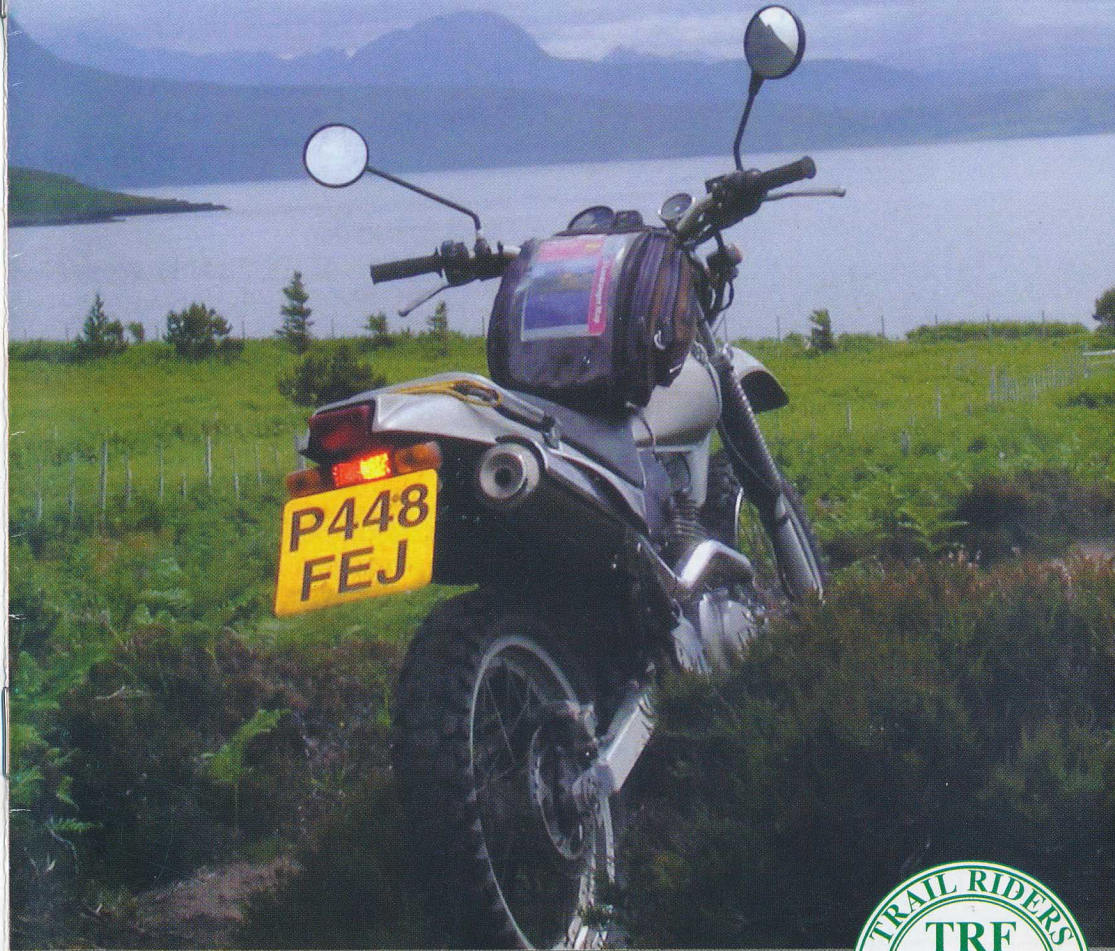
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# TRAIL



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

NOVEMBER 2009 No. 375 EDITOR: FRED ELLISON



Patron: Lord Fairfax

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Display Equipment:	<b>Leo Crone</b>	01325 463815 (7a.m. - 5p.m.) Display boards held at Ut 10, Red Barnes Way, McMullen Road, Darlington DL1 2RR

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## EDITOR

Graham Till was looking for volunteers to man the TRF stand at the Stoneleigh Dirt Bike Show. A nervous twitch and I was in.

A 5 a.m. rise then out by 5.30 and on the road to Graham's at Biddulph on the edge of the Peak District. We went to collect Big Steve (Virtual Peaks) and arrived at Stoneleigh at 9.00 a.m. where we put on our TRF hats and waited for all the trail riders who were eager to sign up to the TRF way of life.

The rush did not happen. Instead there was a steady flow of people onto the stand where, believe it or not, a couple of people had the cheek to ask for information on where to ride when they were adamant that they were not going to join. We did sign up some and had useful dialogue with a good many more, who went off to think about it, usually clutching back issues of Trail. I think all who we spoke to were positive about our aims, even those who had no inclination to go trail riding.

A good day.



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# REFORM FOR THE TRF

The 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Trail Riders Fellowship has cleared the way for a reformation of the organisation that will allow it to campaign more effectively to maintain unsurfaced rights of way for the responsible enjoyment of motorcyclists.

In the coming year, the Rules Sub-Group will produce reports detailing the new structure of the TRF as a two-tier organisation typical of many existing clubs and groups.

A charity will be formed to provide direction for a Limited Company that will deal with the day-to-day running of the organisation including commercial activities such as merchandising. It will also be the vehicle used should the TRF engage in legal action, ensuring that ordinary members are not exposed to financial liabilities.

Now is the chance to have your say about the

future of the TRF. TRF members can log onto a dedicated section of the forum (Rules sub-group in the Members Area) and discuss topics related to the new structure, or communicate in writing to Simon, Andy or Robin (see contact details inside front cover).

The Rules Sub Group will present its detailed proposals at next year's AGM, where members will have a chance to put them to the vote. But don't wait until then to have an input. Log onto the forum and have your say now.

#### **Reference 1.**

*Final Report from the RSG 2009 as published in Trail Number 373 (September 2009).*

#### **Reference 2.**

*The Forum Section on the TRF Website:  
[http://www.trf.org.uk/forum/view\\_forum.php?f=94](http://www.trf.org.uk/forum/view_forum.php?f=94)*

## NOTICE BOARD

### DEVON GROUP AGM 2009

To be held at: The Dolphin Hotel, Station Road, Bovey Tracey, Devon  
on Tuesday 1st December 2009.

The AGM will commence at 8.00 p.m. sharp, in the upstairs function room.

Members are welcome to eat before the AGM but are requested to be in the bar by 6.00 p.m. ready to order food by the start of service at 6.30 p.m. (please call The Dolphin and book a table beforehand. Tel: 01626 832413)

Steve Taylor, Devon TRF Secretary

## RoW NEWS

### TEMPLE BRIDGE, ICKLINGHAM, SUFFOLK

As local members are doubtless already aware, the Temple Bridge at Icklingham in Suffolk was closed to motors several years ago due to its dilapidated condition. About eighteen months ago the closure was extended to prohibit all traffic and at the end of last year the bridge was finally demolished.

Since that time I have made a number of inquiries to the highway authority about the future of this route and have been repeatedly assured that the bridge will be replaced by 2012 at the latest. This is the good news. Unfortunately what the authority will not do is give an assurance that the replacement structure will be of a vehicular standard.

In fact, they have stated that their preferred option is to stop up (extinguish) the vehicular rights over the bridge and down grade it to a bridleway. While a bridle standard bridge would be smaller, lighter and therefore no doubt considerably cheaper it would not of course allow for the reopening of this attractive and important UCR to vehicles.

Fortunately stopping up orders of this kind require a magistrates court order and the grounds for acquiring one are extremely limited. Given the circumstances of the case I am confident that the TRF could defeat such a move and I can assure members that this would be vigorously contested. Still, this is a battle for another day. A more pressing issue concerns the current use of the route.

Following the final closure of the bridge the authority negotiated an alternative, temporary diversion. This runs for perhaps fifty yards along the river bank before crossing the river on a bridge owned by the Environment Agency. Unfortunately this alternative route is only a permissive bridleway and is therefore not available to motorcyclists. Since the closure it has been brought to my attention that in their frustration, increasing numbers of rider are either attempting to ford the river (with varying

degrees of success) or are riding along the permissive bridleway route.

As far as I am aware there is no historic ford crossing at this point and the authority are clear that the permissive access agreement does not permit riding along the alternative route. It is therefore likely that doing either would constitute a criminal offence under section 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, ("driving a mechanically propelled vehicle on land not forming part of a road"). I also have it on good authority (from a first hand source) that the police have been known to attend the site and stop riders, so you have been warned.

If this all sounds predictably depressing take heart because there just might be a solution of sorts. Following discussion with Nigel Burrows, Suffolk County Councils Bridge Manager, he has advised that while motorcyclists must not ride the alternative route it would be acceptable for us to push! There is case law which I am aware of to support the argument that a pedestrian pushing a motorcycle is a foot passenger and as long as the vehicle is not "driven" then presumably no offence would be committed.

Whether this would constitute trespass is another matter. Some authorities argue that pushing a pedal cycle on a footpath is trespass because a push bike is not a normal accompaniment for a walker. The same argument might be said to apply to pushing a motorcycle on a permissive bridleway but, of course, trespass is a civil wrong not a criminal matter so it would not be an offence.

In any case, Mr Burrows describes this as the most sensible way to proceed which given his position in the authority is good enough for me. I would however like to stress that when I say "push" I do mean push. I do not mean ride if you think you'll get away with it or balance on one peg ready to hop off if you get spotted or even walk alongside the bike with the engine running, in gear, slipping the clutch. I mean get off, switch off the engine and with both feet on

the ground PUSH!  
Is that clear? Good!

I will of course keep members apprised of any developments regarding the replacement bridge but you can be sure that any attempt to downgrade it will be vigorously challenged.

Richard Sugden, Eastern Area RoW Advisor

## GARBURN PASS IN THE LAKE DISTRICT

TRF Members will know that, amongst so many other routes, the classic Garburn and Walna Scar Passes were lost to the dreaded NERCA.

Cumbria TRF's applications for BOAT status, on the basis the NERCA exception of "first public vehicular right of way was created by motor vehicles before December 1930" were turned down by the Lake District National Park, which proposed changes from Bridleway to Restricted Byway.

Cumbria TRF appealed this, and a few months ago I was able to report that the Planning Inspectorate had upheld the appeal for Walna, and had proposed BOAT. Of course that

proposal was objected to by the Yorkshire based Green Lanes Preservation Group who are dedicated to closing all unsurfaced roads to trail riders and the 4x4 folk. Until the Inspectorate has dealt with, and hopefully rejected, those objections, Walna remains a Bridleway.

On November 6th we had the response on Garburn Pass. The Planning Inspectorate has come to a similar same conclusion, and again proposed BOAT.

As with Walna this is great good news, but similarly we should not throw our hats too high in the air just yet. There will be objections, and as Walna, until those are dealt with, Garburn remains a Bridleway.

Raise your glasses to Cumbria TRF, and Westmorland Motor Club, our co-objector, and Alan Kind, who so ably presented our case, if you wish; but please, please do not spoil our reputation and relationship with the local authorities and interest groups by breaking the law and riding Walna and Garburn until we can let you know BOAT orders are in place.

Steve Pighills, ROW Officer,  
Cumbria TRF Group.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**Rights of Way Training Workshop** 10.00 am, 22nd November  
Black Country Living Museum Tipton Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 4SQ. Contact Robin Hickin row@trf.org.uk. (See Notice Board page 4 for more information).

### Trail Rides in Wales

**Machynlleth Area** 5th & 6th December. Serow and similar (i.e. small trail bikes like XLs, CRF230, etc). Fees as above.


**Near Aberystwyth** 2nd January. Ride into the night! Ride meet at 12 midday, break for tea at 4ish, ride until about 8 pm. Two course meal provided after ride with option of bunk house accommodation included in price which is £50.

All fees will need to be paid in advance (sorry - in the past I have had people say they will come but not turn up, leaving me having to pay for meals booked in the pub etc).

Contact Marianne Tel: 01686 430522 [www.trailrides-wales.com](http://www.trailrides-wales.com)

## MAKE SURE YOUR EVENT IS LISTED

Send any details to The Editor (see contact details inside front cover)

 **Surrey Hills**  
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## WHAT WILL YOU MEET IN THE WOODS TODAY?

### Read the signs to find out!

The TRF were pleased to learn that the Surrey Hills AONB have taken what they describe as a "no-nonsense" approach to signage on BOATs with the aim of educating all users in the hope of reducing conflict. They rightly say that just because there is no tarmac it does not mean that a route is not open to vehicles.

At the same time motorised users, carriage drivers, the AONB landowners and police are working together to clamp down on illegal and irresponsible use by those who drive and ride 'off piste' with vehicles that do not meet the legal requirements.

Surrey Hills AONB say that "Conflict between the different users, often caused by ignorance of BOAT status, has been greatly increased by illegal activity by an irresponsible minority of 4x4 drivers and trail bikers who prefer the thrills and spills of the banks and ditches, forests and swamps on private land off the carriageway. Driving vehicles without registration plates or insurance, they cause enormous damage to the countryside and are committing serious criminal offences as well as creating a nuisance for local residents. The police are keen to enforce legal use of the BOATs and clamp down on these dangerous activities."

The signs, produced in association with Surrey County Council, are being reinforced by similar leaflets

distributed by responsible vehicular user groups to anyone on the BOATs.

The Police representative, PC Jo Morris, asked that anyone observing illegal vehicular activity in the AONB should note as many descriptive details as possible, and the registration numbers of any vans unloading bikes, and pass them on to the police at this number 0845 125 2222, using the location details and police reference on the signs.





# 250cc YAMAHA SEROW

My 250 Serow was bought in April this year. I admit that when I first saw it in the showroom it seemed to me that it looked 'right' for a trail bike.

I had been riding a Beta Alp 200 (a great little bike) but after a journey on the M6, returning from a day's green laning, I soon realised that travelling on the inside lane at 40-50 mph was not safe! That's when I decided to get a bike with a few more cc's. However it must be low enough to make mounting and dismounting easy, also light enough to pick up from the horizontal (a not infrequent occurrence).

The original Serow has a great reputation and from reading reviews, the 250 version sounded just right for me. The seat is comfortable, even after a long day's riding. Also, on a sensitive note, a friend said "go on fire it up" to which I replied "it's running" ie it is very QUIET.

The bike starts on the button first time, hot or cold, however this is just as well as there is no 'kick starter'. It has Fuel Injection, so there is no petrol tap to forget to turn on or off. Another 'new' feature for me, the rear tyre is tubeless, not sure if this is good or bad. The riding position is just right for me and the suspension soaks up the bumps just fine. I haven't worked out the MPG yet, however I fill it up after about 120 miles. This you have to convert from kilometers as the 'speedo' is not converted. (I multiply the kilos by 6 to get an approx figure) Since April I have done 4,300 kilometers (2,500 mls).

On the trail the performance is fine for my style of riding i.e. slow and steady. It takes climbs with gusto and I find its happy 'chugging' away in 2nd or 3rd.

Danny Gelder (Lancs TRF)

# OUT AND ABOUT

Four likely lads, from Lincolnshire, arrived in Hawes for two days trail riding. The weather was warm and the rain had just stopped hence the mist in the valleys and on top of the hills.

The "London weather forecast" said the mist would disperse to bring a sunny day. Weather forecasters, £40,000 a year for telling pork pies.

The trails were green and stoney. The Autumn leaves were falling producing a wonderful but potentially lethal display of ground cover. reds, orange, yellow and green, a kaleidoscope of colour, that warmed the heart. Hardly a walker in sight. Only a few of the die hards (the friendly ones) were to be found, who waved appreciatively as we slowed down to pass. The mutual smiles said it all. Isn't it great to be out and about.

The bikes were a real mixture. An XR 650 ridden by Paul, a 520 KTM with Jeremy on board, a 450 Beta piloted by Rick, a 250 CRM, two smoke, the choice of Fred and me on a Yam WR 250 F.

These lads were good trail riders in the fact that you could not tell, from the relatively low level of noise, which were the big thumpers and which were the smaller capacity bikes. It was all down to the wrist action. Even a 650 can be ridden quietly and it was.

Again it is all down to attitude. Are you out there to impress your mates with wheelies, leaving stripes and generally revving the guts out of the bike, regardless of all other users or have you got the message: low profile, quiet riding, consideration of others and enjoying the scenery.

If you haven't got time to look at the flora and fauna and admire the landscape, you are going too fast. Trail riding is not for you and you ought to join an Enduro club. Trails, nowadays, are not the place to race, they are

far too public and we are under too much scrutiny not to adopt a responsible riding style, one which acknowledges all other users.

Hear endeth the first lesson.

Meanwhile, back on the trail, arm pump and vibration white finger were the order of the day. The lads found out that the Dales are a far cry from the mud and field lanes in Lincolnshire. We did a ninety mile loop from Hawes to Masham and back. Not that all the lanes were stoney. Some lanes do have a grassy base and were a welcome respite from the constant jaring. Mind you, when we did ride the grass, it was like ice in places. The back end was twitching at twenty mph. The lads remarked that the Dales were the only place where, after a days riding, the bikes were cleaner than when they had started.

Arriving in Masham for lunch, still shrouded in mist, we picked up some petrol and parked outside the Sunchaser Cafe. The food and coffee is great, so are the young ladies who serve them. Rick shot off for some Fish & Paddle. Paul did his own thing, Jeremy and Fred ordered sandwiches and I settled for a coffee.

The cafe is run by "Hippies" and welcomes all comers.

A group of special needs children arrived just as we were leaving and were well cared for.

We headed for the Red Way via the Coal Road, which was in magnificent condition, thick grass, rabbits and pheasants by the

dozen. Then on to the Grouse Moors via Carlton, Stake allotments and Hawes.

The Dales are still littered with notices, of dubious legality, designed to intimidate and deter any riders without an intimate knowledge of the latest legal status of the lanes.

I have often thought of removing the notices since it gives some walkers and landowners cause to doubt the legality of our presence and fuels the anti-trail riding attitude of the few who would ban us altogether.

Then I thought if they serve to deter the casual/non-TRF riders maybe they are a good thing.

The only challenge on the day was at Cubeck where the farmer's son (fifty years old) gently tested the water, as we exited the lane, past his farmyard.

I had already warned the lads we may have an encounter. The "old farmer and his wife" believe everything the Parks tell them. They have never thought that the Park, as an Authority, might be "economical with the truth". Like so many ordinary folk in the Dales, they believe every word the Rangers tell them. The son, who I have met before, is a little more tolerant.

Anyway the conversation went like this: "Since when did you have the right to ride down here? For the last thirty years, as far as I know", I replied.

"That's not what Parks an't Police say".

"There are illegal notices all over the Dales" I told him. "The Parks blanket noticed just about every lane, a few years back and it would cost about £60,000 to take them to court and prove the point, so it is not worth it".

"I read you HAD taken them to court".

"Yes and we won. We had to make a stand in that particular case because they had imposed unjustifiable Traffic Regulation Orders on several lanes, which are legal notices and must be obeyed".

"Well go steady then" and he turned away. Once he had sussed out I knew what I was



talking about he was satisfied and went back to work.

It is good to hear that the case against the Dales National Park, has got round the locals. Made me feel warm inside.

At the top of the Cam Road the lads declined a loop round Dodd Fell, as the light was fading and we made our way back to the petrol station in Hawes.

I told them that there was only half a day's trail riding left in the Dales without doing lots of road miles between lanes and offered to take them to the Lakes, which is only thirty miles away from Hawes.

The offer was accepted and we duly met next morning at Tebay.

The first Lane, Breast High Road, will be a bit of a baptism of fire, I told them. I did not realise how prophetic that statement would be.

During the last month a massive cloud burst must have occurred, that had washed out the

road and scattered hundreds of tonnes of moraine all over the rough pasture by the side of the road making the ascent very difficult. This road had been regraded using a JCB two years ago but the cross drains were totally inadequate to cope with the deluge. A great shame.

If only the contractors would concentrate on drainage channels and cross drain, instead of dumping hundreds of tonnes of loose stone in the road, washouts like this would not be so frequent. End of lesson two.

Forty minutes later the scattered, panting, bodies assembled at the top of the climb. Some were worse than others after the experience. Some had drunk more than others the night before. Once they had gained their composure I took their photograph.

Onward into the heart of the Lakes. The golden pine needles and magnificent beech leaves lining the lanes and lakeside roads were a joy to behold.

When we reached the ferry, to cross Windermere, it was closed. Great disappointment. I always look forward to the break. It was a ten mile detour via Newby

Bridge before ascending the only legal lane left in the Grisedale Forest.

Fred and Rick had to leave early so we headed for Hawkshead for lunch and then parted. A shame since most of the best lanes were covered in the afternoon but they said they were well pleased with the lanes they had done and were happy to call it a day. Duty called!!

Down to three, we covered the area around Oxen Park, High Ickenthaite, Parkamoor and the Langdale loop via Snipe Fold before running out of time and steam. We returned to Kendal where Paul and Jeremy peeled off to Hawes via Sedburgh, after an enjoyable, if somewhat wet ride. Yes they rode over to Tebay, on there big trailies. I returned to Tebay and trailered back to Saltburn.

Another couple of days on the trails without any mishaps. Well, we all binned it at some point but without real damage to bike or body. If you do not fail at some point you have not been challenged enough.

Soon it will be Winter. Can't wait for the snow.

John Robinson,  
Teesside & North Yorks TRF Group

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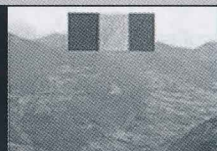
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# 2009 KAWASAKI KLX 250

In January this year I took delivery of a Kawasaki KLX250 2009 Model. It was to replace my Beta Alp 200 which lacked the necessary pulling power for my 16.5 stone person!! Running in on the road I found the bike to be spot on, it handled well and I was more than pleased with my choice, apart from it being a bit tall. More of this later. After the bedding in period a venture off road and I soon found that 1st Gear was on the high side. I felt a 13 tooth engine sprocket would do the job as 6th Gear was quite long so top speed would more than likely not be affected.

Problem, Kawasaki did not list a 13 tooth and nor did any of the usual well known chain & sprocket people until the very helpful lady at B&C gave me the phone number of JB Gears at Wetherby, Tel. 01937 845030. I spoke to John Brown and he said he would see if he had a suitable 13 tooth sprocket with the correct spline centre that he could modify, if I sent my original 14 tooth. Better than that I don't live very far from Wetherby so a quick journey down the A1 was made. If he could not find a suitable donor he said he would make one from scratch but of course this then becomes expensive. However my luck was in and he found a donor and 2 days later I had my sprocket, at a reasonable price. It has made 1st Gear really

usable and as the motor revs for England it is quite long. Top speed is unaffected, as far as I am concerned, 70mph at 8000rpm. So job sorted.

The task of lowering the bike was accomplished by lengthening the "dog bone link" on the rear suspension. After a false start, too long, the tyre made contact with the mudguard. I have had manufactured a longer link to the measurement of 125mm between hole centres. This has also resulted in the rear suspension becoming more "plush", leverage changes I suppose. The front forks have been lowered through the yokes as far as possible. I have also removed the small tool bag from the rear of the bike and replaced it with a lifting handle, another inch saved. All this has made quite a difference and I am more than pleased with the result.

My next job is to fit a handlebar with a higher rise to get a more comfortable stance on the pegs. On this matter the pegs are not far enough back but I can not see a solution without major surgery to the frame and foot controls.

The above modifications are relatively cheap to carry out and make a real difference to enable a good Road/Trail bike to become an excellent Trail bike and still retain its Road credentials.

Jack Knoops

## So when is applying "rules" retrospectively OK?

MPs clearly thought it was OK to apply the dreaded NERCA legislation retrospectively thus immediately killing the DTRFG's 200+ BOAT claims BUT, when it comes to applying rules retrospectively to their expenses, the likes of Ann Widdecombe (for whom I have a grudging respect normally) get assy - double standards or what?

From BBC News website "Some Labour MPs plan to object and Tory Ann Widdecombe said she thought it was legally questionable to apply new rules retrospectively."

If this hypocrisy annoys you then why not let your MP know through <http://www.writetothem.com/>

Extracted from the Devon Group Newsletter

# www.trf.org.uk

The national TRF website forum contains ride-reports, advice, RoW information, banter, debate and the chance to hook up with like minded folk for a guided tour of trails you might never find on your own. This article tells you how to register and get a piece of the action. We'll cover registration, verification, logging on & looking around. *Note this isn't about joining or renewing your membership online.*

## Good things come in threes

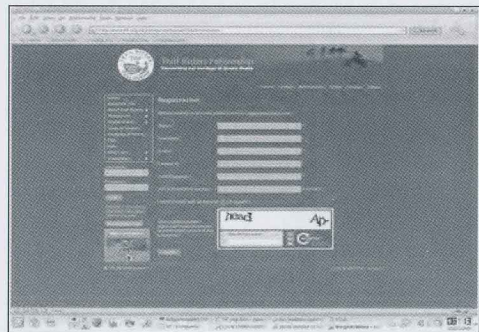
There are 3 things you need to remember before you even begin:

1. The email you register with must match the email address the TRF holds for you on the membership database.
2. The email you register with must match the email address the TRF holds for you on the membership database.
3. The email you register with must match the email address the TRF holds for you on the membership database.

If you're not sure which email the TRF already has for you, drop Debbie a line at [membsec@trf.org.uk](mailto:membsec@trf.org.uk).

## Call Me Reg

Right, now thats sorted, lets get you registered, start here: <http://www.trf.org.uk/component/user/?task=register> by typing this into your web browser. You'll see an online form similar to this one



where you have to enter: Name, Username, Email address (did I mention that **the email you register with must match** ... OK, OK, I did), membership number and a password of your choosing.

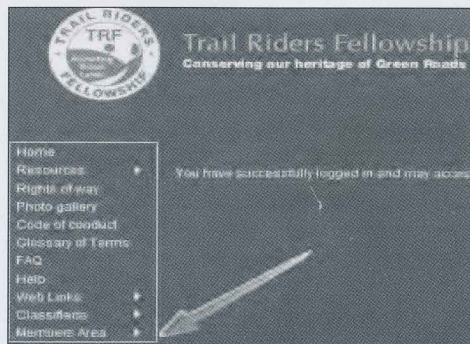
Go ahead and type that in.

Just underneath that form you'll see 2 words in wavy writing. This is to stop Russian porn links being posted, I'll spare you the details but it gives the phrase "TRF Horse events" a whole new meaning ;-). Enter the 2 words in the box provided then click the Register button.

## Verification

Believe it or not there are people on the internet who have nothing better to do than subscribe you to some random service on the web. So, to make sure it really is you that wants to join, the website emails you a verification link. This email goes to the email address you entered above, so make sure you enter this correctly, especially if you're one of those typists that use the "circling eagle technique".

Once this email drops into your inbox, just click on the link. If it doesn't please check your spam folder, the email should arrive within the hour. If all has gone well you should now be able to login with your username and password. If you've logged into the website OK you'll see a new menu option appear on the left called "Members Area".



If this doesn't appear when you're on the

website homepage (note, not the forum), then something has gone wrong. See "Getting help" below. You'll get this new menu item whether you're a member or not so ....

## Drum roll please

Once logged in, you can get to the national forum using the Forum link in the top menu of the website or directly here [www.trf.org.uk/forum](http://www.trf.org.uk/forum)

## Say Hello

The forum is divided into parts, the Public Forum for everyman and woman & his or her, er, horse and the TRF Members Area. If you can't see the TRF Members Area something has gone wrong, see Getting help. A good place to start is The Bar inside the public forum, drop in and say Hi, there's usually a warm welcome waiting. If you're after route info or want to discuss something that could be used by the Antis then the members area is for you, try starting with The Lounge.

## Getting help

If things don't work out there are 2 ways of getting help:

1. Send an aggressive email to the volunteer [it@trf.org.uk](mailto:it@trf.org.uk) pointing out what a pile of \*\*\*\* the site is and ignoring the fact that 1700+ people have successfully registered before.
2. Send a polite email to [it@trf.org.uk](mailto:it@trf.org.uk) asking for help, confirming your membership number.

If you go for option 1 do not be surprised when we eventually point out that the email address you registered with does not match the email address the TRF holds for you on the membership database.

## Conclusion

Whether you just lurk or actively post the TRF forum is a friendly place that provides something for everyone with an interest in trail riding. Give it a go and join us for a natter.

Adrian Allen

# ACU MEDAL OF HONOUR

## Awarded to Ron Carter, Long Time TRF Member and Past Chairman of the Gloucester Group

At the meeting of the National Council held on Saturday 9th May at ACU House, Ron Carter was presented with the ACU Medal of Honour by the ACU President, the Right Reverend John Oliver.

This Award has been recently introduced to recognise the huge contribution and dedicated service that individuals give to the ACU and to motorcycle sport in general. Ron Carter, aged 81, has given 60 years service to the ACU. He left the Army in 1948 and joined the Gloucester and Cotswold Club helping with Trials and Scrambles. In 1950 he joined the Stroud Valley Club, initially as a competitor and has remained one of its stalwart members to the current day.

In 1952 Ron became a Scrutineer and Noise operator. During the following years he helped with British Teams on five occasions at various ISDE's held around Europe. His involvement with all disciplines of the sport at all levels

across many different centres continues as he remains an active Sound Inspector.

Ron is a Vice-President of the Western Centre and President of the Stroud Club. The Western Centre felt it appropriate that Ron be nominated for the ACU Medal of Honour, the first ever recipient of the award. The President was delighted and honoured to be able to present this medal, the first of its kind, in recognition of Ron's dedication of service to the ACU and sport in general. Ron was extremely proud to have received this accolade and thanked everyone for the support given to him.

Gary Thompson MBE BEM





# The Treasure Hunt That Wasn't

Rob Drake, a Devon TRF member, decided to run a paper map based navigation treasure hunt around South Devon after attending two events in Spain and on Salisbury Plain. The idea being to improve map reading and route planning skills while having a good laugh and riding some fabulous old lanes. A lot of hard work went into collecting the data for 78 waypoints (each with a 10 figure grid reference) and a question for each waypoint!! All achieved by Rob!!!

The idea was floated on the Devon group forum (linked from our website [www.trfdevon.org.uk](http://www.trfdevon.org.uk)) and very quickly had 10 teams of three entered. Slightly more than expected for a new venture. The waypoints were e-mailed to each team leader about 3 pm on the Saturday afternoon with the event starting at 9am the following day. What a task! Plotting 78 waypoints spread across 3 map sheets takes a while (2 hrs for me anyway) this is where the troubles began...

By midnight Saturday a few teams had started to drop out for various reasons. Then the weather turned on us as well. I surfaced around 7am to find howling gales and horizontal rain greeting me through the window and looking at the depth of water in the butt of my pickup this had been going on for a while. A quick phone call to Rob to check we were still on turned into a "do we?" or "don't we?" debate before coming to a joint decision to continue in the hope of the weather clearing.

Setting off the two miles down the road from Newton Poppleford to East Budleigh to collect fellow team member Mark I dipped the bonnet of the pick up under the flood water in the first low spot on the road! Whilst loading Mark's bike we were trying to work out why we were standing in the pouring rain with howling gales at 7:45am on a Sunday morning.

The journey down to the start point at Newton Abbot was interesting with debris all over the roads and the wind knocking the vehicle about

on the A380. Arriving at Rob's it was heartening to see we were not the only stupid people about as there were already 4 bikes on the drive. We wandered down to the back door of the house to find them all indoors waving at us and Rob brandishing a large screwdriver. It turned out they were pleased to see us as the handle had come off the inside of the door and they were locked in.

Tea and biccies seemed to be the order of the day while we watched the weather out of the window and debated a plan of action. At 9am, the allotted start time, there was only one full team (mine - can I claim the win?) and one part team present but 10 minutes later there was a rumble outside and another team arrived. The weather was still foul and after more tea and chat it was decided that to waste the effort put into organising the treasure hunt would be foolish. With a low turnout and paper map navigation was going to be very difficult due to the high winds.

So onto plan B then....

A nice gentle bibble around the South Devon countryside was the favoured option. As we were a diverse bunch this was going to be an interesting day. There was a good mix of machinery and experience on show. The runners were

Rob D XR200 monoshock 1981, Grouty KL250, Craig DR350, Martin WR250, Rob M CRF250, Andy CRF450, John WR400, Steve XR440, Mark DRZ400e, Roger WR450

Setting out from Newton Abbot at 09:40, the only plan and map we had was in Rob's head! After a quick pit stop for fuel it was onto the lanes. The first lane of the day gave us an idea of what to expect as it was running with water and the normally docile stream was a raging torrent. We crossed this with the use of the helpfully placed concrete bridge but the drop into the water on the other side was a bit daunting especially when one bike dipped its

handlebars in the water when dropping in!

An hour and 16 miles passed with plenty of lanes before a quick fag stop was called. By this time the rain had passed just leaving a blustery wind. A few badgers had been spotted but nothing to disrupt the flow of the ride which was paced perfectly with lovely challenging conditions to keep you on your toes. On towards Ashburton and the first tester of the day in the form of Dean Steep, a lovely old road starting with a long steep rock climb with a few steps in it then a shallow but slippery rock gully to the top.

A few of the less experienced members were looking a tad nervous at the bottom but after a quick guide to the lane from our run leader they were all grinning like bandits at the top. Although there was a short wait while one member was rescued from the hill.

Plenty more lanes flowed by before we stopped for a splash of fuel and a quick lunch at our most Westerly point in Ivybridge just over 3 hours 45 miles and 30 lanes by this point. Over lunch, talk started of a local rocky lane known as the Devil's Steps which were close by. These vary from one month to the next, sometimes very difficult and others just nicely challenging but never easy...

Sure enough second lane after the stop and we were at the bottom of the Steps with several members having never seen them before. A certain amount of nervous energy was obvious. It's best to leave good space on the steps to allow a clear run but this doesn't help the nerves. But 10 minutes later the whole group was reassembled at the top ready to continue, with no dramas at all.

Another 50 miles and 40 lanes with a

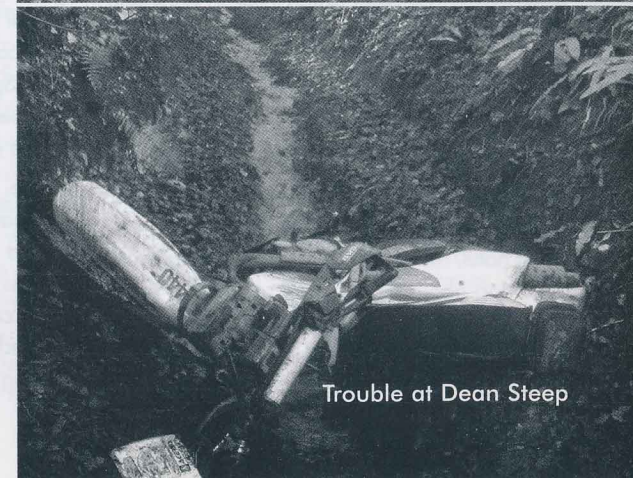
good mix of rocky tight single track mixed in with nasty long ruts, and a few easy ish ones for a rest, brought us back to our start point in Newton Abbot but not before one member managed a rarely seen tarmac badger on the wet leaves.

A fantastic but unexpected days riding in very mixed company but everyone just got on with it and had a blast. 100 miles 70 lanes and 6 1/2 hours all from our leaders head! Cheers Rob - When's the next treasure hunt?

Roger Hart



Fun on the steps



Trouble at Dean Steep

# PYRENEES RIDING

Having decided to try some foreign trails, the Spanish Pyrenees & Andorra were chosen for exploration in June, when the snow had melted from the high passes and before the weather became too hot.

In planning the trip, I tried to obtain information from different website forums (including TRF) with little success. I looked at various websites and found [www.vibration.org](http://www.vibration.org) which offers road books for various countries & areas including several for the Pyrenees which claim to use 60% unsurfaced roads. Although we didn't buy any road books in the end, it is worth a look at the site since it gives an outline of the routes covered & then we referred to detailed maps of the area that we bought in the UK. We used "Rando" series maps scale 1:50,000 from Hereford Map Centre that showed unsurfaced roads marked as "pistes."

The bikes we took were 2 KTM EXC 400's with 13 litre tanks & a KTM LC4 with 18 litre tank. We fitted Bridgestone Gritty tyres on the front & Mitas rears with HD tubes.

After a short crossing from Dover to Boulogne, we trailered the bikes through France aiming for the ski resort of La Molina south east of Andorra which Austin Vince uses as a base for his "Mountain Madness" event. We figured that being out of season there would be plenty of empty rooms - well there were, but nothing was open in the resort. We drove on and noticed a small hotel/restaurant that was open and after enquiring about rooms, were ushered in by the manager David who ordered us a beer, gave orders for beds to be made up & found secure storage for the bikes. It turns out he has a KTM

EXC 530 & proceeded to mark up our maps with trails. We had intended riding one area & moving on but we finished up staying all week & I can't recommend the staff or hotel enough: l'Hostal Escadarcs just south of Puigcerda in the Catalan region. ([www.lhostaldescadarcs.com](http://www.lhostaldescadarcs.com))

We ventured South on unsurfaced roads around Ripoll and North and West along the border between Andorra and Spain. We climbed to over 8,500 feet on the "Pic Negre" above the snow line where there was a fantastic view of St Julia de Loria 5,000 feet below us which was reached by endless switchbacks through the forest. We rode through ski resorts and the classic trail through the abandoned village of Tor on the "smugglers route" from Andorra into Spain (legal route). I was told that the police patrol the passes from Andorra to check if 4x4's are carrying duty free goods out of Andorra into Spain. At the border crossing no one is stopped when entering Andorra but every other car is searched going back into Spain.

There were very few gates which makes a pleasant change although in some areas there are a number of electric wires (cattle fences) across the road which can give a sharp shock if not careful when unhooking & re-fastening. I missed spotting one until too late & finished up sliding down the road but no damage was

done. (That was how Steve McQueen got his bike in "The Great Escape").

The weather started off cold & wet but got hotter as the week went on with one day a sweltering 35 degrees in Andorra. We filled our camel backs with ice to help stay cool.

We had no punctures or problems with the bikes all week, with a total of about 2,000 miles ridden between us. (Except for a missing sprocket bolt which the barman from the hotel managed to obtain a replacement from the local motorbike shop)

The trails are not particularly technical & could easily be ridden by a big trail bike. We saw only one group of trail riders all week although occasionally we came across road bikes on standard tyres which is definitely pushing your luck. Some of the trails are quite remote. and one day we passed a 1000cc Yamaha Fazer parked up minus back wheel - presumably punctured, leaving the owner the best part of 10 miles from the nearest surfaced road.

The locals seemed friendly towards bikers with many people seeming to have a trials or enduro bike tucked away (or used by forest workers & farmers) & always willing to give directions at any opportunity. This backfired on one occasion however when some Spanish walkers indicated we could ride up a track into Andorra but we were stopped by Spanish police in a car coming down the other way. They took our document details & escorted us off the track complete with flashing blue lights with a warning we would have to pay to get our bikes back if we were found where we shouldn't be again. This was in a National Park where we found that a number of trails have been closed in the last year (sound familiar?). It was also evident that many of the



"pistes" shown on the map have been concreted and until the maps are updated its difficult to know what to expect on the ground.

I still consider this an area well worth visiting, but don't leave it too late since unsurfaced trails are being lost all the time. Our trip only took in a small part of the Pyrenees, and since I haven't been to other areas, I can't compare riding the rest of the mountain range. I would welcome any information on riding other areas or any routes from Spain through Portugal.

Ian O'Brien,  
Ribble Valley TRF



## Teesside & North Yorkshire TRF



### 2010 DANCING & CAMPING FUN WEEKEND

TICKET IN ADVANCE EVENT FOR TRF MEMBERS

#### New Location for 2010:

A beautiful valley in the North Yorkshire Moors with Public House serving food & drink. Only the first 40 entries will be accepted. The weekend will offer guided trail rides around the North Yorkshire Moors & music on Saturday night. Families are welcome and there will be a charge for riding members only. Caravans are welcome but there is no electric hook up. Bring your own water. Portable toilets will be provided. Camping starts 12 noon Friday 30th July. Guided trail rides Saturday 31st July & Sunday 1st August 2010. A full English breakfast Sat & Sun will be given to every rider. Breakfasts will be available for purchase from the pub for non-riding family members. Evening meals are available in the pub next to the camping field. Live music will be playing in the pub on Saturday night so you can dance the night away! A raffle will be held at the interval.

**Entry Fee £40.00 made payable to Teesside & North Yorkshire TRF  
DO NOT SEND CASH.**

**Please make Cheques or Postal orders payable to: "Teesside & North Yorkshire TRF"**

There is no pay on arrival at this event with no exceptions. Entrants will receive a pass for the gate in the post with final instructions. You must present your gate pass upon arrival & 2010 TRF membership card. When the event is fully booked cheques will be returned & entry forms retained in case of late availability. Tickets are non-refundable. Entries must be pre paid and pre booked.

#### RIDERS DETAILS

**TRF Membership Number:** ..... **Local TRF Group:** .....

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

..... **Postcode:** .....

**Email Address:** .....

**Home Phone:** ..... **Mobile Phone:** .....

**Bike Make:** ..... **Model:** .....

To help us organise your weekend with a suitable route can you circle your preferred weekend ride:

GREEN: Lots of stops for taking photos, lunch and a steady ride back to the Campsite.

BLUE: Ride at a constant pace with a lunch break.

By signing this entry form I confirm that I have read, fully understand and agree to the indemnifications (see opposite)

**Member's Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

**For further information please contact:  
Richard 07834 632040/Dan 07970 836155 or visit  
<http://nytrf.handzonsitemaker.com/>**

Please send this entry form & £40 cheque with a self addressed stamped envelope to:  
TRF, W.G. Dodds & Son, The Sawmill, Bowesfield Crescent,  
Stockton on Tees, Cleveland, TS18 3HJ

#### Indemnifications

- I confirm that the information in this entry form and the information given is correct.
- I confirm that I understand the nature of the fun weekend I am entering and I am competent to take part.
- I confirm that any vehicle that I use will comply with the highway regulations and be fit for road use.
- I will NOT take part if I have any doubt about my ability or the safety of the venue.
- I confirm I will not hold any run leader or the TRF responsible for any traffic offences that might arise in prosecution such as section 59 or financial penalties. Run leaders will take all necessary precautions to avoid potential prosecutions but neither the local club nor the run leader will be held liable for any traffic or financial penalties imposed on individual riders.
- Before taking part in the event I will read and be bound by and comply with any regulations and final instructions issued by the organisers.
- I will not participate whilst under the influence of alcohol or intoxicating drugs and that if I am taking any prescribed medication I will inform the event organiser and seek approval to participate before taking part.
- That as a participant I may be exposed to the risk inherent in motor sport and that I am prepared to take such risks.
- I further agree that I shall not seek to claim against the TRF, the organisers nor their officials, the land owners, the promoter or other bodies or individuals connected with the event in respect of any damage to my property how so ever caused, and whether by negligence or breach of statutory duty of the said bodies or persons.
- I understand and agree that I am required to register my arrival by signing on at the event control with my gate pass upon arrival.
- That I am fit and not suffering from any physical or mental disability which would impair my safe participation in the meeting and I undertake to inform the organisers immediately should any change in my condition occur which I have reason to or ought to have reason to believe would affect my ability to continue to participate in this fun weekend. I also authorise any hospital or medical practitioner to furnish information relative to my medical condition to TRF.
- I agree it is up to myself, the applicant, to supervise my family around the riverbank and take full responsibility for any accidents that might happen there. THE RIVER CAN BE FUN BUT ALSO HAS A HIGH RISK OF DROWNING.
- I also hereby AGREE that if the applicant should sustain any injury from any cause whilst taking part in the event and as a result bring a claim for compensation against you or the organisers or officials or sponsors or entrants or owners of the venue I WILL INDEMNIFY AND REIMBURSE any sum which you may be required to pay as a result of such claim.

## LOOKING FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

Adventuromania owner Stephen Palmer is offering tours in Scotland over the winter months

Trail riding and enduro type riding near the border on a large area of private land. Riding to suit all levels covering moorland, ditches, river crossings, endless hills, deep valleys, mud, rocky sections. Two days

guided riding, 6 hours minimum per day including accommodation, breakfast and evening meals.

Bring your own bike £200 per rider, minimum party of four riders. November to March.

For further information ring Stephen on 01368 840728

# TO THE LAND of the BURNING RING

Last year I got to thinking about the birthday that I had coming up in August 09 which had a very large zero at the end of it and I thought that I would treat myself to a trip that I had been reading about for a long time. That was a trip done by 'Blazing Trails' to Spiti Valley in the Himalayas and of course was on Royal Enfields. Having made the decision and of course obtained the necessary permission, I asked around to see if anybody else was interested. Two came forward but in the event only one took up the challenge and that was Kevin Smith who lives in Yapton and belongs to the TRF as I do.

Having booked it up in October 08, it seemed a never ending wait for September this year to come around. Finally, with tickets clutched in our hot sweaty little hands we boarded the plane at Gatwick for takeoff at 10.00 with the sixteen others who were taking part in this trip. Seven hours later we landed in Dubai at 20.00 where we were on the ground for two hours and then another three in the air to Delhi where the time was 02.45. All gets a bit confusing.

By now we were starting to get to know our fellow adventurers and this was helped as we then had to wait in the airport until 06.00 as we were told that it was better/safer to wait in the airport than to wait at New Delhi railway station. At 06.00 we were collected by the Blazing Trails rep and loaded on to a bus of

questionable vintage and the first part of the most eye opening trip that I have ever undertaken started to unfold. Where does one start? In no particular order, the amount of traffic, people, dirt, squalor, animals, decrepit buildings, beggars, pavement stalls selling anything you can name, and some very dodgy looking wiring hanging like Christmas tinsel from anything above ground level. The ride took about an hour and then we saw just why we waited in the airport and not the station. Moving on. The rep found the carriage which had all our names on a piece of paper stuck to the outside, and we loaded up all our bags in to the compartment. Sound easy? Well by now we were all sweating like never before, being pushed and shoved from all directions and moving bags which now seemed far heavier than the 20Kg that we had packed. Then we got the good news, the train had air conditioning and it worked. There is a god then.

The journey to Kalka took some five hours but we never stopped being overwhelmed by the passing sights. By now we had been struck by the fact that even though the people lived in, to us, incredible squalor, the vast majority were clean as were their clothes, with washing hanging from anything that was handy.

At Kalka, like a bunch of kids, we headed for what we had all been looking forward to, the Kalka/Shimla train ride. Should you be interested in trains, then go on to Wikipedia

and look it up. Just a few of the statistics. 2ft 6 inch gauge, completed in 1903, 60 miles long, goes up some 5000ft through 103 tunnels and crosses 864 bridges and takes five hours. Bring it on. So with all the bags loaded into our compartment, we were back on the platform taking photos of everything around us, when all of a sudden the train was unhooked and pulled away. What's going on? There had just been a landslide on to the track and the train would not be running until it had been cleared. This would take about four days. Oh! Bother or words to that effect. All off. One of the lads rang Suzie the organiser who was waiting in Shimla for us and she told us to get some taxis and she would pay the bill. Six taxi drivers must have thought all their birthdays had come at once. Now travelling in a taxi is always a bit of an experience, and this was no exception. A three hour white knuckle ride. Beats the hell out of Alton Towers. We arrived in Shimla at 18.00 and were met by the Blazing Trails team. Suzie Lumsdon, the owner of the company, her new husband Damon, the medic Dr Ove, Kevin an out rider, Jamal and Ranji the mechanics, Kamal the driver of the jeep with all the spares on/in it and Farook the driver of the baggage van. The following morning we all had to meet up at 09.00, well 09.20 then as Suzie's time keeping was always off the mark, and we set off for the government office which was to issue us with a special visa. This would allow us in to the territory which goes up to the Chinese border. It was thought that this process would take all day, but in the event we were all done and dusted by 11.00 and we had the rest of the day to look around Shimla. Seeing bazaars on tele does not prepare you for the real thing in any way shape or form. The tradesmen, beggars, repairers of umbrellas, shoes, pots and pans, dentists, barbers, sellers



of spices, fruit and veg, cloth, cement, building materials, booze, computers.

You name it, it was there to be bought. Me and Kevin spent ages just soaking it all up and in fact we got lost and only just made it back to the hotel in time for Suzie's talk at 18.00.

Suzie has been in India for some twenty years and started up B/T about six years ago and runs approx 12 trips in the Himalayas each year. With this much experience behind her and her new husband, we were surprised to hear her say in her do's/don't speech, "don't keep stopping to take photographs as this will hold up our progress and please don't ask questions when we stop as we have heard all the questions before and the answers are all in the hand book". NOT. The policing of this would be done with a yellow and red card system. Yellow for the first offence, red for the next and then you are off the bike and in the jeep for the rest of the trip. This was also to cover bad/dangerous riding. Hang on a minute. Who has just paid who the thick end of three grand for this? But in true British spirit nobody said anything. But we thought and talked a lot amongst ourselves and in the event we did much as we wanted. Well I did anyway. One slightly disconcerting statement

made us sit up and take notice. "Don't go over the edge as we may never find you". And she wasn't kidding either. She then described the way to drive in India.

The horn is king. Coming up behind a vehicle, going in to a corner or seeing a vehicle coming towards you, you must keep beeping. Listen for a beeping horn behind you as that means that you are about to be overtaken. Watch your mirrors all the time. If the vehicle coming towards you puts his lights on and keeps them on then that means he has his foot to the floor and he is going to keep it there and it is not coming off for you or anybody. All this is friendly and normal. However if the horn button is held down, then this is aggressive. When you come up behind somebody and you keep beeping your horn they will put on their right hand indicator. This does not mean that as you get along side he will turn right and have you off, as in the UK, it means that he is ready for you to overtake on his right side. Lorry and bus drivers will give you hand signals as well on the mountain roads where most bends are blind, and they do, and it all works. Riding along Worthing seafront will never be the same again. We were also asked for 3 thousand Rupees each (£38) to pay for all the food and drinks we would be consuming on the road. The next day we got the bikes which are 500cc Enfields. All have disc brakes on the front, road tyres and turned out to be about 20 years old. Right ho! All be at reception at 9.30.

#### Riding day one:

So at 10.00, Suzie and Damon appeared without a word, got the bikes sorted out and off we set. After about ten miles when we started to get out of the town and get a bit of speed up, I noticed a rumbling coming from the front end. That will be the front wheel bearings then. Horn not much cop either. I

stopped and hand signalled as instructed and waited for the mechanic to arrive. Oh! that's ok he says. No its not says I. If that locks up and has me off I will not be very impressed. Ok, take my bike he says. I did. I was now at the back of the group and I was riding on my own with just photo journalist Dan Walsh for company. Dan was just along for the ride and was acting as an unpaid out rider and had stopped just to keep me company until Jamal the mechanic arrived. You must have all had rides at some time in your life, that will stick in your memory for ever. Well, for me and Dan that was one of them. Some of the best tarmac and bends of the whole trip and we had only just got started. OK, it was on a 20 year old Royal Enfield and the top speed was never above 60k, but on those roads with those blind bends, enormous drop offs and the traffic, it was fast enough. It could not have been better on anything else.

Some ten miles up the road we stopped for

chai and Jamal took the front wheel out and the centre of one of the ball race's and the balls fell out. Mummmm! With new bearings in and the horn fixed we were off once again to the lunch stop and our first introduction to a small village cafe and the 'delights' of genuine Indian food. Not bad at all really. I am not a fan of Indian food as served up in the UK, for me it's far too hot and spicy, but this was far more palatable. I had made the decision before we left home, that I would not eat any meat and only drink bottled water, having first made sure that the seal on the cap was sound. This worked for me for the whole trip and Delhi belly or the Shimla sh\*\*s was not something that affected me at all. It did others and one in particular is now visiting his Doctor back home in Scarborough.

The excitement for the afternoon came, when a couple of jack the lads in some small Indian car, decided to overtake four of us on bikes and four cars in front of us, all in one go. He nearly had Steve off on our leading bike, but he got his comeuppance when he went for the four cars in front not realising that the lorry coming the other way, was A) not going to slow down and B) was not going to move over either. The resulting shower of shrapnel was quite impressive. He hit the lorry just behind the front wheel just as he had cleared the front car. This spun him across the road with his horn blaring nonstop. Dan, who was in our group, shouted 'keep going' which we did, as did the lorry.

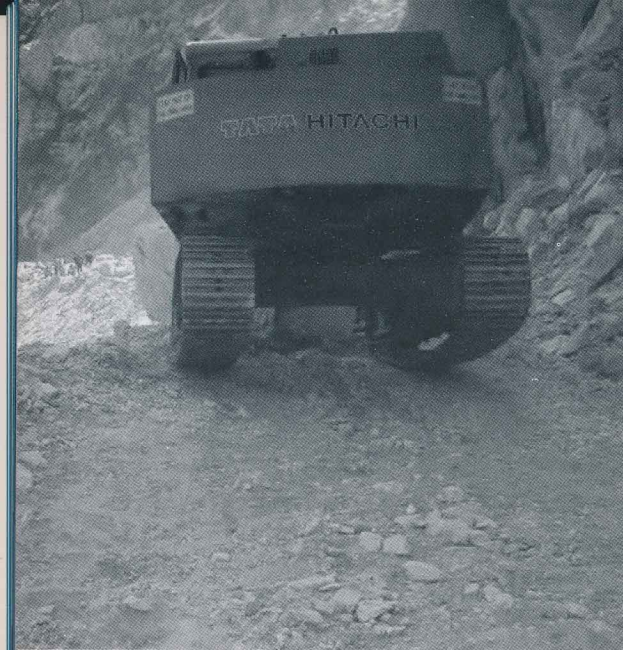
The night was spent in a 600 year old monastery in Sarahan, which is a small hill top village. Yes it was a bit basic but this was the sort of thing that we had come for. A real piece



of India. We had time before it got dark to have a walk around the village and we were told that if we wanted to go into the monastery proper we must remove our shoes, socks and anything that was made of leather, like belts/thongs etc: This we decided to save until the morning. 169Km today.

#### Riding day two:

Breakfast in a local cafe where the food was good and very fresh as we were in the same room as it was made. Late start at 11.00, sorry, that should be 11.30, as we only have 95k to do today to get to Sangala. Cor! What a 95k. Mostly dirt roads full of pot holes, covered in thick dust, mud at times, running water and mostly just hanging to the cliff face. Gulp! We also had an hour and a half wait as there had been a landslide and it was not yet cleared. Watching the clearing was an education in itself. We were now just below the tree line, which meant that we could see a lot of snow capped mountains. Fabulous scenery. That night we stayed in tents. Well, I say tents but they were very grand tents. This was one of the government run refuges that are dotted



for lunch and bad news from Suzie. The road ahead was closed due to a big landslide and we had to stay put for 24hrs . Well it could be worse, the sun was out and we were in a lovely spot, so five of us went for a walk down the side of the river. When we stopped for a rest we were in an apple growing area and there was a big sign saying that it was forbidden to pick them. We settled on a big rock by the river and Kevin noticed that an old lady was walking towards us. She stopped and turned off in to the orchard. When she reappeared she had an apple for each of us as a gift. When we asked if we could take her photo, she first took her hat off and patted her hair in to order and then indicated that it was ok to do so. What a lovely lady and gesture. Watched

'Indian Vultures` circling overhead. Well that's what we were told they were. Not moved today.

around India and have all mod cons, but not as we know them. The shower head is only about 18inches above the ground and you have a bucket and jug to wash in. As the loo is hooked up to a septic tank you are asked to put all your used paper into a bucket which has no lid. Moving on, it was all very comfy and cosy and the weather still brilliant.

Camp fire for soup and drinks and then into dinner. Not silver service you understand, but a very good help yourself job. Finally back to the tents for bed and deep joy, they have put hot water bottles in for us. 95k today.

### Riding day three:

We spent the morning in Sangala village and the surrounding area finding out how they grind their buck wheat with water powered wheels. This seems to be the substitute for corn. The Temple is being rebuilt after being burnt down in 1998. Its all wood, and they are rebuilding it as it was complete with some very erotic wood carvings. I had to throw Kevin in the stream to cool him down. Back to the camp

### Riding day four:

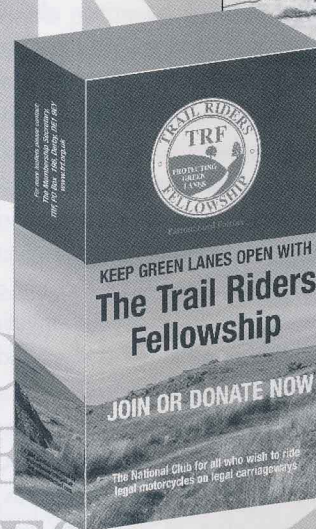
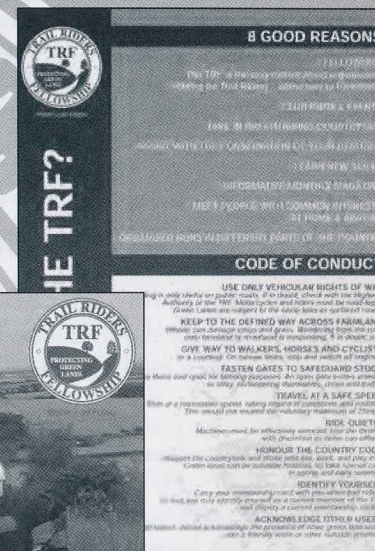
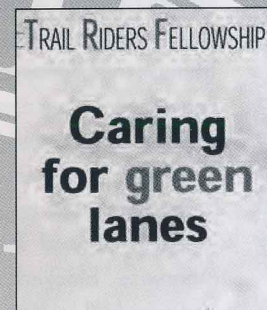
We wait and wait. No news from Suzie, in fact we did not see her from last mid evening until lunch time the following day. However we were off at 13.30. What a fantastic ride to Kalpa. Mostly dirt roads, alongside rivers, passing dams under construction, high passes, dust and running water. We had a wait of about 30 mins as there had been a landslide and they were just finishing clearing it. There was lots and lots of evidence of recent landslides and that is what we were riding over, not tarmac. Finally up and up a long long road which was just one hairpin after another to the 1 star hotel which was just below the snow line. Fantastic ride. 59k today

To be continued...

John Grew

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# POSTBAG

## BRIAN THOMPSON

I have the fondest memories of BGT (as Motorcycle Sport readers will remember him) despite his perverse aversion to FFs.

As I pointed out to him myself, he was actually a closet 'FFer' himself without actually realising it, what with the forward footrests he fitted to his Honda.

I shall never forget riding his Honda CB400Automatic with its standard throttle mounted on the left handlebar so that you had to twist it away from you to make it go.....And I daresay he always remembered riding my fairing-less Flying Banana round a car park.

(Brian had a bad accident with a sidecar outfit which left him permanently slightly disabled in both arm and leg, hence the modifications to his own machines)

I last saw him up in Hexham about 20 years ago, when he was working for Northumberland Council as their Rights of Way officer saving green lanes.

He had a twinkle in his eye like a teenager, having found new love with a new woman.

I'm sure that many of the lanes I rode last Spring on the Rally of Discovery NE were only open thanks to his efforts.

I'd been meaning to get back in touch for ages, and now it's far too late.

Thank you Brian, you were one of a kind.

Tempus Fugit, Cape Diem!

Paul Blezard

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## BRIAN THOMPSON FIRM, FAIR BUT FIERY

When I first joined the TRF it was a small cabal of rather earnest but friendly folk of whom Brian Thompson was a prime example. Although I lived in London then I did most of my trailriding in Wales, often travelling down there with a tent strapped to the back of my Triumph (men were real men then etc., etc.) so I only met him once or twice as there were few regional groups and TRF meetings took place mainly in the home counties. But I do recall being impressed by Brian's fervour over the state of many of the lanes - overgrown or otherwise blocked up - a characteristic undiminished by time.

Much else has and will be written about this since his death, and I can only add that having known him so long, albeit punctuated by some 25 years when I was not a TRF member, I found it both reprehensible and rather sad that his passion was increasingly regarded by some in the organisation as inappropriate, irksome, and even counter-productive. Perhaps this was because of the manner of its delivery: outbursts at executive meetings, lengthy e-mails fired off to TRF officers and not always coherent pieces in Trail that often contradicted conventional policies. But we now know that in part this was a consequence of his knowledge that he was dying and thus had little time remaining to right the wrongs inherent in the RoW situation as he saw them. But even if this frustration wasn't shared by those he sometimes criticised, the substance behind it should not have been dismissed as

easily or in some cases patronisingly as it was.

I know I myself might be accused of boat-rocking in this regard and this is perhaps because we shared some criticisms of TRF policy (e.g. an uneasy alignment with the 4X4 movement) and thinking on forward strategy (e.g. rejecting bold approaches to increase membership, revenues and public profile). But however disagreeable or even wrong these views may've seemed to some, and however abrasive his manner in later years, there is no arguing the integrity of his beliefs or the intellectual rigour on which they were founded... intellectual rigour being distinctly unfashionable in today's world of reactive politics and instant digital polemic. I'm also sure that Brian was far more in touch with rank and file trailriders' opinions than many of us who'd been active in the TRF for a much shorter period.

For these two reasons if no others we must mourn the passing of a great man in the UK rights of way movement, a man who believed in fairness under the law but also the need for fair law, which are not the same thing and which drove much of Brian's arguments and activities. As such, the TRF has lost a tireless tower of strength and the repository of much knowledge and experience that it will be impossible to replace. For the movement's sake I hope I am wrong, but I don't see how he can be replaced - something which he pragmatically rather than proudly hinted at increasingly in these last few years when he knew he was dying.

The best we can hope for is that others will be inspired by what he did, and even the manner in which he did it, and step forward to try and fill the void that he leaves.

Mark Williams

## £5000 REWARD

On Friday 16th October we had a PR launch for our Motocross school and the launch of the amazing new Honda CRF 250R at the Fat Cat Motocross Parc near Doncaster.

It was a brilliant day and we were all very proud to be part of it. The media loved the school and the bikes. Our first school with the new bikes was due to be on Tuesday and we were good to go after an excellent first outing.

Sadly, that night, we were the victims of an organised crime ring. The bikes were followed back to their storage place (an hour away) and 8 of them were taken later that night. They went to great lengths to get to these bikes and we are pleased to say no one was hurt. However, things could have been very different (and very nearly were!).

We have not given up on these bikes just yet and we are asking all of you for your help to stamp on these guys who have tried to steal the heart out of our business. They nearly succeeded but we are not finished with yet.

These bikes are rare as they have just been launched in this country (by us that day!!). They are fuel injected CRF 250R's. The old version was not fuel injected.

We are offering a reward of £5000 to anyone with information leading to a conviction or the return of the bikes. If you require any further information or have any, then please contact me on my mobile 07809 464050.

In the meantime we are working hard to ensure business as usual.

Help us catch the thieves!

Steph & Mick

Mick Extance Off Road Experience

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# MEMBERS CLASSIFIEDS

**SUZUKI 250** 1999 off roader. Tax MOT. £1200. **Yamaha TTR 250** 1999 trail bike new MOT. £1400. Tel: 01403 700279 (West Sussex).

**TTR 250** 2004 4100 miles MOT Aug, Tax April 2010. Excellent condition except for tank graphics bubbling. Little trail use. £1950. Tel: 01792 298009 (S. Wales).

**CCM 404 DUAL SPORT** 2004 bike 1,200 genuine miles. Reliable Suzuki DRZe engine, key ignition & electric start, WP suspension & Brembo brakes. Proper dual sport bike ideal for the weekends trail riding & daily commute. Low maintenance bike, never raced, superb condition. All plastics changed & seat to all black to match black rims. Bash plate, frame guards & handguards. All black, reliable & clean bike, v. low miles. £2,650.00. Call 07530 844445 or email glennfozard@hotmail.com

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**HOLIDAY LODGES IN MID WALES** (owned by member). Ideally suited for motorcycle enthusiasts. Large site with safe, secure hard standing for bikes and trailers. Utility/boot room in all, fully equipped workshops for those essential repairs. Self catering or provision for grocery supplies and home cooked meals delivered to your door. Excellent rates for TRF members. See our website: www.radnor-revivals.co.uk or telephone 01597 840308 for a brochure and information.

**ANNEXE BED & BREAKFAST** Staylittle, near Llanidloes, Powys. Sleeps five (six possible). Separate drying room. Right of way information & guides available, trail bikes provided (only with guide). See www.trailrides-wales.com/stayinwales.html or phone 01686 430522.

## 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, 7.30 p.m., The White Swan, Elsworth Road, Conington, Cambridge CB23 4LN.

**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** Jim Harrison, Tel: 07747 758323  
2nd Tues, 8pm, Londesborough Arms, Market Weighton.

**ESSEX** Cliff Eves, Tel: 07515 330423  
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** John Fox, Tel: 01462 811654  
2nd Wed, 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** Nigel Jeffrey Tel: 07901 776700  
2nd Tues, 8.30p.m. for 9pm,  
The Moat Pub, Wrotham, near Brands Hatch.

**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** Eddie Mace, Tel: 07973 721059  
2nd Thurs, Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading.

**MANCHESTER** Phil Kinder, Tel: 07809 647293  
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.

**NORTHUMBRIA** Nic Gilbert, Tel: 07931 838587  
1st Wed, 8pm, The Staffs Club, Blaydon, NE21 4JB.

**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, The Gladiator Sport & Social Club, 263 Iffley Road, Oxford, OX4 1SJ, next to Motorworld VW Garage.

**PEAK DISTRICT** Steve Cartwright, Tel: 01782 848034  
1st Thurs, 8pm, The Joiner's Arms, Church Road, Quarndon, 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** Colin Lindstrom Tel: 07818 404240  
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 Monday, 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** Last Tues, Corner House Pub, Commercial Street, Ystalyfera, Swansea.

**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**  
Harry Nicholson, Tel: 01642 657063.  
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, 8.00pm, Cue Gardens, Stadium Mills, Stadium Road, Bradford BD6 1BJ.

**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.

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