

GROUPS

BRISTOL
Richard Tallon, Tel: 0249 715426
2nd Monday, Tennis Court Inn, Deanery Road (A420), Kingswood. 4th Friday; Social Night - Tel. for location.

CAMBRIDGE
Howard Biddle, Tel: 0223 232879
1st Thursday, Golden Ball, Foxworth

CHESHIRE
J. Johnson, Tel: 061 427 6963
2 & 4 Monday, The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport

CORNWALL
Roger Fogg, Tel: 0726 67198
3rd Thursday, Ring Secretary for details.

CUMBRIA
Roger Harris, Tel: 0539 725198
2nd Wednesday, Albert Hotel, Bowness on Windermere

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE
David Bonsall, Tel: 0742 748688
2 & 4 Tues. Erfield Arms, Broughton Lane, Attercliffe, Shefld.

DEVON
Richard Arcsott, Tel: 0803 612950
2nd Tuesday, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton Abbott

DORSET
Pete Boyce, Tel: 0305 783210
1st Tuesday, The Royal Oak, Bere Regis

EAST MIDLANDS
Graham Chinnery, Tel: 0332 863433
2nd Wednesday, Three Horseshoes, Hemmington, Nr. M1 Junct. 24

EAST SCOTLAND
Les Mollison, Tel: 0382 738530
2nd Wednesday, Glencarse Hotel, A85, Perth to Dundee Rd

EAST YORKS.
Dave Barratt, Tel: 0977 672402
2nd Wednesday; Kellingley Social Centre, Knottingley.

ESSEX
Neil Gamble, Tel: 0245 461643
4th Tuesday, The White Horse, Old London Road, Widford, Chelmsford

GLOUCESTER
Ron Carter, Tel: 045 382 2707
1st Tuesday, Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.

HERTFORDSHIRE
Alan Vincent, Tel: 0923 775263
1st Wednesday, Coach & Horses, Newgate Street, Nr Cuffly

ISLE OF WIGHT
Mick Holbrook, Tel: 0983 866361
Last Thursday, Liberal Club, Longford Rd, Shanklin, I.O.W

KENT
Nick Moon, Tel: 0322 862855
2nd Tuesday, Pied Bull, Farningham, Nr. Brands Hatch

LANCASHIRE
Keith Westley, Tel: 0704 893215
1st Tuesday, Hindshead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard

LINCOLNSHIRE
Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 0529 60793
4th Thursday, The Mall, Woodhall, Spar

LODDON VALE
Don Lewis, Tel: 0252 616359
2nd Thursday, The Lamb, Theale, Berkshire

NORFOLK & SUFFOLK Stephen Canning 0359 31018
Last Wedne. Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd. Bury-St-Eds.

NORTH MIDLANDS
Ray Morse, Tel: 0785 661543
1st Tuesday, Leek Area - Contact group rep (above)

NORTHUMBERLAND
Dave Vaughan, Tel: 091 529 3202
3rd Tuesday, Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton

NORTH WALES
John Mills, Tel: 0477 34425
1st Wednesday, Hope & Anchor, Ewloe Place, Buckley,

SHROPSHIRE
Steve Rodenhurst, Tel: 0952 244161
2nd & last Wednesday, The Bell, Crosshouses, Shrewsbury

SOMERSET
Peter Banks, Tel: 0749 86396
Last Thursday, The Canallnn, Wrantage

SOUTHERN
Euan Harrison, Tel: 0962 733781
3rd Wednesday, The Priory Inn, Bishops Waltham, Hampshire

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY
Brian Wright, Tel: 081 669 4214
9pm Every Wednesday, Epsom & Ewell F.C., West St, Ewell

SOUTH WALES
G. Jones, Tel: 0239 810255 - Meets to be arranged

SOUTH WALES (WTRA),
Bill Kershaw, Tel: 0633 895241

SUSSEX
Bevis Billingham, Tel: 0243 585128 *Last Thursday, Ashing on Soc. Club, Rr. of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles N. of Worthing*

TEESIDE & NORTH YORKS
Leo Crone, Tel: 0325 380117
1st & 3rd Wednesday, Blacksmiths Arms, Swainby.

THAMES VALLEY
Bob Williams, Tel: 0344 24958
3rd Monday, District Arms, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middlesex

WEST ANGLIA
David Knight, Tel: 0933 313816
1 & 3 Thursday, Scott Bader Clubhouse, Opp. Parish Church, Woolaston, Wellingborough

WEST MIDLANDS
Dennis Hayter, Tel: 0527 23550
1 & 3 Thursday, Duke of Marlborough, Studley, Warks.

WEST YORKSHIRE
Gordon Carr Tel: 0535 644568
1 & 3 Thursday, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd.), Odsal, Bradford

WILTSHIRE
Bill Riley, Tel: 02216 3811
1st Tuesday, The Toll House, Holt, Trowbridge

WYVERN
Gwyn James, Tel: 0902 763824
Every Thursday, Hill & Cakemore Ex-Servicemen's Club, Victoria Road, Blackheath



TRAIL

MAY 1992

No. 166

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

EDITOR: Mike "Nettlebed" Pedley.



Dave Giles and Mike Pedley near Nottingham discussing the next Bulletin. Or are they lost?

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Try to make it interesting! . . . All contributions to the Editor
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HONDA XL250S 1979. £300 inc. spare frame & front wheel. (0305) 848468. Dorset. David Greenslade.

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1988 ITALJET Trials bike. 350 ohv. Regd. by Swansea as a 'Morris' (Unique i'nt it?). Stolen when 1 week old! Completely dismantled since recovered. £150 ono 0405 860904.

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SECRETARY:Ian Thompson, Glebe House, The Square, St. Columb Minor,
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EDITOR

What's the biggest change you've noticed on the trail in the last five years? More ramblers? More confrontation? More signs? Yes maybe some or all of these, but for me its Mountain Bikes and yet more mountain bikes'

The Countryside Commission report on the proposed long distance Pennine Bridleway attempts to estimate the number of mountain bikes - (750,000 were sold in 1989 alone) - their figure is 2.5 million (by the end of 1989) and although no one pretends that all these are used off-road the Mountain Bike Association then had an impressive 10,000 members. By now it could easily be double that and as we the (TRF) are well aware with our membership renewals, there are probably at least twice as many people actively riding than join an official body.

In the-North West we rarely ride without meeting them - and a fine lot they are - out to enjoy the countryside by using our extensive RoW network - though their knowledge of this network may vary considerably.

The Alpine Countries are also "cashing-in" on the mountain bikers. Ski-lift operators are now hiring out bikes in the summer season and shipping riders to the mountain tops for an exhilarating run down - much to the annoyance of "proper" alpine walkers (if Radio 4's holiday programme is to be believed).

Representations have already been made, presumably by our old adversaries the Ramblers) to the Countryside Commission who are now considering imposing a ludicrous 3mph speed limit on the mountain bike. I say ludicrous because in my experience 3mph is about my modest rambling speed' In other words if a mountain bike overtakes you he is probably speeding - but he has no speedo or registration number for that matter - so how could it ever be enforced?

One of the problems is of course ignorance - there are now numerous firms in the Lake District happily hiring out bikes, but without the slightest shred of RoW knowledge (in the form of say a simple route sheet) to the hirer. Frequently he (or she) does not know the difference between footpath, bridleway, RuPP or Byway and because of our RoW signing (or lack of it) and abysmal RoW mapping (OS) conflict is guaranteed.

I appreciate that mountain bikes can legally use bridleways, but in places like the Lakes and Yorkshire Dales, horse riding appears almost non-existent, (I have seen two in five years) and bridleways are thus exclusive to Ramblers until now!

When bicycles were lumped-in with horses, as far as bridleways were concerned, the mountain bike was not even a dream to the likes of Messrs. Raleigh and Co. - now it is their saviour and curtailment would be unthinkable (they even have ads in the quality colour supplements).

None in 1985, 2,500,000 in 1989, how many by 1995? The Countryside Commission must surely be wishing they had a comprehensive system of vehicular RoW's they could now encourage the mountain biker to use - they have of course, but they and other bodies have done their level best to conceal it and reduce it to the extent where it is minimal and unknown to all but a few!

I look forward to watching droves of mountain bikes attempting to balance at 3mph. I'm already practising.

NETTLEBED.

P.S. Keep Off the grouse moors for a month whilst the birds breed.

LETTERS

Stay in a rut

I have been approached by the B.H.S. R.O.W.O. for my area who made an appeal for motorcycle trail riders to ride in already established ruts on green lanes. She went on to explain quite correctly that when motorcycles create a third rut down the middle that either leaves no room for horses or if they do use it, it is made dangerous for the horse. I think this is a point we should all bear in mind, especially as we are all hopefully now in the same B.O.A.T.

(Mrs Kibble has a Fractured Arm)

Roger Bailey R.O.W.O. for Radnor.

Super Sprocket Service

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Chainmail Sprockets for their excellent service. After four weeks of trying to obtain a rear sprocket for my XL 185 Honda through my local Honda Dealer and getting nowhere, I phoned Chainmail on Friday at one p.m. On Saturday at 8.30. a.m. the sprocket arrived and the cost including first class postage, 15p more than the local Honda shop quoted.

Peter Halstead. Nelson. Lancs.

Yorkshire User Evidence

The article by Alan Kind in the April Bulletin about the Middleton Lane Prosecution was one of the most interesting I have read.

In the same vein, there is a lane in Yorkshire on sheet 98 from Hebden, Nr Grassington which goes North up Hebden Gnyl then West to Yarnbury; where riders are being reported to Grassington Police.

Although there is some user evidence, we need stronger evidence (as produced by Alan Kind in his case) to prove once and for all we have a right to be there! I ask therefore that anyone who can help contact Tim Stevens.

Finally Willy Echerslyke's Team scored another first when 'Tosh' was knocked off his bike by a Glider
Happy Riding.

Willy E. Goole. Yorkshire.

12 Volt conversion

Has anyone of our members carried out a conversion from 6 to 12 volts on a TS250 ERX and if so Help! 'Cos I'm halfway and stuck (i.e. all bulbs changed) the bike has been on fire so I'm starting from scratch.

Also does anybody run an Ossa 250 and can give any information on their history (i.e. does anyone still make them) Any service data to -Paul Atkinson. Lincs Tel. 0427 82349.

Thank-you

A big thank you to Bob McConnell, Leo & Dave Crone and Alex who for 3 days over the Easter Break superbly lead Richard and the Lads from the Herts TRF around the

Yorkshire Dales & Moors.

Alex who lead us for the first two days did a superb run, especially as it was his first time as a run leader. The Tea & Scones went down well.

Last of all anyone wishing to do the same type of run, try staying at Ian & Pauline Robinson's Guest House in Middleham, a great base to start and finish your day in the Dales.

Hope to see you all next year! (time to perfect the fried bread Ian)

Best Wishes. Yours Richard & the lads from Herts TRF. P.S. - enclosed a small donation to the fighting fund.

Richard Ogilvie-Herald. Herts.

Too intense

A dose of trivia to dilute the intensity of the mag.

My ten year old son and I have an XL100-ASP (All Spare Parts). During its life it has belonged to a number of Southern Group members, and their sons, and has undergone a few changes - to the extent that it is now more trial than trail. We get a great deal of fun riding this bike Off road and in the process 'the apprentice' has dented his learning curve a few times. I fear he has inherited that gene responsible for human falling off behaviour - although not yet fully developed. (Should a father feel proud or depressed when, after 200m of rutted soft sand - fought all the way; only just staying on; out of breath - he turns to see how far his little lad got, to find him parked along side ?!

Eventually, after a number of stunts that were beyond the capabilities of both bike and rider, the rotten back end of the silencer fell off and, due to a £65 to £85 replacement cost, remained off for sometime. Shamed into action by previous owners I thought I'd make one.

I formed a tube from a section of discarded Land Rover panel - an easily worked aluminium. I found an old solvent tin, with a conical top, and cut the bottom out of it. The box of plumbing fittings was raided and a 15mm/22mm compression joint selected along with a short length of 15mm copper tube.

The copper tube was flattened at one end to seal it and a number of small holes drilled, sufficient to exceed the area of the hole through the compression joint. This tube, wrapped in steel wool, was joined to the compression joint which in turn was fitted through a hole made in the solvent tin screw cap. This 'unit' was then assembled into the bottomless solvent tin. This assembly was pop riveted into one end of the aluminium tube which was secured to the remains of the bike's silencer with a jubilee clip. All seams had a bead of exhaust sealant applied prior to assembly.

The resultant noise levels are on par with the original box but there is a slight hesitation when twisting the wrist whilst the bike is already pulling.

Strangulation or mixture I ask? Mark II will be made with 22mm tube drilled to exceed the area of the 15mm hole but not quite as big as the 22mm. A different packing will be sought. It took about an hours thought and about an hours work - a satisfying little project. Eat yer heart out Micron.

D.Tilbury. Hants.

Memories

When I was a lad of about five or six my father got hold of an old 'Morris', running boards, spare wheel on one side, and a glass temperature gauge on the front of the bonnet and took the family for a ride.

We pulled into a layby on a cliff top west of Teignmouth to take in the view of the sea. After a while I could hear the sound of a bike coming up the hill, and just as it got up to us, it turned up a rough lane on the left. It was a female rider, leather jacket, boots, gloves etc, no helmet, and as she dropped a cog and bored it into a cloud of dust, standing up on the pegs as she did so, boy was I envious, I thought about the scene for a long time.

About three years ago John Gibb and I went down to Torquay for a run led by Dave Needham, he took us down many lanes used in the Exeter Trial, some easy some hard, but the lane I got the most kick out of was, yes you're ahead of me, the lane I saw the female rider on all those years ago, it made my day, although it was easier and shorter than I thought it would be.

Another lane that was notorious in my younger days was Begger's Roosts, North Devon. My uncle who was a rally man told me tales of that one, which I have also rode and got a kick out of it.

But not such a hard kick as you get when you ride Stone Lane Exmoor, now there's a lane and a half, too slow and you could get a refusal, too fast and your butt leaves the saddle followed by the rest of your body, if you're lucky you land on something soft. The giant rounded stone staircase, that's the only way to describe it, fun, but not if you lose your grip, (ask Pete Hitchings).

MJ Troake. Devon.

Suzuki Hybrid

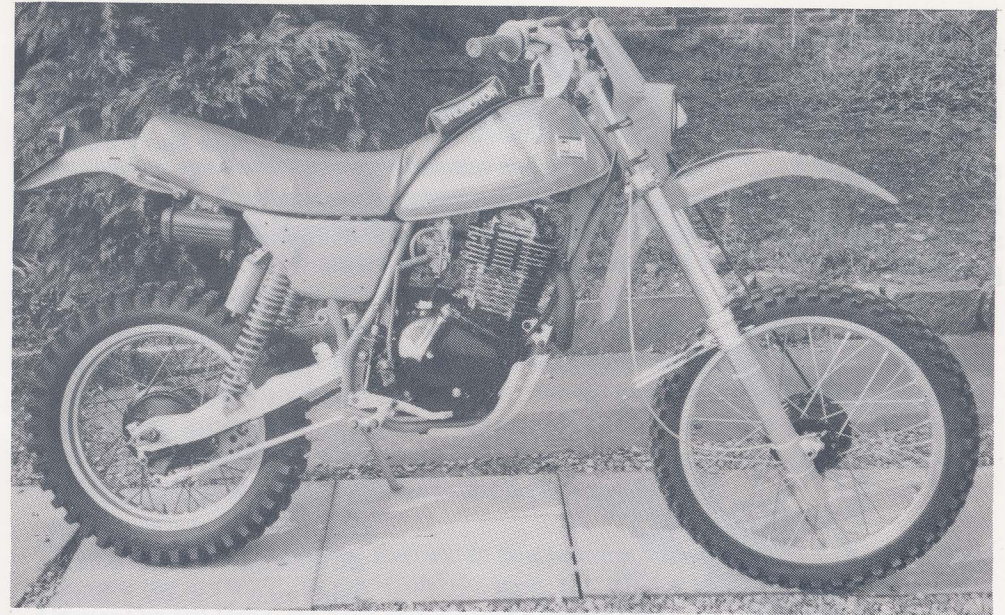
I ask the question, who wants a new Suzuki DR 350 anyway? I do! But for now I will keep my trusty old DR/RM Hybrid. I bought this bike in bog-standard trim, in September 1983, and after a couple of months had altered it to it's present state. Specifications are as follows:-

Frame, engine, petrol tank and seat - Standard DR400. Carburettor - Amal 36mm. Rear swing-arm and rear wheel - RM400T, 1980. 'Ohlins' shock absorbers - Ex 400 Maico. Front fork yokes (using DR400 stem) - RM500E, 1984. Front forks (43mm dia) and wheel - RM 125E, 1984

My 'DRM' 400 has been ridden in many enduros, time trials and 'Haynes' four stroke motocross events, and is now used solely for trail riding with the lads and lasses of the Somerset TRF Group.

And in answer to Mr B Taylor of Huddersfield:-

1. Motocross type tyres, Metzeler "E" Enduro (perfectly road legal, have MOT to prove).
2. Metal petrol tank (standard DR 400)
3. Fitted chainguard (adapted DR 400)
4. Speedo kit (Sammy Miller)
5. Valid VELS
6. Lights and brake light fitted, and working fine (through 6v battery)
7. Legal registration plate (with 2.5 inch letters and numbers)
8. Silencer fitted (with extra baffle plate)
9. Valid insurance (just been renewed, conning S**S!!)
10. Yes, number 10 (you left this one out). A horn (6v electric) just fitted and working.



Sorry Mr Taylor "old bean", but you don't get me sunshine! About your white BMW. Is it a "Malboro" R80GS Paris-Dakar? and-is your real name Gaston Rahier?

Yours Road Legally. P.S. Keep up the good work Ed., the Trail Bulletin is a really good read.

A R Sharp (Yeovil) Somerset

More improvements

A few suggestions that may help to make Trail an even better magazine for trail riders.

1. A regular section from either a knowledgeable rider or a dealer with a particular interest in "off road" on bike preparation. The American mags. do it very well and there are 100's of money and labour saving tips that could be included.
2. More encouragement to members to travel to other groups for rides. Why not have short articles from group leaders describing the terrain in their areas and what sort of day out a newcomer can expect.
3. More listings of actual events.(!) It all seems a little 'clique' at the moment.
4. More debate and suggestions about riding techniques. Standards vary so much and we can all learn from the experience and expertise of others.
5. More illustrations and photographs. I know it could add to the cost but it does make so much difference.

Having run a national motorcycle club for 5 years I know what an uphill job it is to motivate other people to make a contribution. I also realise that higher standards in publishing cost more money.

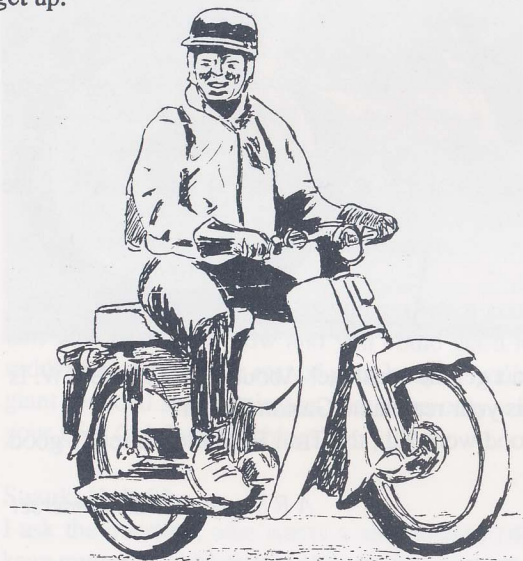
However, the T.R.F. is all we 'off roaders' have to protect and further our pastime. Perhaps we could attract more advertising support more sponsorship and more members if we could make our very worthy magazine more lively.

P.S. The superb picture on the front of the April issue makes my point very well. Publish a few more like that in every issue with some encouraging copy and participation would increase substantially.

Mike Parry. Bucks.

C70 - see sense

Herewith a sketch of your Public Relations Officer. It will not be apparent but the hat and scarf are a matching check tweed. A country jacket and corduroy trousers complete the get up.



The bike is, of course, my C70. What a wally you might say. You might be right. But the point is any person looking like this tends to blend better into the countryside. If a green lane rider tries to make him or her self look like a farm worker, fisherman or even a horse rider, he is likely to give less cause for concern to another user or landowner. Unless, of course, that person has a young daughter and is worried about some Norman Wisdom look-alike offering her a sweetie!

If a group wish to build up evidence before claiming a new lane, don't you think it might be a sensible alternative to diving in with half a dozen enduro bikes? I just hope we don't discover a "Monks Trod" or "Walna Scar" in my area!

Brian Wright.

(It takes all kinds (how about it Alan) Ed.)



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**IN THE LAST ISSUE.....
In Alan Kind's excellent
article on Middleton,
we mistakenly put the
cost of the case at £100
- instead of the correct
figure of £1000. This is
obviously an important
difference.**

GROUP NEWS

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY

We continue to ride almost every Saturday and some Sundays.

In order to cater for the newer members we have decided to organise an easier ride on the first Saturday of each month. The leader to ride something less suitable like an XT 600 or moped. I would hope to attract some of our members with trials bikes, or others who seldom join the usual runs.

Recent weekend runs were to Somerset and Dick Sutton's in Wales, thank you Dick, your runs are always enjoyable. Already this year we have officiated at one horse event and held a joint green lane clearance with the AWDC and BHS. We are currently co-operating with the BHS over some newly discovered lanes near Woking on which the landowner wants to build a golf course and destroy two old roads.

We won the Public Inquiry at Tatsfield in co-operation with the Surrey CC. By the time you read this I shall know the result of a proposed TRO at Moats Lane to "Protect" the Greater Crested Newt. We have also averted a possible TRO on Water Lane Leatherhead. Although cars were banned we won the right to use the footbridge.

The Review is almost finished and I consider we have done very well in the circumstances. I would like to think that other Councils will be so fair.

A trip to France is being planned for early September. Any one owning a vehicle capable of 30 mpg and transporting 8 people and their bikes is welcome to join us.

My Notes for Public Inquiries (and Byway claims) received favourable comment from Bill Riley and Alan Kind. The Committee will decide whether to publish them as a guide to rights of way officers.

I have acquired some circa 1940 O.S. maps for various parts of the country which I will make available for any rights of way officer who is likely to make good use of them. Contact me.

Brian Wright.

SOUTH EAST NEWSLETTER

I have received confirmation that R. of W. 28 Tatsfield is now to be made up to full byway status. In other words we won the Public Enquiry. I wrote up notes on this case and copied the "Proof of Evidence" to make a useful document which will be helpful to other members fighting for byways. I sent the first batch to Dave Giles, Bill Riley, Tim Stevens, Alan Kind, Richard Marshall. Only Bill Riley replied, incidentally with some very good comments. P.S. Alan Kind replied too.

Tim Gooderson, the Kent man who is now reading the London Gazette sent me an item

concerning Bradley Lane, North of Dorking. Unfortunately the item gives notice that the order is made and it is too late to object. In this instance, it seems the road is concrete and a new bridlepath has been formed alongside. The local B.H.S. rep picked this up but did not object. Presumably they do not care about carriage drivers not being able to use it. I am certain that this is yet another case of LARA and ACU not doing their job. I made the offer of Tim Gooderson to read the London Gazette nearly two years ago. This makes me wonder how many lanes have been lost. Tim tells me that he is sending out a large number of notices. I believe that the TRF Committee have been lax in not acting sooner.

I spoke to the Countyside Commission this week. They want a little snippet about the TRF to print in their Newspaper. I believe they may go for the long running saga of the Greater Crested Newt at Moats Lane. The Highways Sub Committee meet on the 6th May and I have lobbied the Chairman as well as one of the officers in the legal dept. of Surrey CC. The trouble is both the latter people passed their letters on to the chief of the Highways Dept. who is probably now heartily sick of Newts.

I had a message to ring an Isle of Wight telephone number recently. It turned out to be a Highways Dept. official who wished to quiz me on my use of the Tennyson Trail. As everyone knows this is a green lane on the I of W which the authority wish to make into a bridle path. I had forgotten that I filled in a user form some time ago. This matter may go to Public Inquiry.

The Somerset run was enjoyed by all recently. Going over it as we usually do for the following few club nights, it seemed to be lacking a great deal of talking points apart from the fact that we did all the lanes on the route. I hardly got lost at all and even then Chris pointed out my mistakes. No accidents apart from Andy trying to put his bike onto a hedge. Steve doing well with his 125 on trial tyres. Can it be that a weekend run is more memorable if lots of things go wrong? Maybe I should have a chat with Dick Sutton in order to make the next trip more memorable!

In view of the controversy with insurance and the virtual monopoly that the Norwich Union enjoy, I thought I ought to try elsewhere for my insurance cover. I tried the BMF insurance services, after all, they have close contact with trail riders. Imagine my surprise when they wrote back "We regret we cannot cover you due to the high amount of trail riding you carry out" I have asked them for an explanation which I will pass on in due course. Incidentally I reinsured with the N.U. and trimmed the premium by reducing my capacity limit to 600 cc. I find it interesting that my rider policy costs me £147 to cover all my bikes and about 5,000 miles a year and yet it costs nearly £400 to insure my van for a mileage of about 10,000.

I spent a day cycling with Steve B in the Woking area (centre of the universe) recently, checking on some old green lanes. I have some copies of 1910 Finance Act maps which I inherited from Kate Clow of the Thames Valley Group. She took copies in 1981. Two of

the lanes are obviously old roads and are badly blocked with fallen trees and in some cases recently felled trees as well as barbed wire and "Private no Trespassers" signs. Other lanes are bridle paths. Letters have been sent. Ed. This is now out of date.

I had an idea regarding the South Downs Way. We arrange a trip out for some of the elderly residents of a nursing home nearby. No, not on the back of motor cycles! Peter Payne of the AWDC is organising the Land Rovers. The trip will be just a short visit up and over the Downs with a couple of trail riders acting as outriders, perhaps giving out leaflets encouraging the walkers not to scowl too much. The press will be given the story. The P.R. will then be used to combat further closures.

I heard a rumour that Thames Valley have amalgamated with Loddon Vale. It seems their first joint run was so successful that they had to split into two groups. Don Lewis mentioned that the Loddon Vale Group no longer wish to be represented at Committee level, which seems a shame. P.S. Bob Williams says they have not amalgamated.

I spoke to Richard Thompson newish R of W man for the Thames Valley and Loddon Vale. We spoke of the R of W Extending Southwest from Weston Corbet, the one with the no vehicles sign on the gate. I always seem to meet the farmers son, who always claims it is not vehicular. As the revue is under way this needs attention.

The other area where I have had discussions with landowners is on the Lambourn Downs. Maidencourt Farm near to East Garston runs North before becoming indistinct. The farmer told me most people are using the track to the East of the copse whereas it needs clearance to the West but continues North to the East of the fence as far as Oakhedge Copse. From this point, where it meets the road, another R of W runs East to Henley Farm, this is so overgrown that you would have to fight through the middle of a hedge. However a farmer told me that this section is no longer a right of way. The near by waymark is often vandalised too. Over to you locals.

Brian Wright.

SUSSEX

At the beginning of April there were 48 paid up TRF members in Sussex, 32 in West Sussex and 16 in East Sussex, which is certainly a record. 15 to 20 members now turn up for the mainly monthly runs, usually necessitating three groups, but more people are willing to lead nowadays, and it does not appear to be a problem. The East Sussex section under Charles Whittaker's management also seem to be thriving, with regular meetings and runs. George Scowen and new member Mark Eason attended the recent RoW course in Derby, and found it very worthwhile and enjoyable. Fortunately (!) George is unemployed again now, so he will be able to spend some time at the Records Office, and Mark is also hoping to find time to do some research.

It is amazing how stable the group has been since it was formed 13 years ago. Of the four people who took part in the inaugural run in March 1979 (I was on an ST70, and given 45 min start!) three are still active members and the other is occasionally in touch. From

time to time former members reappear, the latest being Lloyd Burroughs, who has rejoined after an 11-year interval!

The local horse trial scene is booming, with the group assisting at about 12 events every year. The largest one, the BHS Fontwell 100 mile ride, has always strained our resources, and this year we thought it would be easier as the longest distance class is 80 miles. In fact, however, the event has become much more complicated, and the total distance to be marked-up is now about 140 miles.

Many members will be aware by now that West Sussex County Council are preparing a report with a view to making more TRO's on RUPP's on the South Downs, starting with the Chanctonbury area (North of Worthing). Since the last TRO campaign I have been watching the Council's activities very closely, and it is interesting to see that every proposal put forward by the council, on any subject, has been put into effect, regardless of public opposition. The Council seem to regard objections by the public not as a factor to be taken into account, but as a challenge to be overcome at all costs, and the stronger the opposition, the more determined the Council become to put their proposals into effect. The councillors and officers are motivated mainly by self-interest - councillors to further interests of themselves and their friend, the officers to further their careers and pensions.

Bevis Billingham.

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RoW NEWS

My thoughts this month are coloured by an offer that is at the same time a threat and an opportunity but first I must tell you what else has been going on.

Reports from Gloucestershire say that:-

1. The farmer who won his case to close a local lane has not yet decided to defend our appeal. 2. A well known barrister on the rights of way scene has very kindly offered to conduct the appeal for me, but we must of course go through a solicitor. 3. A solicitor has been found; he will charge £85 per hour to find out about the case so that he can tell the barrister (who already knows) what it is all about. 4. Not related to this case, but interesting all the same, a local policeman is reported to have suggested to local highway surveyors that they should dig ditches across green roads to keep out "Travellers".

I have written to the Chief Constable and the County Surveyors suggesting that this might not be the cleverest thing ever thought of.

Reports from Cumbria say that the BHS has proposed to the local rights of way liaison group that all the unsurfaced unclassified roads should be 1) Recorded as Byways. 2) Shown on Ordnance Survey Maps. 3) Maintained and generally looked after just like footpaths and bridleways are. 4) But any which are unsuitable for vehicles should be recorded as bridleways.

I have responded giving my support for three of their ideas; no prize is offered for guessing which one did not meet with approval.

That is all that has happened. Now I think about it, only half the above news comes from the TRF, as the Cumbria contact was through LARA with my BMF hat on. I can only assume that you all thought that I had been very busy with organising the Derby Workshop, and could do with a rest from all this TRF work. For this I thank you all. I assume you have all found other ways of keeping the membership up to date on local activities.

The Byway and Bridleway Trust have written in support of my idea that we ought to be more active in making Byway claims. This was to be expected because they said as much in their magazine before I suggested it here.

Dorset TRF lads have indicated their reservations about the idea which is also to be expected because they live in a country where there are hundreds of 'unclaimed Byways', and this does not seem to present them with a problem, now that they know where most of them are. So come the year 2000 when Dorset claims to have its

'definitive' map up to date and says no more claims need be accepted, what chance of defending a case of trespass by a TRF rider using one of these hidden rights? If you were a magistrate (ie not young, not poor, not a motorcyclist) and you heard that no-one had come forward with evidence when they were asked to, might that influence any decision you took? Anyway, Dorset riders, you are completely outnumbered by the absolutely overwhelming lack of response from elsewhere.

Perhaps I am getting worked up over nothing, and there really is no news from anywhere else. If so, let us hope that this continues for at least a month or two more, perhaps even until the AGM this autumn.

What was it that Lady Bracknell said? 'To lose one parent may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness'.

The TRF will lose three of its, well, not parents, exactly, but certainly guardians, at the AGM, when the Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer all step down. As if that does not put the club in a difficult enough position, I have to warn you now that I might be joining them on the back benches. Not, as you might imagine, because I am fed up with the job. No, it takes more than a bit of apathy to get me down. No, my circumstances might be about to change. The firm for whom I work are a bit strapped for cash, and I have been asked to consider seriously taking early retirement. Just what a chap needs to encourage him when he gets back to work after a bout of illness, but that is the way of things in these market oriented times. There is also a strong rumour that if they cannot get the numbers down by voluntary means they will have to make it compulsory and of course on less favourable terms, so I am thinking quite hard about it all. This might be good news for the TRF, because it may mean that I have lots of spare time to organise workshops, write booklets, and columns for Trail, and generally spread the word about the rights we need. However, it is not my intention to sit here doing nothing about my new freedom from the impositions of employment. Should anyone come along and offer to cross my palm with silver, or even cupro-nickel, guess what I will do. It might even be that I follow the example of our last RoW Officer, and offer to put my countryside knowledge and skills to use, in which case I, like Brian Thompson, might be constrained to give up any thought of work for the TRF. But perhaps not; perhaps I will start in another line of work altogether. And if I do, I might not have any time at all to look after anyone else's interest. The unfortunate thing about mortgages is that they have to be paid back.

I have just, as I write had a phone call from a TRF worker in which he explained that no-one else in his group could help him out with a problem because they all wanted to go riding. Perhaps he is a sucker for letting them get away with it. Perhaps all the officers are suckers too. Only you can prove me wrong. On November 1, or even before.

TIM STEVENS

MORE RoW.....

Unclassified County Roads

What are they? Study of documents held by my local records office reveals that they are, roads "with vehicular rights of passage" and were considered at the time by the County Councils to be maintainable by themselves. After the Second World War, things began to change. The M.O.T. asked highway authorities to resume submission of annual returns of road mileages, which it 'recalled was discontinued during the war years', they requested separate returns of the mileages of highways maintained by them on 1st April 1948, 1949 and 1959.

In Radnor during 1954 it was found that unexplainable differences had occurred in Annual returns "as it fell short of previous mileage by 166.55. Investigation brought to light the following facts: An accurate schedule had been prepared of the class of highway which was defined as "carriageway used as a cart road", the mileage totalled 252.99. The document goes on to say, "These Highways are repairable by the inhabitants at large, and so are in exactly the same category as far as the highway authority is concerned as are other county roads. It would seem from the total mileages concerned that these do in fact comprise the non-scheduled roads of the Rural District Council. Surveyors returns of 1930, and as such should be included as unclassified road in annual returns. In fact the division of the original scheduled and non-scheduled road into 'unclassified roads' and 'carriageways used as cart roads' which was made by the C.C. for purposes of their own, would appear to have been applied incorrectly to the annual return, and that for the purpose of the return, "No distinction should be made between the two types of highway".

The following year classifications of County roads was again questioned This time the mileage of U.C.R.'s was cut due to "an accurate schedule of class III roads having been made".

On 14-6-1963 the M.O.T. asked councils not to include bridleways and footpaths as unclassified roads but to show them separately on the annual returns form, they also requested the mileage of "green lane", maintainable by council, should be shown, and submitted on the supplementary proforma. The M.O.T. also stated "At the same time it should be remembered that all roads maintainable by the council should be included, whether or not the council carries out any surfacing work on them".

This was classified in a letter dated 17.6.63 thus:-

The mileage to be entered opposite "unclassified roads" on form 197 (Roads) is to INCLUDE the mileage in the County of "Green Lanes", that is unsurfaced roads with a right of passage for vehicles and which are maintainable by the council.

The supplementary Proformas showed thus:-

Unclassified Roads 579.11 miles (a) Unsurfaced "green lanes" with right of passage for vehicles 292.00 miles (b) Other unclassified roads 287.11 miles.

Also attached to that years mileage returns was a statement that the council had that year been able to accurately ascertain the mileage of "green lanes" by reference to the definitive map of RoW.

Thus substantiating that all U.C.R.'s. listed had vehicular rights of passage. The M.O.T.s request for annual mileage 1964, 1965 returns had the addition that unsurfaced roads (including green lanes) be included in the councils unclassified mileage total. "For this purpose a green lane may be defined as any unmetalled unclassified road which is maintained by the council".

The 1966 request was further modified thus:-

"For this purpose, unsurfaced unclassified roads which are maintainable by the council for the use of vehicular traffic should be taken to include green lanes. A Private carriage or cart road (whether surfaced or not) which has a public right of way over it as either footpath or bridleway should not be included in unclassified road mileage".

Note this does not include public cart roads?

The 1967 request dropped the request for details of green lanes, bridleways, footpaths, private carriage and cart roads?

Unsurfaced unclassified roads are shown elsewhere to be 345.95 miles for Radnor.

As the purpose of the Annual mileage return form was to assess how much grant aid was paid to the councils they were not to happy with the last alteration. So scrutiny of the term "surfaced" revealed that it included a "maintainable", "made up" carriageway as defined in the Highways Act 1959:- "Made up carriageway means a carriageway or part thereof, which has been metalled or in any other way provided with a surface suitable for the passage of vehicles".

This of course helped with the next annual return.

It can be seen from the details given that each declaration of U.C.Rs listed highways with vehicular rights of passage at the time. As the 1981 W.C.A.'s main requirement for Byway Status to be given is reasonable previous proof that a vehicular RoW existed then it follows that any U.C.R. list or map is just that required proof.

All the listed details were revealed by careful study of records held at my local Records Office. Of course there is **much** more that I have not included such as complete lists of U.C.R.'s stating their classification number? It seems that D, E and F class roads are *not* classified?? A description of where they go and their lengths to the nearest 0.01 mile. Many now not shown on the current U.C.R. map.

County Road Mileages.

Differences between mileages at 31st March 1961 shown in Highways expenditure returns and on Ministry of Transport Form 197 (Roads).

Column 1. *County* Column 2. *Highways expenditure* (Does not include Trunk roads). Column 3. *Ministry return* (adjusted for mileage taken over 1st April). Column 4. *Difference*. Column 5. *County Councils stated reason for difference*.

Buckingham	1,577	1,699	122	Unmetalled Roads
Cambridge	741	814	73	Unmetalled Green Lanes
Derby	2,229	2,407	178	Green and Bridle roads
Dorset	1,941	2,495	554	Bridleways and footpaths
Essex	2,960	3,110	150	Unmetalled Green lanes
Gloucester	3,025	3,055	30	Class VI highways (footpaths)
Huntingdon	492	529	37	Green lanes
Leicester	1,692	1,792,	100	Unmetalled roads
Lincoln, Holland	1,109	1,134	25	Green Lanes
Lincoln, Lindsey	2,596	2,814	218	Unmetalled roads
Norfolk	4,574	4,756	182	Unmetalled green roads
Nottingham	1,339	1,423	84	Green lanes
Oxford	1,507	1,532	25	Unmetalled roads
Somerset	4,412	4,445	33	Unclassified roads for which some maintenance is required
Sussex West	1,155	1,309	154	Green lanes and unmetalled roads
Westmorland	918	1,014	96	Unmetalled green lanes for which no maintenance carried out
Wiltshire	2,254	5,826	3,572	Bridleways and footpaths
York, East Riding	2,082	2,144	62	Unmetalled green lanes etc
York, North Riding	3,038	3,112	74	Green lanes and bridleways
Caernavon	1,041	1,088	47	Green roads
Cardigan	1,224	1,406	182	Unmetalled green lanes and bridle roads

All other counties show some mileage in each return.

If your county has lost these green lanes why not ask them "Where are they now?"

ROGER BAILEY. R.OWO TRF RADNOR

PLEASE NOTE That the views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the official views of the TRF.

LODDON VALE

GROUP RIDE
MARCH 1992

At the last meeting on Thursday someone reminded me that I had (foolishly!) volunteered to lead a ride and this was the month. Now let me explain that I love trail riding and I know the route well, but having to get up early on a day I am not working is what I hate. Still, sacrifices have to be made. So, on Sunday there I was, nine o'clock at the Little Chef with six other bikes and one came later. We started promptly at 9.30 down Woodcock Lane, usually a narrow rutted muddy lane but now it has been 'sanitised' with several tons of hardcore on a three foot path, making it very easy. Never mind, the next lane had been well cut up by horses and we almost broke into a sweat! Then Broad Way, Beech Hill, a tricky little number with grass covered tractor ruts. The disadvantage of leading is that you miss all the spectacular falls, unless you do them yourself. The Devils Highway next, one time a real battle, but now so 'sanitised' that I have ridden it on my BMW R80 ST, so no challenge for a properly sorted trail bike. We were incidentally almost all on four strokes, apart from Phil Tipping on his IT420, and he was back marking so I only caught glances of him. Down to Bramley and Cockfords Lane, grassy and greasy, this was where Bernie lost his handbag one time, but that is another story! Very tricky, either you ride on top of the lumps with a four foot drop to rest your feet or in the bottom which is glutinous mud. Round the back of Basingstoke as no one required petrol then west along the Harrow Way towards Whitchurch. We were going so well, without any punctures or rest stops that we would finish my route by lunchtime. At Whitchurch we turned north along the A34 until we picked up the Nine Barrows on the Wayfarers Walk. We followed this along, past Combe Gibbet all the way to Combe itself, where the ever helpful Brian Herbert knew a good pub for lunch, and we stopped at the Nags Head for our Ploughmans Lunch. As we were almost the only customers the service was exemplary and I worried about where we would go in the afternoon. The choices were north and over the Berkshire Downs or south on the edges of Salisbury plain. We decided on south.

First we explored Chute Causeway, the only example known to me of a Roman road that does not go straight, then the rest of the Roman road towards Andover, the start of which I could not find. When we did, there was something hiding in the bushes, but I could not be persuaded to go back and investigate. Eventually we came out at Andover, found our way to the A303 and then we did stop to fill up. Barton Stacey next, then the long sweeping green lane to the Lunways Inn, unfortunately the now dual carriageway A34 cuts it in half and we had to do a five mile detour to get to the second half. It was getting dark and was five o'clock so Brian Herbert left and the rest carried on from the Woolpack at Totford, eastwards and northwards nearly to Lasham (the Ham of the lasses, I am told) where we called it a day and headed home.

Almost 120 miles in total, very few ramblers, some dogwalkers, two mountain bikes and a few horseriders were the only people seen. I am glad I did get up and go, not a bad day for a fifty year old, even if I do ache today, although the bike kept trying to lose its

chain. I promise to get a new one when finances allow. Any jobs for I.P.S. qualified people out there??

P. S. If Dave Deeley would stir himself he could find all the green lanes in the area at our club night, or I would mark his map for him if he lets me have it. A lot more portable than carrying a computer round on your bike!

P. P. S. Would Rick O'Shea like to be the Loddon Vale Group Rep as we seem to have a vacancy, and he could 'freeload' with the rest of the committee, the "palatial accomodation" was my 20 year old tent, sorry amend that, 30 year old tent, in the Forest of Dean-Civil Service Motoring Association Centre, and the lavish hospitality provided was coffee, the lunches were paid for individually by the committee members themselves. Why our beloved Chairman, or Secretary or Treasurer has not replied to Rick O'Shea's letter point by point escapes me but if he, or anyone else wishes to avail themselves of the "freeloading" available to members attending the Executive Committee Meetings they have only to volunteer and go along. Any members may attend these, it is just that only group reps and elected officers may vote. The date of the meetings are published in the Bulletin.

You are doing a terrific job on Trail magazine but could you get the name registered before someone else tries to use it for a Caravanning (AA used that) magazine or a Walking magazine (Countryside Commission) as I believe both former users are now extinct/ bankrupt??

JOHN R HIGGINS. HAMPSHIRE

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