



# Norton Notice

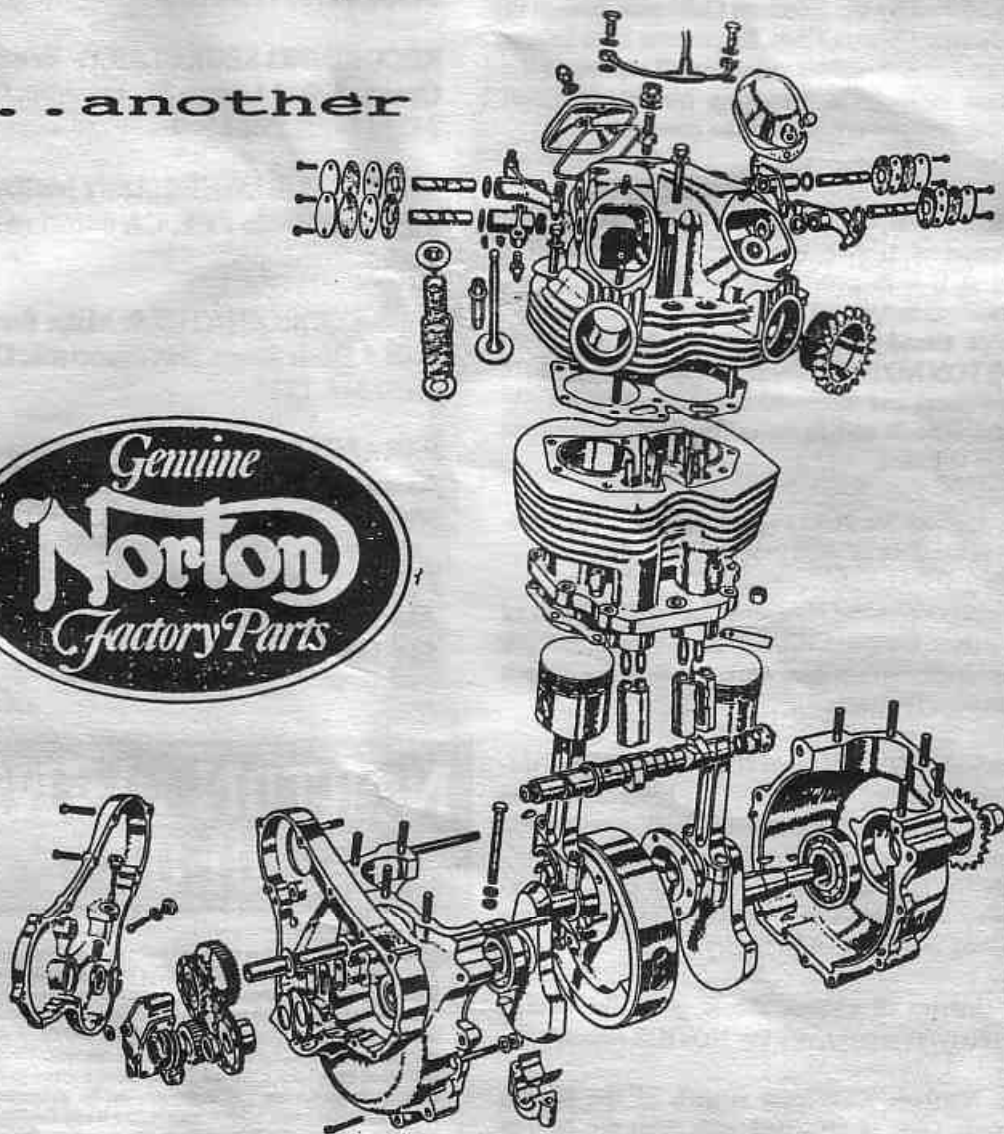


The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club

No. 154

Feb. 1991

...another



endangered species? ...  
this time, at the helm of Philippe Le Roux?

More information- as it becomes available- through interviews,  
and the International Press... next month.



## Norton Notice

is published by the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club. Its purpose is to inform and entertain members regarding all aspects of the Norton motorcycle, including history, technical advice, and preservation of the marque.

NORTON NOTICE is a reflection of the readership, who are encouraged to submit any article, technical tip, photograph (original or otherwise) as long as it is in good taste, so that other Norton enthusiasts may enjoy it. For Branch members who cannot attend club meetings or club rides, the NORTON NOTICE affords an opportunity to share experiences and information with the membership of the Branch and to bring the Branch members closer together.

The deadline for items to be submitted for publication is the 25th of each month.

Membership in the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club is available for \$15.00 per year. Membership dues are payable to the Branch Secretary/Treasurer.

Renewal dues are payable at the end of the individual's membership year, that month being designated by the last number of the individual's membership number as listed on the mailing label of the NORTON NOTICE and the membership card. For example, 745/2 denotes member 745 with dues expiring on the 1st of February.

All changes of address should go to the Branch Secretary/Treasurer, not the NOTICE editor.

The Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club is affiliated with both the Norton Owners Club of England and the International Norton Owners Association. Interested persons can join these two organizations per the terms described on the Branch membership application form.

## CLUB OFFICERS

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## NORTON OWNERS CLUB

**IMPORTANT** (Please take note of the following fine print):  
The object of the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club is to promote, encourage and develop motorcycling activities. The Club's members are owners of Norton motorcycles and they often submit for publication in the NORTON NOTICE technical tips pertaining to motorcycles of the Norton marque. Technical tips so published have been reviewed for technical content and are believed to be both acceptable and workable, but no guarantee is made or implied that they will work correctly, nor is any liability assumed by either the Norton Owners Club or the members for any problems resulting from use of these technical tips. The club also assumes no responsibility for the acts or omissions of its members in connection with Club activities. NORTON NOTICE articles or other materials express the authors' views only and not necessarily the official policy of the Norton owners Club or its Northern California Branch. The editor reserves the right to accept, reject or alter all editorial and advertising material submitted for publication. Advertising published does not imply endorsement of products, goods or services. Now you know.

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## Upcoming Events

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### Club Rides

...For an overview of the Bay Area Club Rides for 1991, and other ride-oriented events, see this month's column from Mike Burnham, our new Rides Coordinator.

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Notes from Thackery Washer, N.O.S

When adjusting your primary drive chain, be certain to slacken the rear wheel chain and adjusters. If you don't do this, the primary chain cannot be adjusted properly.

#### THACKERY PREDICTS FOR 1991!

\* The "Baby Boom" will hit the Norton Club! (Ed.'s Note: You ever see an exploding baby? Not a pretty sight...)

\* Mike Burnham will have a serious mental breakdown trying to decide which of his seven Nortons to ride!

\* Tim Coburn will get his ES2 running- and actually ride it!

\* Phil Radford will show up at Alices with his wife on an Ariel Square Four!

\* Don Dannier will change his name to Dan Donnier!

\* Patrick McDowell will buy a helmet (Ed.'s Note: Yeah, but will he consider wearing it?)

\* Art Sirota will part out his 500T!

\* An unnamed Club Member will be soundly thrashed for hiding a Manx Norton under his house for the past Six Years!

As always,

Thackery Washer, N.O.S.

(Nosey Old Sod)

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### Meeting Schedule

The club meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month, at 7:30 PM. The location rotates between Peninsula, South Bay, East Bay and S.F.

**February 14--South Bay**

**Harry's Hofbrau, El Camino near Castro Street, Mountain View**

**March 14--East Bay**

**Spaghetti Factory, Jack London Square, Oakland (tentative)**

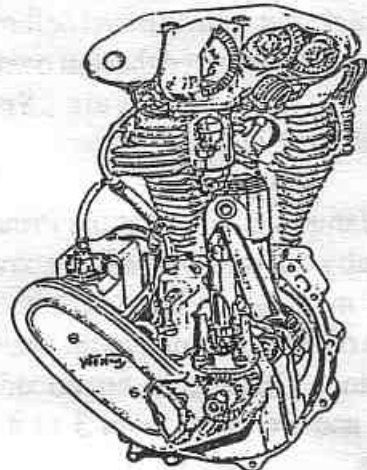
**April 11 -- San Francisco**

**Lake Merced Boathouse. Off Skyline Blvd.**

**May 9--Peninsula**

**The Prince of Wales Pub on 25th Ave in San Mateo offers a wide selection of beers and a private meeting room with dart boards!**

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## Over the Bars . . .

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I enjoyed our ride to the Flying Lady. Brunch was great and the model aeroplanes are worth a second look. Marick took us through some great countryside and over some wonderfully twisty roads. I put over 225 miles on the clock and enjoyed every mile.

The planning for the Easter Morning Ride is moving along and the next issue of the Notice will have complete details. Plan to attend this ride! If you haven't been on this one before, you've missed a real classic.

All the Lake Tahoe details are moving along at an even faster pace, and the rally preparations are looking better and better.

I just received a copy of the Chicago Norton Owner's Club News. With all due respect, it is not nearly the quality of our own Norton Notice, but still contains a lot of interesting news. I believe I found a possible conflict to our Lake Tahoe Rally, though: on August 16th - 18th is scheduled the Great Lakes Norton Rally, and some people might not want to travel before that rally to ours. I also noted that our own Phil Radford has his Fair Spares advertisement in place.

Our January meeting at the Prince of Wales Pub went very well, and we covered a lot of material. It brought home the message of having a quiet room available for meetings. Once again, our attendance was up, and we heard from 3 or 4 new members.

The February Meeting is at Harry's Hoffbrau, and I hope to see you all there. A group of Nortons from San Francisco will be heading down, and anyone is welcome to join us, except if it is raining. Call me at (415) 334-2042 if you are interested.

Thanks for the time and this chat "Over the bars."

-Lynn Miller, President

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### February Minutes, cont'd

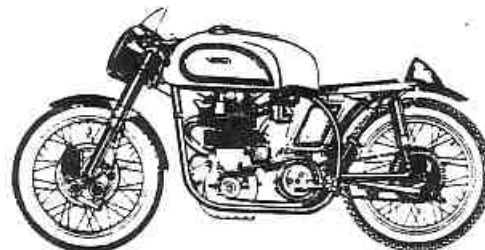
Discussions then turned to the upcoming Clubman's Show on March 24th. Don Danmeier mentioned that judging of classes will be broken down into categories by size and style.

Leo Christiansen displayed his assortment of Club Paraphenalia for all to see, and sold several tee shirts.

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

- Brad Green, Club Scribe, 792-0501

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1963 catalog drawing of Maxx 30M and 40M

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## Minutes of January Meeting

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The first meeting of the new year at the Prince of Wales Pub in San Mateo was called to order at 8:05 PM. by NOC President Lynn Miller. Attendance was approximately 15 members.

Lynn opened the meeting by thanking Alan Goldwater for his nomination, and then went on to discuss the Easter Day Morning Ride up to Mt. Tam, mentioning the club's unofficial sponsorship of this annual event which has been running for some fifteen consecutive years. He further suggested some possible improvements for the Old-Timer's Ride this year. More about this later...

The Treasurer's report stated our balance to be about \$800.00 after outstanding bills clear.

Norton Notice Editor, Andy McKerral, reported that the Club's Raffle Bike should be ready in time for the All-British Clubman's Show in Jan Jose, March 24th. (Editor's Note: due to unexpectedly sudden hand surgery, additional assistance in preparing the machine would be greatly appreciated.) He is also in dire need of a front fender and a chain guard. (c'mon, people!) The price-per-ticket for the raffle was set at \$1.00 (such a deal!) There was also mentioned the possibility of showing the bike at Raber's Parts Mart to generate ticket sales.

Lynn then initiated self-introductions of all NOCers present, for the benefit of visitors and new members.

Andy McKerral requested photographs to be submitted for the Norton Notice by the 3rd week of each month. A new idea introduced was a possible "Norton Of The Month" photo. More discussions on this later.

The current lack of participation on the East Bay rides was discussed. The Scribe mentioned the ongoing search for a new East Bay meeting venue which meets the Club's needs.

John Covell announced his Public Relations position, and the Scribe suggested that NOC Hospitality Cards should be issued.

Former president Alan Goldwater took the floor at this time to talk about the impending International Norton Rally. The deposit has been paid for Camp Richardson at Lake Tahoe. The various events discussed for the rally were: Five-pass poker run, overnight runs, a full scale Concourse, and field day events. Future expansion of the Rally Committee will be determined as the work load needs increase. The current Committee members were introduced, along with each person's individual responsibilities. The Club Bike will be raffled at a yet-to-be-determined point during the rally.

The "NORTONES" have offered their services to entertain at the rally and back up Art Sirota on stage; Harry Bunting volunteered to be raffle manager; and, all food will be catered on site.

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### The Restored 500T Story

by I. Pushtit Home

After much blood, toil, tears and sweat, the 1951 Norton model 500 T is finished. During the course of the restoration, I learned a lot about obscure, obsolete, and rare Norton parts, made the acquaintance of some very helpful enthusiasts, and had a great time.

I learned from Peter Roydhouse in England that from 1949 to 1954 only 74 500 T's were brought over to the North American continent. Peter has microfilms of all the original factory records, and he sent me copies of all the information relating to 500 T's. He has become a sort of clearinghouse for all 500 T owners worldwide who are searching for parts and information. His present estimation is that there are approximately only 150 surviving examples left of this rare Norton.

One interesting fact that I learned was that once the 500 T went into production in 1949, Norton never altered anything right up until the end of production in 1954. Either they had such a successful formula that they didn't want to monkey with it, or they got a bit lazy.

As I became more familiar with this model, I became amazed at the number of special parts. Approximately 90 components are only for the 500 T. Being such a limited production model, these special parts are now almost impossible to locate. Luckily for me, most of these pieces were still with "the project" when I collected it from former NOC member Mark Wilcoxon last year.

The 500 T originally came with a clip-type Amal carb 276 AU/1BE. Unfortunately, my engine had a later style Amal monoblock carb with a custom manifold. As I studied the Amal listings for British motorcycles from 1946 to 1955, I became aware that they had supplied hundreds of different types of 276 carbs. The one that I needed was used only on ohv Norton singles from 1946 to 1951. I wrote to all the usual sources in England, but came up empty-handed. Then I called up NOC member Lewis Mendelowitz, who lives in neighboring Palo Alto. It was an auspicious moment when Lewis informed me that he did indeed have a spare remote-float Amal in a box somewhere in the back of his garage and, wait a moment, the numbers stamped on the carb body were 276 AU/1BE. So, I rebuilt the carb with some missing pieces supplied by Mr. Ed Brooks, who was very supportive and encouraging. I built my own cables and hoped my luck for finding rare parts who hold.

The next step was to locate the missing toolbox. Naturally, this toolbox is different from any other toolbox ever made by Norton and is almost impossible to locate. I searched through all the different seller's stalls at the vintage swap meet in Tulare while clutching my *Norton Singles* book by Roy Bacon, but could not find anything even closely resembling the original toolbox. I contacted four other 500 T owners in hopes of locating a spare, but it turned out that they have all been searching for a toolbox for about ten years! I was almost ready to give up and begin chanting "Namyoho rengay hyo," when Frank Forester suggested that I call Baxter Cycles

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in Iowa. So, I called Randy Baxter and after a short search through his collection of old toolboxes, he found one for a 500 T. It was new! So, I new the Norton Spares gods were smiling on me.

I found a 500 T chainguard and 500 T rear number plate (no hole in it for a rear tail light because there is no tail light) from Robert Drury Quality Products. John Burdette assembled a chronometric speedometer for me from all new parts. A new competition-type hard rubber seat was purchased in kit form from Armour's.

I took the wheels down to Kelly Moss at San Jose Motorcycle Wheels to get stainless spokes laced, when I learned that the rear rim was the incorrect size. I needed a WM3 for the wide rear tyre, with 40 spoke holes angled to accept the early small diameter hub. When I got home from Kelly's, there was a new Accessory Mart poster/sales brochure in my mailbox. They were selling new BSA war department rear wheels complete for only \$16. I checked the M20 in my garage and discovered that the rear rim was the correct WM3 that I needed for the 500 T. I called Bob Shanz at Accessory Mart, and he promised to pick through the pile and send me the wheel with the best rim. I had it chromed at Diamond Plating in San Jose, and soon Kelly was calling me to inform me that the wheels were finished!

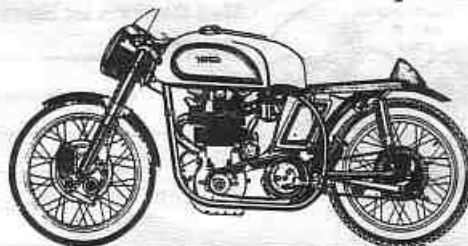
The 500 T is Norton's last trials bike, and I was very eager to learn all I could about it. One interesting fact that was revealed to me by Peter Roydhouse is that Norton apparently employed Rex McCandless to carry out the design and R & D in 1947. This, of course, is the same

Rex McCandless who later designed the first featherbed frame for Norton.

I had the frame powdercoated, Lewis and Templeton restored the petrol and oil tanks, and I painted the bike myself using Imron by DuPont. Dick Klatt, the sheetmetal wizard in Southern Calif., straightened out some of the bent and twisted parts. He also made me a new bash plate using the old one as a pattern. The gearbox was rebuilt by Phil Radford using new gears, new original countershaft sprocket, and a roller bearing on the layshaft (Andy McKerral, take note!!). Dave Lindsley rebuilt the Lucas competition racing magneto. I rebuilt the front forks, clutch and everything else. Mark Wilcoxon had already rebuilt the engine when I bought the bike from him.

Norton claimed the bike weighed only 289 lbs., which was considerably less than anything offered by the competition at the time. This may have accounted in part for the successes enjoyed by Jack Williams, Geoff Duke, Rex Young and other factory riders. Cyril Kemp, riding his privately owned 500 T, beat the factory riders and won the 1951 Experts sidecar class.

Having no headlight or taillight, this machine is not legal for road use in California. I have registered it for off-road use and plan to ride it in the easiest, wimpiest and least skill-demanding trials course Dick Mann can come up with!



# International Norton Owners Association



## *Richardson's Resort, South Lake Tahoe, CA*

Rally fees: Adults \$40.00 (\$35 before 7/1/91)  
Children 5-16 yrs \$10, under 5 free

Note: Full RV hookups and family cabins are available separately. Contact Richardson's Resort at 800-544-1801 for reservations (required).

**Fees include the following:**

- Four nights camping
- Daily rides and tours
- Complimentary raffle ticket
- Awards and door prizes
- Friday barbecue with live music
- Saturday banquet

**Special events and features:**

- 1971 Commando Roadster raffle
- Five passes poker run with cash prizes
- Overnighter to Yosemite Park
- Breakfast served every day
- Free Casino shuttle

To preregister, complete the form below and mail to:  
Harry Bunting, 1165 Crandano Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94987



Mail this form to: Harry Bunting, 1165 Crandano Court, Sunnyvale CA 94987

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

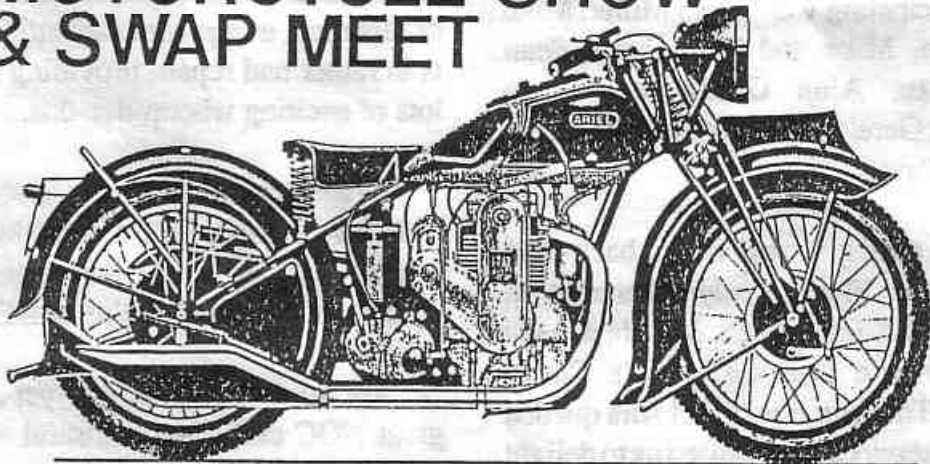
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

INOA #: \_\_\_\_\_ Number in party (adults) \_\_\_\_\_ (children) \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ ALL FUNDS IN US DOLLARS



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Jeff Sunzeri 408-578-1936 (days)

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**LEADER OF THE PACK****this month's ride report****by Marick Payton**

A somewhat small but enthusiastic group of NOC'ers romped through the Santa Clara wine country Sunday, January 20. Participating were Lynn Miller, Mike Burnham, Mike and Teri Curry, Sean Moynihan, Alan Goldwater, Harry Bunting, Gerald Mauricio and ride leader Marick Payton.

The outing started with a back-road ride to the Flying Lady restaurant in Morgan Hill for brunch. We shared the facilities with a group of 50's Chevy owners. The long line of Bel Airs queued up into the parking lot caused us to delight in the ability of a motorcycle to make way through a crowd.

The weather was beautiful as we rode down Uvas Valley Road to the Hecker Pass Road between Gilroy and Watsonville, then toward the coast to Mt. Madonna. This route let us bypass the gravel road (Redwood Retreat Road) up the mountain, which I customarily take. On the ride through this area last fall we found Redwood Retreat in a pretty rough state.

The Ride down from Mt. Madonna to Correlitos, just a few miles short of the coast, was beautiful, as usual. The only mishap of the ride occurred here when one rider, the one with the largest gas tank on the ride and who prefers to remain anonymous, ran out of gas two miles short of the gas station. Four borrowed Bud bottles of petrol later we motored on to

Correlitos.

After refreshments, Sean headed back to Pacific Grove and Harry and Alan also took off for the coast to Alan's home in Santa Cruz. The rest of us headed up the long and twisty Summit Road to its intersection with 880. The middle sections of this road, away from the settled areas, is in rather bad repair, providing us with lots of exciting whoop-dee-dos.

We reached the 880 intersection a little before 4:00. The rest of the group headed back home on that route and I continued north on Skyline to Alice's.

By all accounts, it was yet another great NOC club ride: beautiful weather and scenery, thrilling mountain roads, no breakdowns and no accidents.

**A PREVIEW OF 1991 CLUB RIDES****by Mike Burnham,  
Rides Coordinator**

On January 20th, eight club members tore themselves away from their television sets and met me at the Flying Lady in Morgan Hill... not a bad turnout, considering the ride conflicted with the Forty-Niners playoff game.

I would, at this point, like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Marick Payton for planning and leading the ride through the Santa Clara wine area and the Santa Cruz Mountains (... or, at least I THINK that's where we went...). Following Marick has given me a new-found respect for his riding style- smooth, effortless, and he'll steadily pull away from you if you're not making the effort

to keep up. Ah, yes, I almost forgot- the ride marshall ran out of gas. Pictures to follow at a later date.

As for the upcoming East Bay Ride, please note that the meeting place- Denny's- is NOT on Ashby... In fact, it's not even in Berkeley! It's on Powell Street in Emoryville. (oh, shut up, Phil!) Powell Street is only one block (turnoff) south of Ashby. Speaking of Mr. Radford, after much wining and sniveling, he will be leading the ride up to Mt. Hamilton on 05 May. It may be noted that I did the wining, and he did the sniveling....

...which brings us to future rides- or, better put, the Ride Schedule.

**February 24th: the East Bay Ride**  
Starting at Denny's on Powell Street in Emeryville, and winding up at the Royal Oak Pub in Clayton.

**March 31: the Easter Morning Ride**  
This is the one where you get up at four in the morning, shiver in the cold for awhile, then ride up to the top of Mount Tamalpias to watch the sunrise...maybe. 300 British bikes showed up for this event last year- loads of fun.

**April 14: as yet undecided; however, I was thinking in terms of a Peninsula ride, perhaps to Santa Cruz. Any ideas?**

**June 8 & 9: The famous BSA/Norton Sierra Ride and Chili Cookoff**

**July 7: Lynne and I have been bouncing around an idea for some time now about a Napa/Sonoma ride. I think this is it. Fred Twigg, Jerry Caplan, and whoever else**

lives up this way. Any ideas?

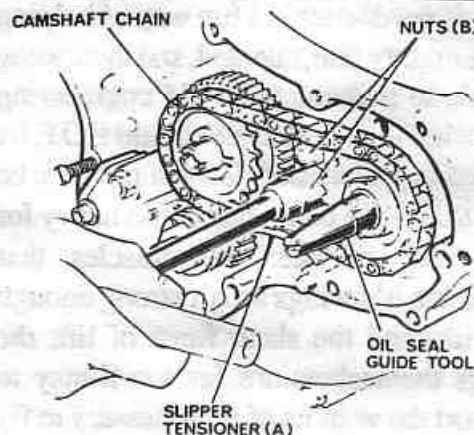
August is the month for both the NOC Rally and the BSA Rally, and as such, provides quite a full month of classic motorcycling. If enough people would like a ride separate from these two events, please say so. Also, if people are interested in organizing rides/s to and from these two major events, again, please say so.

**September 15: The Old Timer's Ride,** starting at Alice's and going wherever the machinery will allow. I think it would be fitting if Thachery Washer leads this one. The old so-and-so.

**October 20: another question mark,** although a repeat of last year's Delta Ride isn't a bad idea. There again, a Coast ride sounds interesting as well.

**November 3: The All British Ride. Or so I like to think of it. The Don Danmeier second annual fiftieth birthday ride**

**December 15: I dunno about you, but my butt is sore from all this riding! Not only that, but I'm clue-less about the destination of this ride!**



Have you done this lately?

## ... Side Trips

*... an occasional article dedicated to sarcastic, incisive, hopefully humorous insights into the joys and foibles of NORTON ownership*

by Andy McKerral-Belcher

The oddest thing happened on the way to our recent Christmas Party: I felt a strange, uneasy feeling that I should NOT be making this run up the mountain to Alice's in a goddamn Buick station wagon... it just felt like I was violating some unwritten law about the sanctitude of travelling a road previously reserved for 60 MPH flat-outs and 3- G turns... impossible in a station wagon, but not on a Mark 3. But, it was a warm and friendly gathering amongst friends breaking bread together in the chill of post- winter solstice, and a chance to renew comraderie in a common goal: keep the time-honored marque of Norton alive through active participation in an organized and focused activity group, and lend a hand to those who respect the art of motorcycling on a mount that defines the term "paragon".

This newsletter is a fun way of helping some mighty fine, talented, and interesting people to perpetuate an old engineering curiosity: the bumblebee should NOT, by presently understood laws of physics, be able to fly- the damn bug is too heavy for it's wing surface; the muscles that articulate it's wings aren't strong enough to withstand the shear force of lift; the wings themselves are far too flimsy to support the volume of air necessary to fly at all- let alone, move in controlled flight- and yet, the stupid bug flies anyway...

basically because bumblebees can't read aeronautical engineering textbooks, and nobody at Lockheed's Skunk Works bothered to tell them that they shouldn't be able to fly.

And so it is with Nortons: a two-wheeled vehicle with a cast-iron cylinder barrel, the entire affair mounted at three points in rubber on a tubular steel frame, using pushrods and carbretors- and, more often than not, arrives originally equipped with chrome-plated steel Dunlop wheel rims, steel spokes, steel silencers, chrome-plated steel fenders, iron sprockets, and a chain-driven final drive: yet change the plugs, clean the carbs, set the timing, change the oil, and make sure the tires have air in them, and the damn fool thing can scare the hell out of you in a flat-out haul. This sort of thing defies the same kind of sensible engineering that even Willie G. Davidson may still ponder as he counts his Milwaukee statistics. Yo, Kawasaki: are you listening? (...it may be noted that anyone engaged in active intimacy will state that it isn't the flash or the glitter that matters: it's the performance with standard equipment...)

ANYHOW, I regard my newly elected position as a privilege with which I will take care to provide responsible stewardship. Thanks to all for the support.

On to matters of more sobering attention:

### Th' Friggin' Club Bike

You of The Faith know who you are. For those who need to be informed, the individuals who have thus far participated

in bringing the Good Ol' Club Bike back from the dead are:

*Gerald Mauricio*

who helped me strip the miserable old dead wiring harness out of the old frame, and provide a nearly limitless supply of rags to keep my garage floor clean and my landlord happy;

*Marick Payton*

for all those oddball little knickknacks, odds and ends, and the encouragement as he stopped by the house while walking his dogs, offering such inspirational pep talk as, "Well, Andy how's the old piece of shit doing?"

*Phil Radford of Fair Spares America*

who provided the complete original air cleaner, decals, sundries and goodies to make the Frankenbike mechanically sound;

*Alan Goldwater*

who provided the tachometer lens; gave advice and encouragement; and tenaciously gave me the contagious urgency necessary for inspiration to complete this project beyond the "standard six week enthusiasm modulus;"

*My World-Famous Brother, Chuck*

who knows next to nothing about Nortons, but who's always willing to broaden his base of mechanical knowledge by participating in all the insane bullshit projects his older brother sucks him into;

and, finally-

*Paige, my oldest daughter*

who states, on a far too-regular basis, "Daddy, can you win the Club Bike for me so that when I ride to school on a Norton, I can impress the guys... PLEASE?!"

There are certain responsibilities in life, such as paying taxes, wearing a helmet, and showing up for work without a hangover which can guarantee a fair degree of success ... but there ain't any rules that prevent a parent from coming unglued:

**BUY A LOT OF RAFFLE TICKETS FOR THE CLUB BIKE! HELP SAVE ME FROM A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH!**



## NORTON OWNERS CLUB

### 1991 CLASSIC CALENDAR

Published in England by the NOC, this very high quality production is now in its eighth edition. Measuring 16x12 inches, it contains 13 full colour photographs of Nortons 11x7 inches, complete with full and informative captions.

Bikes included this time are: Commander, 16H, JPN, Commando 'S', Model 99, ES2, Atlas, Inter, Model 19, Fastback and the very latest in the long Norton line, the F1. A unique extra to the NOC Calendar is the information page, this time featuring a specially written article on the history of the Dommi engine from its debut on the Model 7 through to its final Commando version.

Printed on fine quality art paper and hung on a wire spiral, each page is just flipped over as required, no rip offs here! Truly the best quality and value in motorcycle calendars and it is 100% Norton. A must for every discerning Norton owner and enthusiast, at the very reasonable price of \$11 per copy, post paid. Don't go into 1991 without a copy upon your wall. Order now for prompt dispatch. Ideal Xmas/New Year present for all your motorcycling friends.

The Norton Owners Club  
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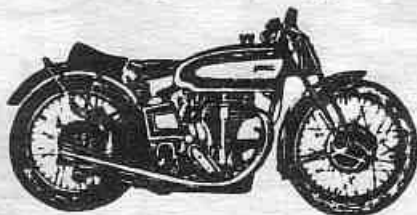
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