



Norton Notice

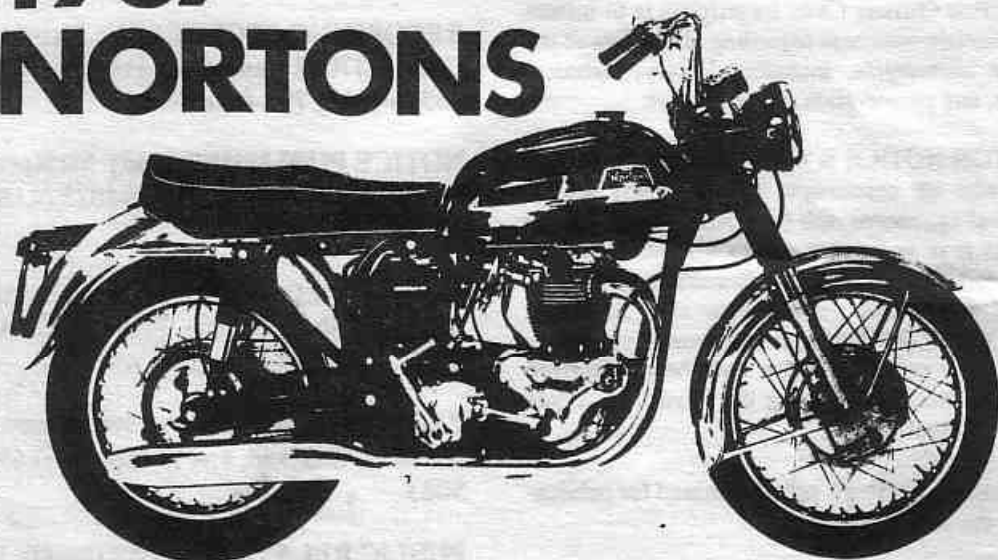


The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club

No. 155

March, 1991

1967 NORTONS



ARE HERE... 750cc Powerhouse!

Not just a "pretty good" frame. The frame acknowledged to be the best. The Featherbed. Roadholder forks. Comfort included at no extra cost.

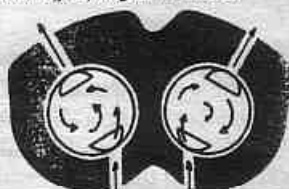
The potent Atlas engine can take you over 100 in a matter of seconds. The Atlas stops with 8" front, 7" rear, brakes. No jiggle. No shud-

der. 12 volt lighting means higher night cruising speeds, with safety.

Suspension that swoops around turns...no bounding about. Brakes that stop you. A gearbox that works easily, doesn't break. Throughout, features that make your riding a pleasure.

Norton has a distinctive look.

Parallel induction, wide-splayed exhaust results in better cooling, plus greater volumetric efficiency because of the "swirl" effect, diagrammed here.



We ask you to visit a Norton dealer. Read some road tests before you go in. Ask the dealer questions. The more you know about the Norton, the more you'll like the Norton.

WINNER
34 T.T.s
ISLE OF MAN



Norton

Backed by
America's No. 1
Independent Distributor

**BERLINER
MOTOR CORP.**

HASBROUCK HTS., N. J.



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 denoted 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.

Upcoming Events

Club Rides

**March 31: The Easter Morning
Mount Tam Ride**

April 14: tentative: contact the Rides
Coordinator for details.

May 5: The Mount Hamilton Ride!

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

Graphics Credits

**Cover: August, 1967
Cycle World**

**Lower left corner,
page 14: August, 1953
Cycle Magazine**

Courtesy, Tom Dable

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

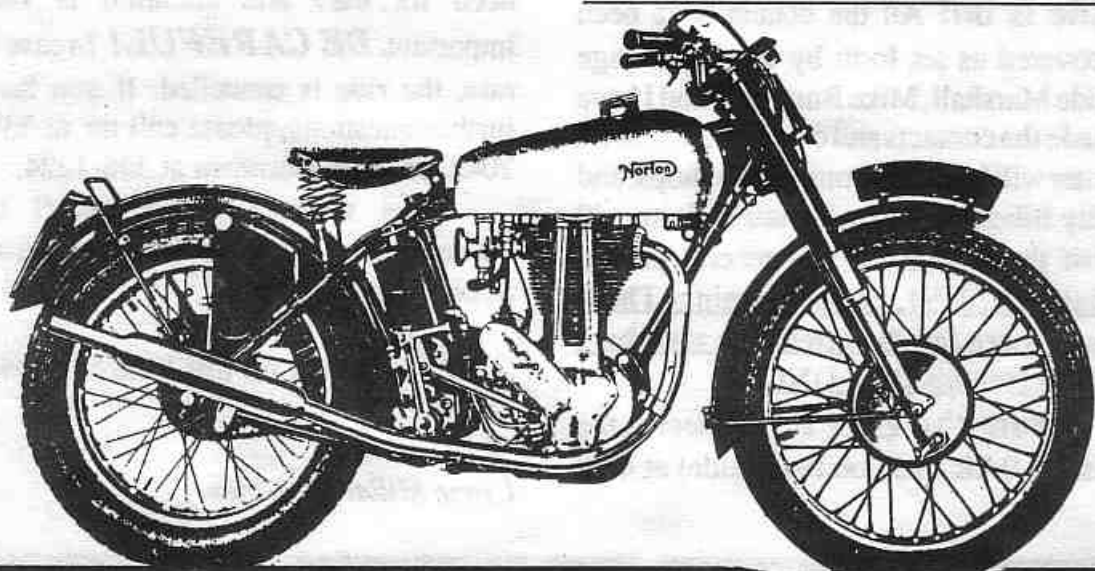
March 14--East Bay
Spaghetti Factory, Jack London Square,
Oakland (tentative)

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!

June 13-- South Bay
Harry's Hoffbrau, El Camino near
Castro Street, Mountain View



Over the Bars . . .

My sincere apologies for driving my car to the last meeting at Harry's Hoffbrau! I had what I thought was a flay tyre, but on the other hand, Mike Burnham spent some time in my garage alone. It is possible that he.....

Anyway, the weather did look threatening!

The last Club Ride was an interesting one and covered some great country-fantastic back roads, and a good lunch at the Royal Oak.

The ride was not without mishap, however! Todd Kennedy took a nasty high speed fall that had a serious effect on the day. Todd's bike was severely damaged, and Todd was banged around and injured. A group of four did a massive repair and patch project- and in just under an hour, we had his bike rideable. I believe that the accident was caused by loose spokes on his rear wheel. Bikes can always be repaired...

Todd, we all hope that you are feeling better, and that your ankle mends quickly!

The Easter Ride! March 31, 1991! Set your alarm clocks! The ride is on! All the details have been covered as set forth by the Great Sage Ride Marshall, Mike Burnham, and I have made the contacts and covered the P.R.. A letter will be handed out in bike shops, and City Bike, courtesy of Brian Walton, will post the details for the general public. March 31, 1991, Easter Morning- These details are for the attending members of the Norton Club ONLY!

From the East Bay: Meet at the Ashby BART station (west side) at 4:00

AM. Lou Caputo will lead the group out at 4:15 AM and head for the Richmond Bridge toll plaza where you will meet up with the stragglers- and then, over the bridge, to Tam Junction where you meet the rest of the group.

From San Francisco and the South Bay: Meet at the parking lot by the toll plaza at 4:15 AM. We leave at 4:30 AM for Tam Junction where we meet the East Bay Group.

From Marin and the North Bay: Meet at Tam Junction at 5:00 where the rest of the Club will rendezvous.

We all leave for the top at 5:20 to enjoy the sunrise and each other's company. We have about two or three hours to look over other people's bikes and reflect on life!

On or about 8-8:30, the Norton Club will head down the mountain to the Lighthouse Restaurant for breakfast. They will have a special meal waiting for us.

Remember to dress warmly and bring your Thermos of hot tea or coffee. some members might bring coffee cake to share.

There are lots of other riders, and the need for care and attention is very important. **BE CAREFUL!** In case of rain, the ride is cancelled. If you have further questions, please call me at 334-2042, or Mike Burnham at 346-1224.

This ride is dedicated to Marshall- who isn't so mean after all!

Well, that's it for this little chat Over The Bars.

Lynne Miller, President

Minutes of February Meeting

The February 14th meeting of the NOC was called to order at 8:04 pm, at Harry's Hofbrau in Mt. View. There were 32 members present (good turnout).

The first item on the floor was the upcoming Easter morning ride up Mt. Tam. Lynn stated that he has most of the details taken care of. Advertisements for the ride will contain a disclaimer stating that the NOC is ORGANIZING this event NOT Sponsoring!! Make plans to meet at Tam Junction. Departure time is set for 5:20am. Wear warm clothes and bring coffee.

Volunteers are needed to work in the booth at the upcoming Clubman's All British Motorcycle show on March 24 at the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds. Interested parties should contact Bonnie Beneveds at 415-793-0704.

Discussion then turned to the International Rally & Raffle Bike. The bike will be shown at Rabers and they have agreed to promote ticket sales. Andy made mention that the bike was in need of a gearbox side cover, Phil Radford graciously donated one. Two ongoing issues of discussion are what type of raffle tickets to be used and should the winner be present at the rally. Harry's State of the Rally Address noted that Joe Edwards has Camp Richardson's brochures, Maya stated that the promo packages will be mailed out soon with brochures included. A note of "CAUTION" there are "Meat-Eating" Bees at the camp grounds! (This is no joke!). Leo has the artwork for the

unofficial Rally T-shirts: a Slot Machine displaying 3 Norton's. NOC member, who was a former member has offered his services for first-aid emergencies at the rally. The possibility for a Five Passes Poker Run is still being sorted out. there is a \$19,000 operating budget for the rally. See Harry for breakdown.

Treasury report stands at \$1084. Several new members (Welcome Aboard!). The club is now 194 members strong.

Andy thanked everyone for materials donated and moral support.

The February ride to Royal Oak Pub in Clayton is scheduled for Feb. 24 (Note: Owner is a fellow Brit bike enthusiast!).

Once again, Eric Swortsfigure's bid for support met with much apathy (Scribe's note: how 'bout some support for a winning combination?!). The possibility of a future club ride to Sears Point to show support was mentioned.

Yours truly will pursue the printing of Club Courtesy Cards for members.

Attendees were introduced all around. the meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.



... Side Trips

by Andy McKerral

Last month, I promised a report on the situation with Norton PLC. The whole mish-mash strongly resembled a bizarre amalgam of our own savings and loan debacle, together with the persistent, long-running goofiness of a soap opera... so, I decided to take it upon myself to investigate the situation, confirm or deny reports and details, sort through the morass, interview people, and report the facts so that our Nortoning Public could know what to expect. I will do this first, but I will also assume the responsibility for my opinion on the recent events in England afterward. I will also give a brief update on the Frankenbike.

The whole matter began when Philippe LeRoux, CEO of Norton PLC, together with Chairman of the Board, Jimmy Tildesley (evidently, according to the press releases, these men are relatives), proceeded to set up a takeover bid for a German fastener manufacturer called FUS. LeRoux purportedly borrowed a sum of money against established Norton interests, allegedly to assist Tildesley in acquiring FUS. Under normal, conservative business practices, there would be nothing unusual about this event... except that under certain rules, such use of funds has to be approved for such a purpose by the shareholders. Here's where it gets *really* fuzzy, folks- so bear with me.

Two simultaneous, completely unrelated things appear to have happened next: first, Yehuda Mendelson, a top internal manager, discovered this transaction and sought to block it,

complaining that FUS was being bought FROM a company controlled by family interests (Tildesley) of Norton's own chairman (LeRoux) for something upward of 170% of its original purchase price a year previous. At the same time, there was the slight matter of the 195,000 pound loan Mr. LeRoux made, and when the time came to pay it off, his check bounced.... that's right, folks, bounced. The receiving agent was left with the debt of the FUS deal (7.5 million pounds) the broker was five days late in covering the transaction because a couple other investors got cold feet, and the resulting scramble to cover everyone's corporate asses must have truly been something to see.

Enter two Department of Trade and Industry inspectors (our equivalent of the Federal Trade Commission). "...methinks there's something afoot here!" Three days later, Philippe LeRoux resigns. Money starts to ooze out of the floorboards to complete the FUS takeover. James Tildesley assumes LeRoux's position in the Firm- Norton Motors cuts their workforce from 105 to 80- and the group's advisors begin to review the possibility of scaling back the loss-making motorcycle segment of their business.

I interviewed Bob Raber of Raber's Parts Mart in San Jose by telephone, to find out if he had heard any pertinent news about these events, and, if so, he felt they would impact the Commando Spares segment coming from the U.K. "No," Raber stated flatly, "In fact, I called the distributor and asked whether I should start panic buying to fill up my stock, and he told me that, if anything, it should be better than before."

I asked Bob the man's reasoning behind this reply. "Now that they're under investigation, they're running a very tight operation, and they realize that it's in their own best interests to do so."

I then contacted Phil Radford, of Fair Spares America, for comment. "Norton Motors itself is divided by a chain link fence in their warehouse," Phil told me. "On one side is the spares section, and the other side is the rest of the Operation. Virtually all of the Commando spares are manufactured by outside contractors to Norton specification, and Norton acts as their own distributor for these spares."

So, what's a Norton owner to think? The British DTI is still reviewing Norton's business at last report... and the highly successful F-1 might end up being much like Neil Young's description of Johnny Rotten: "It's better to burn out than it is to rust- the King is gone, but he's not forgotten..."

I, for one, can't help but find the whole matter to be pathetic. Doubtless, our friends in the U.K. would indeed mind if we Yanks undertook to advise them on matters of business integrity, and they might very well politely tell us to go to hell in such a way that we might enjoy the trip- but consider the overall situation:

It makes very good sense that if you possess a unique product or service, which under the stewardship of professional, ethical people, the business begins to flourish, you need to be very careful to protect those interests so that you can begin to build (or, in the case of the British motorcycle industry, rebuild) upon your successes. We in America refer to this sort of phenomenon as "growth". Carefully managed and nurtured, this growth can

result in something we in America refer to as "success".

Norton Villiers Triumph folded in 1976 because losses exceeded profit, and because the product didn't compete with a Japanese onslaught of media blitz and public confidence. It took an entrepreneur like LeRoux to "talk up" the rebirth of the Norton motorcycle, get the investors lined up, start the process going, and go after the Public Relations folks effectively. Unfortunately, entrepreneurs (even in the States) know how to get things started, but seldom if ever know how to maintain a sustained flight without crashing and burning.

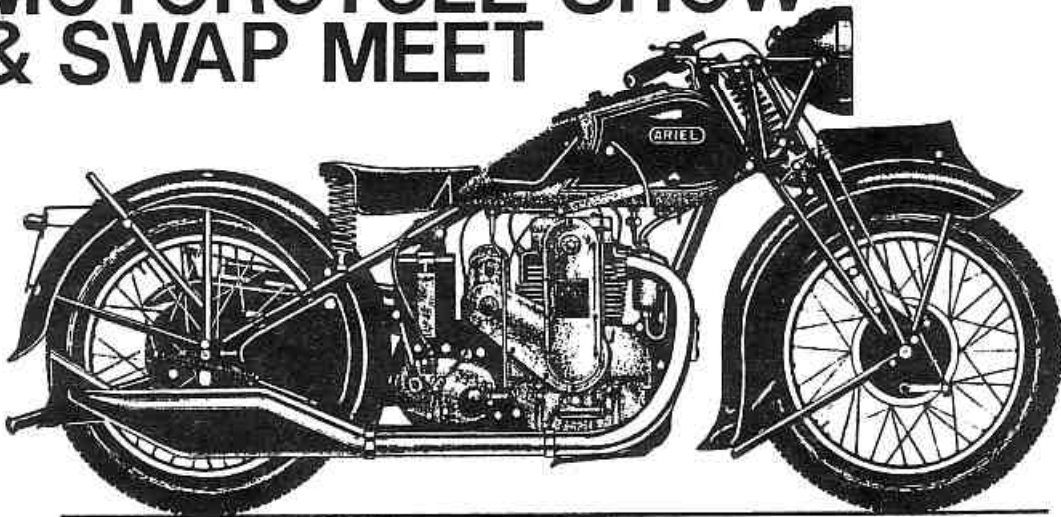
I sincerely hope that a change of upper level management, and the "reality check" of having to be accountable to it's shareholders will cause Norton PLC to protect it's products and services by gaining a new-found interest in protecting it's one unrecoverable asset- the old Norton owner- by paying attention to sound, sensible, and prudent business methods.

The Club Bike has recaptured the imagination of the membership! Jeezus, it's nice to get visitors. Jerry Joliff has donated parts cleaning, stainless braid and fittings for the oil lines, and footpeg rubbers. Harry Bunting has donated a front fender, and parts cleanup. Ken Armann has donated a new grab rail with brackets, a left handlebar wire bundle, and is presently searching for a tail light assembly. Phil Radford came through with an excellent quality gearbox outer cover. Brad Green and his lady have donated some high-tech outer cover polishing, and a rear fender.

We still need that elusive chain guard and the even more elusive center (or is it

(continued on Page 13)

THE FOURTH ANNUAL CLUBMAN'S ALL-BRITISH MOTORCYCLE SHOW & SWAP MEET



Honoring the motorcycles built by **ARIEL**

SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 1991

SANTA CLARA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Open for Show & Swap Entries 6:30 AM

GENERAL ADMISSION \$3

AWARDS

STREET & COMPETITION CLASSES

Show Bike Registration \$10 (\$25 for 3 or more)

Trophies also for Unrestored, Specials, Peoples' Choice & Best of Marque

RAFFLE

WIN A 1967 BSA SPITFIRE

Tickets \$1 in advance or at the Show

BUY & SELL

SWAP SPACES \$20

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WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE ARIEL, AJS/MATCHLESS, GREEVES, ROYAL ENFIELD,
NORTON, TRIUMPH, VELOCETTE AND VINCENT OWNERS CLUBS, THE A.H.R.M.A.,
AND THE BSA OWNERS CLUB OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

FOR DETAILS CONTACT:

Don Danmeier 415-897-6145 (days) 415-898-0330 (eves to 9)
Jeff Sunzeri 408-578-1936 (days)

ALL ENTRIES/CHECKS PAYABLE TO: BSAOC, P.O. BOX 594, NOVATO, CA 94948

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

The February Ride Report

(...or, Where the hell is Lynne Miller?)

by Mike Burnham, Rides Marshall

The turnout for the East Bay Ride was much better than expected... considering that the original listing in the January Notice put the meeting place on Ashby instead of Powell Street, and that the February Notice deleted the meeting time, it was amazing that anybody showed up at all! (Ed.'s note- hey, lighten up... my copy is only as good as the details I receive **no later than the 20th of the month... from month to month.** Plans previously made have been known to change over the course of thirty days...) Yet, 15 riders showed up at the right place on the right time. Must be something in that Berkeley air-

At about ten o'clock, the ride proceeded east on Powell, then west to Ashby and east once again to Claremont where the overpopulated area stops and the twisties begin. Claremont having ended, we then turned North on Grizzly Peak Blvd. to Wildcat Canyon Rd. which starts off with gentle swerves and ends with very tight twisties. At the intersection of Wildcat Canyon, Bear Creek, and San Pablo Dam Road, some poor hapless soul lost a float bowl. (more on this later) We then continued on Bear Creek Rd.- a fast, sweeping stretch with much opportunity to get the adrenaline flowing. Bear Creek Rd. then terminates at Alhambra Valley Rd. where we turned east once again. Alhambra is a narrow country road with still more twisties and very nice scenery. Alhambra then begins to show the signs of urban sprawl, and abruptly turns north into "Historic Martinez". At the north end of town, we found our way to Waterfront

road and then to Port Chicago Highway. These roads are straight as an arrow- and, on a map, look very dull. However, a road is what you make of it, and Nortons go well in a straight line, too. Port Chicago takes you into Pittsburgh- and, where the road ends, one picks up Willow Pass Rd. which eventually becomes Parkside Drive. When we arrived at Railroad Ave., we headed south, and at that point I decided to take a head count: one, two- hmm, twelve. "Guess I better go look for some lost Nortons."

As I began to retrace our route, a few more bikes appeared and all was well. So, I addressed the group: "...anyone see Lynne Miller?"

Susan Wood stepped up and asked, "Is he the one on the yellow bike?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Oh- we lost HIM a long time ago!"

"Where?"

"The last time I saw him, he was trying to start his bike back at Bear Creek Road."

"Shit."

Just then, another club member had brought to my attention the fact that another member's gearbox had run dry. After some head scratching, Lawrence Gill agreed to stay behind to help Todd Kennedy with his gearbox. I took the rest of the group up Railroad Ave., which becomes Kirker Pass Rd., which becomes Clayton Rd., where we gassed up before going to the Royal Oak Pub for lunch. When we arrived, guess who was already there?

"What happened to you?" I asked.

"My float bowl fell off," Lynne replied. Lynne did not appear to be amused at having been left for dead one hundred-plus miles ago. Can't say I blamed him.

At this point, I must digress. Last year, five members showed up for this ride...

Lynne Miller, Don Danmier, Leo Christianson, myself, and the mysterious Eric on his Triumph. Very near the spot where our fearless President lost his float bowl, Leo's gearbox packed it in. As his bike slowed, I noticed his kickstart lever digging into the tarmac. I pulled up in front of him, and waived him over to the side- while Miller, at that time, the Ride Coordinator, was accelerating away! I gave Leo my instant layshaft bearing diagnosis... and he was quite upset, as I recall- but, hey, I was getting upset as we waited for Don and Lynne to return...and we waited...and waited- Oops, they go that Berkeley air again. Must have been blowing over the hillside.

ANYWAY, back at the Royal Oak, Lawrence and Todd have arrived. "Everything okay?" I queried.

Lawrence responded with, "Well, I've got some good news and some bad news. The bad news is the guy on the Triumph couldn't start his bike as the rest of the group left us back on Railroad Avenue. I think that his ignition went dead."

"What else could go wrong?" I thought. I shouldn't have thought that.

After a satisfying lunch, we headed east on Marsh Creek Rd., with the intention of turning off on Morgan Territory Road. I overshot the turnoff, and two people followed me. As I slowed to turn around, they passed me... and they kept on going. I made a U-turn to Morgan Territory Rd. and waited for the rest of the bikes... and waited... and waited. A red sports car pulled up and the girl in the passenger seat said, "Are you with that group back there?"

I nodded.

"One of them has fallen off!"

When I arrived at the scene of the accident, there were several Club members

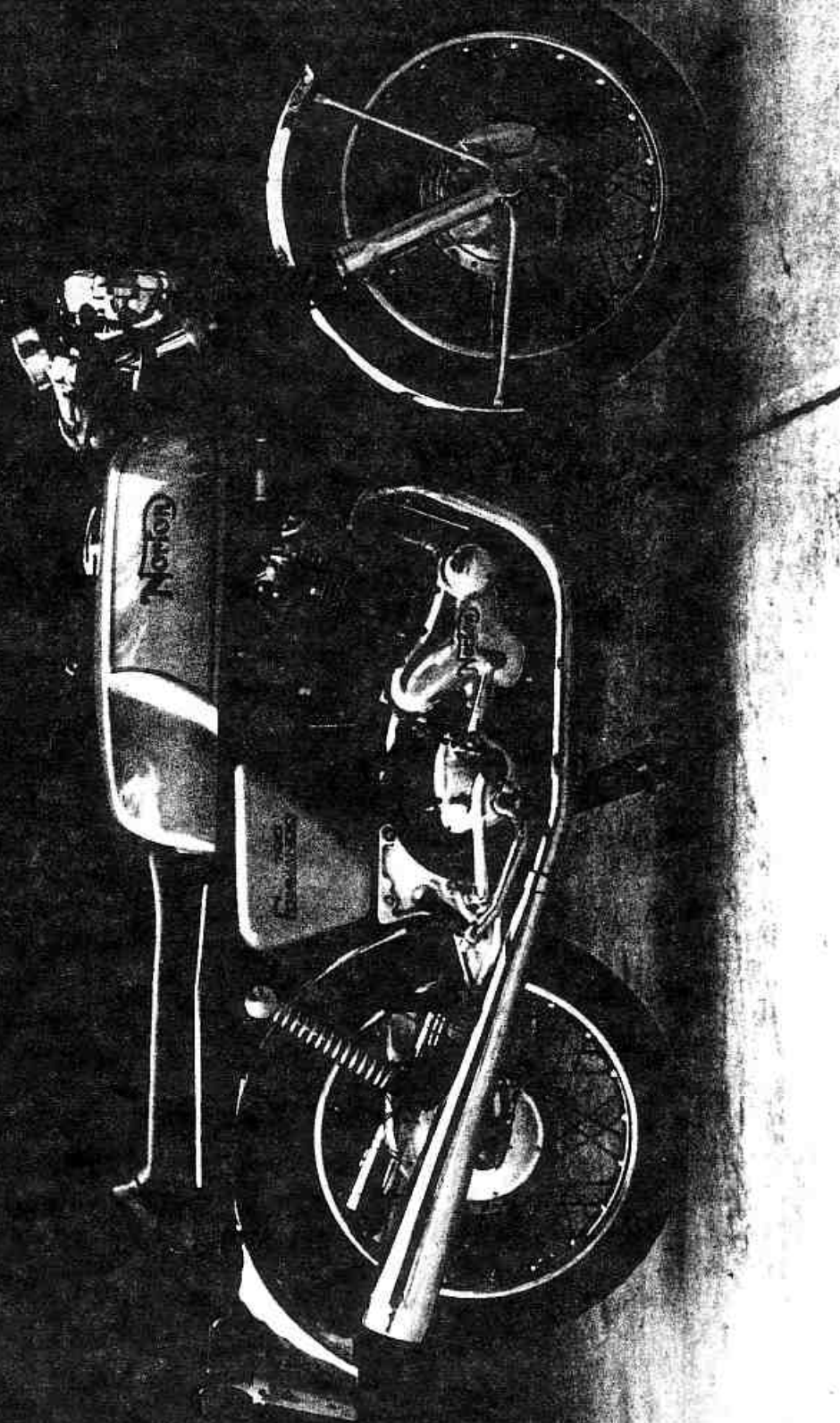
picking up bits from all over the road... tail light lens, tools, seat, mirror- even the heel from one of his boots. Todd Kennedy had taken a nasty spill, and had proven the effectiveness of a helmet and leathers. He was badly shaken, but he nonetheless retained a sense of humor. Meanwhile, all the bits that had been gathered up were being refastened, handlebars straightened, footrests bent back, spokes tightened- the "on-the-road" repair savvy of the Norton riders proved to be unsurpassed. In about an hour, bike and rider were able to return home under their own power. (Ed.'s note: later confirmed was the fact that Todd drove home with a mangled ankle and a concussion... even with wearing a helmet. While it may piss off Harley riders, the fact remains that helmets save lives.) At this point, interest in completing the ride had greatly diminished, and only a bare handful continued.

Engines idling, sweltering in overdressed February clothing in 70 degree heat, the ride attempted to continue. At some point in time afterward where Lawrence gives me the "thumbs-up" approval, he asks me, "Where's Lynne?" Double shit. That fifth helmet was not El Presidente.

Down to four riders at Tassajara Rd., we went east on Castro Valley Rd. The original intention was to get onto Redwood Rd. which, if you are not familiar with it, you should be. Ending east of Oakland, the remaining three of us (which were Gerald Mauricio, Lawrence Gill, and myself) decided to call it a day. After 200 miles, and almost as many mishaps, this Ride Coordinator stuff is hard work. See ya on Easter Morning.

(P.S.- Lynne, I guess I owe you a breakfast at Alice's.)

This is the Legendary 'Dumpster Special'...
The sole survivor of a very limited production.
As they say in the Old Country, "Eat your 'Art out'"



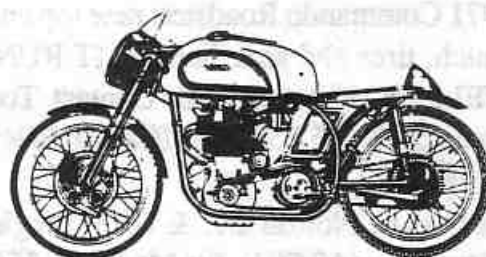
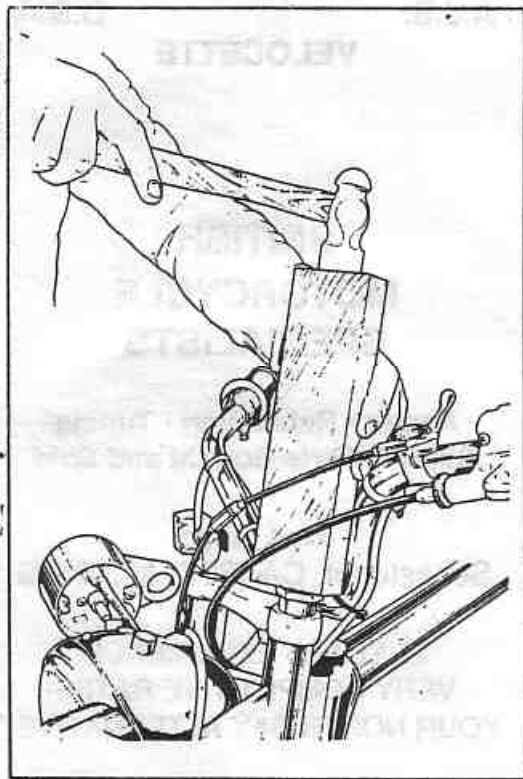
Motorcycle

Astride on Steel
 Youth storms the street
 with four-point feel
 of hands and feet
 on speed and noise
 and every pound
 in two point poise
 of wheels on ground

Through prim, sedate
 suburban quiet
 he plunges straight
 his rampant riot
 and steers a force
 that blends a scope
 of lion, horse,
 and antelope.

-Benjamin Sturgis Pray

...copied for The Notice by Ron Aticberry



1963 catalog drawing of Manx 30M and 40M

Side Trips continued from Page 7

centre?) stand. Beyond that, the parts requirements for this machine are met! Thanks to one and all- Tom Dable, Marick Payton, and all the rest! We may discover a few minor sundry items of need, but at least the bike has the bare basics now.

Last-minute bulletins: The petrol tank has been painted and clear-coated by a fellow guitarist friend of mine who is a genuine master at his craft; the general assembly has, for all intents and purposes, been done, and the remainder of tasks necessary to bring the beast back to life will hopefully be completed in very short order. Harry is in the process of obtaining a chain guard. I **STILL** need a center stand and a tail light fairing, however. Is it possible that someone may have one?

Thanks for the information this month are in order. John Covell provided the Nexus media information about the affairs of Norton PLC. He will, from time to time, provide articles dealing with local Norton enthusiasts... in-depth interviews, candid observations, and generally reporting on the foibles and idiosyncrasies of Nortoning here in the San Francisco Bay Area.

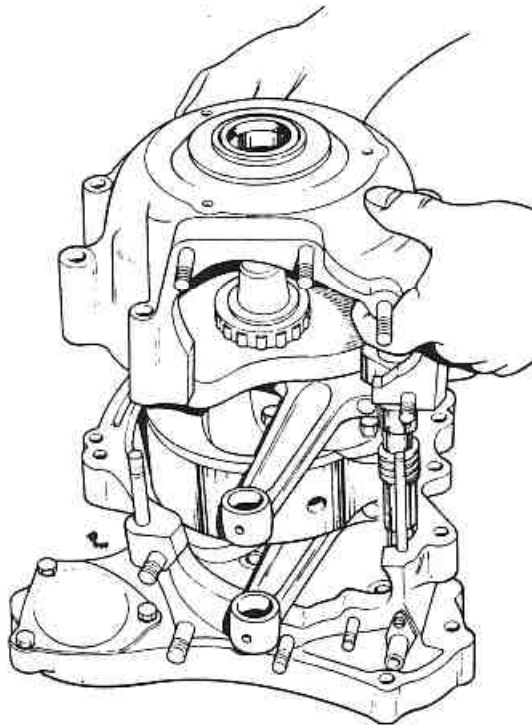
Next month: **FRANKENBIKE LIVES!**

FOR SALE:

1971 Commando Roadster: new top end, clutch, tires and seat, license- IT RUNS WELL, Y'ALL... \$1800. Contact Tom Spoicich at (415)537-4559 (Castro Valley)

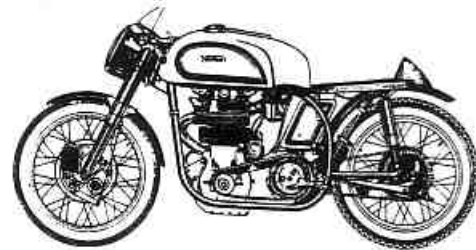
FOR SALE:

Early-style Norton s.v. & o.h.v. singles oil tank cap (A2/291), fits Model 18, 16H, ES2, 500T, etc., 1946-1955. Just re-chromed, \$50.00. Contact Art Sirota, 1281 Laurel St., Menlo Park, Ca. 94025 (415)327-3167

**ADVERTISING RATES**

	<u>1/4 Pg.</u>	<u>1/2 Pg.</u>	<u>Full Pg.</u>
6 Mos.	\$35	\$70	\$140
1 Yr.	\$60	\$120	\$240

Send ad copy and check to the Publisher



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A.J.S.**

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Norton

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DELUXE**



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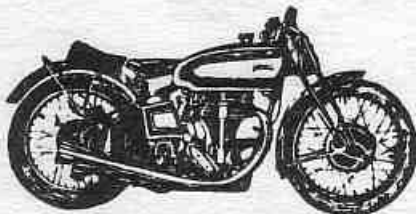
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