



# Norton Notice



The Newsletter of the  
Northern California Norton Owners Club

No. 173

September, 1992

Susan Wood and Ed,  
In a rarely seen pose...



...Standing Still!



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 20th 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.

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**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 Schedule

*The Old Timer's Ride and Club Picnic Memorial Park, September 13th.* See the centerfold flyer for details.

*October 18th- The San Benito Ride*  
Grover Buhr, ride leader. Another new one for the Club. Highway 25. Probably a lot more fun without 105+-degree weather.

*Consult your Rides Calendar for further information*

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### Events Calendar

*The Old Timer's Ride and Club Picnic Memorial Park in San Mateo County, at Huckleberry Flat, Site One.*

September 13th. Rendezvous at Alice's at 10:00, then proceed sans the Rides Marshall. The BSA Club will also be attending, so we gotta be on our "best" behavior. (...NOT.)

*Chicken Ranch Racing Promotions presents a Vintage Extravaganza- "The Sights and Sounds of Yesteryear"*  
Argyll Park- call (916) 989-4938

*The Annual Club Christmas Party Farmhouse Restaurant in Redwood City*  
December 13th. Cocktails from 6-7, dinner served at 7PM. Prime rib, BBQ plate, seafood, soup, salad and Dessert- \$15 per person.

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### Meeting Schedule

**September 10, 1992- San Mateo**  
**The Prince of Wales Pub**  
25th Avenue, San Mateo. Great food, beer and ambiance. Use your darts to protect yourself from aggressive rats.

**October 8, 1992- South Bay**  
**Harry's Hoffbrau**  
El Camino Real, near Castro Street in Mountain View. A wide selection of everything drinkable.

**November 12, 1992- East Bay**  
**Brew Pub on the Green-**  
3350 Stevenson Ave., Fremont.  
Fresh, cold beers made on the premises (the stout is heartily recommended), good food, and a large meeting room.

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### Editor's Note

In the fury to get this thing out to the members, it occurred to me that there is a new advertiser to the *Notice* who hasn't received press for two issues- due to PICT file formatting screwups by your Editor. My sincere apologies to Brad and Kathy Green of *Redline Metal Restorations!* The next issue will have your Ad!

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### Graphics Contributions

#### Photography:

Lou Caputo, Gerald Mauricio  
**Press Production and Halftones:**  
John & Carrie Follett:  
*White Oak Press, San Carlos, CA*

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by Joe Edwards, President

Well by now, we should be close to getting back on track with the *Norton Notice*. I realize that we've had a few delays, but this has not been the fault of the Editor. If for anything, we've had to wait for items that needed to be placed in the Notice. Once again, I ask you... Please get your material into Andy (*Ed's Note*-practice "safe journalism" and *send* me your material- don't "get it into me"...) by the 20th of the month. I know that if you call him, he'll hold you a spot in the *Notice*. Andy does one fine job for us, but he does need your help. Without a doubt, we have one of the best Club publications around- why not be a part of it?

Those of you who made the Gathering of Nortons ride must have a few tales to tell. First off, I did trailer my Norton to Dardanelle Resort. I left on Thursday afternoon and unloaded, only to find that I had left my key at home! But not to fear... the one and only Alan "the wonderful" Goldstein, who jumped the wires, slapped me on the head, and sent me on my way. Alan does a great job- ask him about it sometime. A little bit of rain, a little bit of heat, and some of the best roads: a person can ride... and ride... and ride... I'm sure that you get the point.

Due to the fact that we are a little late, We'll vote on the Club By-Laws at the September 10th meeting at The Prince of Wales Pub. Speaking of "that place", I have been in touch with the owner. He did inform me that the upstairs room will be cleaned up. I also told him that we would like to see the restroom clean. Jack told me that he and his crew would clean it up. I let Jack know that the members were

more than just a little upset over the conditions of the place. We'll see. For those of you who have another place in mind, just give me a call and the board will give it a look-see.

I learned a few things at "The Gathering"... Phil Radford's great dog can and does teach Phil new tricks- in fact, he was holding classes on the porch. In total, we had about 28 folks there; Mario Savino and a few people from the Monterey Bay Club, and Terry and Mark smoking a few corners. All in all, it was really great.

Let's not forget the upcoming Old Timer's Ride and Picnic, which is going to be outstanding. I know that Lynne and Mike have set up a great ride. The final touches are being placed on the food: we know that you will enjoy it. Bring a friend! As you know, the BSA Club will also be joining us. This is going to be one great event.

Also, please keep in mind that the Club Christmas Party will be held on December 13th at The Farmhouse in Redwood City, same as last year. We should start dinner around 7:00 PM. (*Ed.'s Note*: bagpipes for dessert) If anyone would like to help spruce up the place for the Christmas Spirit, let me know.

We should be set on a new tee shirt design, and the Bridge School Charity Poker Run that we will schedule for around May of next year.

Those of you who would like to try out some new rides for next year should let us know. I'm certain that Mike would be able to use some new ideas. We'd like to fill the voids with rides that appeal.

Well, looks like it's time to get out of Dodge... *Joe Edwards*

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## Minutes of August Meeting

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The August meeting of the Northern California Norton Owner's Club convened at Tonto's Restaurant in San Francisco on Thursday, August 13th at 7:40 PM by Andy McKerral who conducted the meeting for Joe Edwards, who was in Downieville for the Gathering of Nortons. 19 folks were in attendance.

Andy stated that the last newsletter was prepared on the new Club Macintosh Classic II computer. The current *Notice* is running over 1 week behind schedule, due to missing articles.

Andy also stated that Joe Edwards is waiting for information from The Bridge School about insurance arrangements for the planned Poker Run Benefit tentatively scheduled for May of 1993. As the information comes in, we'll put it out.

Rides Coordinator Mike Burnham gave a report on the upcoming "Old-timer's Ride", scheduled for September 13th. The ride will leave from Alice's Restaurant at 10 AM for a picnic at Huckleberry Flat. The NOC is happy to announce that the BSA Owner's Club will be our guests for the barbeque. Mike also mentioned that all of the food has been donated, and that Grover, Andy and Joe are working out the logistics details. Because of the liability factor involved, there will be no beer or wine served at this event. Soda pop will be served.

Grover Buhr reported that our current balance was \$3300+ , after an outlay for \$1800 for the new computer and printer. There currently exist 215 paid members. Approximately 50 members have not renewed. Additionally, Grover

reported that he has given The Farmhouse in Redwood City the deposit for the Christmas Party. The Club has purchased a stamp machine to speed up the mailing of the Notice. Also, due to the problems with keeping current dues with the UKNOC, he will forward all of the paperwork for anyone interested.

Since Tonto's did not receive advanced notice of this meeting, a motion was passed that the Recording Secretary will notify each venue prior to each meeting. (Thanks, guys...)

After much heated debate, Art Sirota brought forth a motion (seconded by Jerry Joliff) to drop the Prince of Wales Pub as a club meeting venue. This motion was passed by a show of hands. Not all members present voted. The next motion carried was to try Gus's Restaurant in Redwood City for the next Peninsula venue. Andy McKerral then stated that in view of President Joe Edward's absence, that this vote was provisional, and should be repeated at the next meeting on September 10th at the Prince of Wales.

A new Club Member- John Laggart- was introduced. John said, "My '74 Noron and I could sure use some help in getting it back together!"

John- I'm sorry that I didn't get your phone number. Call m, and I will make sure that it's printed next month so you can get the help that you requested.

The meeting Adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted:  
***Duncan Ferguson***  
Recording Secretary  
(510) 489-0135

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## August Ride Report

by *Mike Burnham, Rides Marshall*

When I arrived at the Lighthouse in Sausalito at about 8:05, there was just one person, Jim Carton. This was not a good sigh. I knew I could count on three or four more because they told me they were coming. James Langan, Patrick McDowell, Lynne Miller, and Lawrence Gill. One of the first things that Jim told me when I sat down was that Patrick had phoned and said his bike would not start. Ugh. This could be the worse turnout all year I thought. By 8:35, no one else had arrived yet, and my hopes of a successful ride were sinking fast. Then there was the unmistakable sound of a lone Commando snorting through Dunstall silencers. Lynn Miller had arrived, and shortly thereafter, James pulled up on his Jaguar Mist Green Roadster. I'm feeling a bit relieved by now, but still no Lawrence, and it's time to depart for points north. Then, as we were almost out of town and on the freeway, I heard another unmistakable sound, a Ducati on hard acceleration. As I looked toward the sound, an orange flash penetrated the shrubbery that Sausalito uses as a divider, and I knew Lawrence had arrived on his Duck. We almost missed each other, and I had to chase him back to the restaurant. He had brought two other riders, his girlfriend, Donovan on his (Lawrence's) Bonneville, and a friend on a BM. Finally, as a group we're beginning to look respectable.

A straightforward one hour jog on the freeway, then 116, and we're pulling on to Green Valley Rd. In two-hundred feet a quick left in front of Fred Twiggs' house and we're on a gravel easement alongside his house and shop, which is towards the back. The first thing I see is a sizeable collection of motorcycles and people, and my fears of a shabby turnout disappear like beer at a Norton meeting. I'm then greeted by an enthusiastic Jerry Kaplan, "What a great turnout!" were the first words out of his mouth, and music to

my ears. The next thing I noticed was that there were several people sucking down brewskies at 10:00 in the morning. Yeah, these are my kind of people. The Hamm's for brunch bunch.

During the next hour of socializing and admiring motorcycles, both in and out of the shop, even more people showed up. The most interesting and eclectic assortment of machinery I can ever remember on a Norton Ride is the only way to describe the twenty-four (?) bikes in attendance.

In previous discussions with Fred, he had told me that there were some optional routes we could take depending on how long people wanted to ride. All three routes however started out the same, West on Graton Rd. From here we would head north on Hiway One to Jenner. It was above Jenner that we would have our three options of ever increasing loops, boiling down to a two and a half hour ride, a four hour ride, or a six hour ride. It was thought that we could get a consensus before the ride started, but after talking with only a couple of people, I realized the decision was up to me. The four hour ride was it, as it was very similar to a ride I had read about in a recent local freebie motorcycle rag, and the length of time was about right. Up Meyer's grade Rd. to King's Rd., which heads west, then south to Cazadero where we would stop for lunch.

And while that is the overview, the details were much more interesting. Knowing ahead of time that Fred's riding style can be classified as spirited, I knew he was going to set a fast pace, but I did not know that I would find myself at the back of the pack on the first road of the ride. This Sonoma crowd takes no prisoners. At the end of Graton Rd. is Occidental, and it was here that I finally caught up with the front runners. It was also here that I realized we would need someone to direct the slower riders who were less familiar with the roads, so towards the back I stayed. It was also in Occidental where a bit of magic occurred. Well, at least a statistical

*Continued on Page Thirteen*

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## Membership and Money Report

By Grover Buhr

This month's ramblings will be less of a report on the membership or the treasury than a paen to a long weekend of riding. However the numbers (such as they are) are as follows: we have 213 paid-up members as of this writing (long ago, now you're reading it), and approximately \$3,386 in the bank. The kitty is quite a bit smaller than last month primarily because of the brand new computer for preparing the Notice. I can't do it justice, so Andy will have to praise all it's turbojets and Eisenhower Slam Bam Cams.

The weekend in Dardanelles was fabulous, if seat-punishing. Since the speedo drive on my blue 850 (Ed) turned to oatmeal on Panoche Road the other week, I rode last year's gambling winnings (the Lake Tahoe Raffle Bike-alias Trixie). I've been tearing up the local roads and commuting to work on Trixie, but hadn't taken her out on a long trip. The forward final drive sprocket has 19 teeth, rather than 21, so the bike is much more peppy than the 850. I was worried about the higher RPMs for the long highway cruises, but didn't need to be. The ride is very steady, if rarely relaxing. Unfortunately, it gets only about 25 miles per gallon, but it sure is fun!

Harry bunting met me Friday at the Sky Kitchen and we headed out across the Gobi Desert. We gassed up at Oakdale (or Escalon) where it was probably about 105 in the shade, and down the road caught up with Susan Wood (whose bike is also named Ed...)

and Lou Caputo. They'd been slowed up by a flat (Susan saved the nail as a souvenir- an 8-penny, I think). We four joined the long, long line of campers and cars and put-putted down 108/120. We thought all the damned traffic would turn south at Yosemite Junction... but they didn't. Well, we got an interesting lesson from Lou in British-style riding (left side of road) for a few miles. We arrived in Dardanelles early evening, after Harry's clutch broke and it rained on us- then we were dragged off to a very nice restaurant with the most god-awful potato pancakes in the world.

On Saturday, a bunch of us followed Tom Dabel up 108 and over Sonora Pass. This is a beautiful 5 or 6-dimensional road. Every

large hill or curve is composed of smaller hills and curves which are, in turn, made up of even smaller hills and curves. A road that makes you feel like it's stretching, and forces you to burst out laughing or cheer. WOW! Along were Joe, Tom, Gerald, and Shirley riding on back of her dad Ben's Electraglide, Susan, John and Carol Bria, Alan, Kevin from New Zealand, Harry, Lou, Leo, Jim Carlton, and who else? Can't



Grover

Diggin' on his bad sled...

remember, except that Tom Terry and his two shadows passed us going both ways (and we were going fast, I thought). Anyway, we buzzed past the Marine Mountain Warfare Training Camp to 395 and had some wonderful high desert riding into Bridgeport.

We had lunch at the Sportsman Inn, where we were joined by a crazy man on a Vincent Rapide, gassed up and drove into a mercifully short rain storm towards Bodie. The road to Bodie was great until it turned suddenly into dirt halfway out. People started

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## Side Trips

by Andy McKerral, Editor

For once, this month's column actually has something to do with the name of the column (!). And, as a matter of course, the following incident actually has a moral of some universal value.

I will preface this information by stating that all the facts contained herein may be corroborated by simply asking Joe Edwards, Tom Dabel, or Alan Goldwater to affirm this report. They might have various opinions about how I chose to *embellish* the facts, but the facts themselves stand as actual, true incidents.

We begin this saga by setting the scenario: I am firmly ensconced on my couch, comfortably eating microwave popcorn, sipping on a gin gimlet, and watching an old Perry Mason episode on channel 20 late on a recent Saturday night. My telephone rings... I pick up the receiver and the voice on the other end of the phone replies, "Hi, it's Grover! You feel like taking a ride tomorrow?"

"Sure!" I reply. "Where are we going?"

"South," Grover says.

"Okay- so how long is the ride?"

"Oh, I figure about 110 miles- about the same length as the Flying Lady Ride."

"Sounds good," I answer, "So when and where do we meet?"

"San Carlos airport cafe, 8:00"

"8:00?! Isn't that a little early to meet for a ride?" anticipating that perhaps I had gotten myself into something bizarre.

"Yeah. Joe and a couple guys are gonna meet us at 'Breakfast Only' on Monterey Highway in San Jose."

"Okay," I respond, my voice dripping with recalcitrance, "I'll be there." As I ponder the following day's events, I now regard my response with the same dread I feel every time I hear Arnold Schwarzenegger grunt in yet another one of his Terminator movies, "...

Ah'll be Baaack."

I meet Grover at the appointed place, on the appointed hour. To my surprise, the waitress is cute, the coffee is good, and I'm feeling up to a good day's outing. I ask Grover for some of the details of the ride- he draws an innocuous little map which describes someplace I have never *heard* of (let alone visited), so I'm feeling chipper, thinking that this sort of adventure builds character and broadens one's horizons. Tee hee.

So we mount our bikes and shoot down to San Jose for breakfast. Joe and Tom arrive as Grover and I contemplate the meaning of life through profanely liberal servings of hash browns and sausage. The mood is upbeat. The spirits are high. Oh, yeah- where are Brad and Duncan?

After a bellyful of food and an eye-full of various people who patronize this place so early in the morning, we begin our adventure. We go south on Monterey Hwy.- and continue on to Morgan Hill. Tom Dabel begins to sense the beginnings of pensiveness amongst the troops, and takes the lead to bring us to 101 South, where we pass Gilroy and head east on hwy. 25. Eventually, we wind up in Hollister at around 10:45. Grover, being a geologist, takes us on a little side-trip (...that phrase has a certain ring to it, no?) to show us a graphic place in downtown Hollister where the Calaveras Fault runs through. At a 40'-wide place in a residential area, one can easily see the displacement in the roadbed, the brick and concrete soil retaining walls, and sight down the area north and south to see that Jerry Lee Lewis would indeed feel quite comfortable here- "... *uh whole lotta shakin' goin' on...*"

The superlatives from the attendees were bounteous. "Cool, Grover!" "Fascinating, man!" "Wow, we got something to prepare for." Then, I realized that I needed some jing to continue this ride, so I asked someone where the nearest Wells Fargo was. Turns out that there was an ATM close to 25. I pulled in, inserted my card, and I should've taken a lesson from the results: my recently deposited



paycheck had bounced, and thank God for overdraft protection. As I pulled away from the bank, the time/temp sign read, "10:55PM, 96 degrees". Being something of the "eternal optimist", I tend to overlook the obvious signs...

We continued south on 25 until we came to the junction of 25 and a road euphemistically referred to on the map as "J1" (the locals call it Panoche Rd.). At this place is a small general store. There is no gas. We're told that Alan would be here to meet us at 11. I buy a diet Coke, relieve myself, and wonder what we're about to do. Promptly at 11:00, Alan arrives on his Mark 3, already looking somewhat dehydrated. We sit and toss the chips for awhile, then decide to mosey onwards to wherever the hell we're going.

After being on a road like cheery, lush and friendly (*NOT* J1 for about 50 miles in heat like this, with the sun directly overhead par-boiling your brain inside the state-mandated helmet that you are dutifully wearing out in the middle of B.F. Egypt (where nothing- except for your buddies, assorted jackrabbits and an occasional tarantula- is alive for 100 miles in any direction), you then begin to get the feeling that there is probably a band of peyote-crazed Comanches somewhere around the next turn, ready to fill you full of obsidian-tipped arrows and take your scalp home to their squaws for a trophy (...probably inscribed with the Norton logo...).

EVENTUALLY (i.e.: about 65 miles later), we come to a place with a large oak tree (with a bar strategically situated underneath it's branches) literally out in the middle of nowhere, called Panoche. I will not reduce this publication's stature by translating that

word literally from Spanish, but it DID pose more questions than answers. We stopped for beer and gas (in that order), and I asked the barmaid about the origins of this place. She stated that many years ago, there was the largest cinnabar mine in the state in full operation in New Idria, about 22 miles further south along J1. They employed upwards of 400 people there back then, and a new local industry was born. The barmaid explains, "That old, broken down ranch house about 5 miles down the canyon used to be a whorehouse. The gals that worked there pooled their money together and built this place to attract the guys from the mine as a meeting place, so they could clean the guys out of their pay."

"How charming," I thought, "Is this a commentary on the voracity of men's will to survive in such a harsh climate, or a success story of venture capital investments?"

So we settled our bar tab, sweated out the beer in about three minutes, and prepared to go back to Hollister. Grover chirps, "... But I wanna see the mine, and see if J1 cuts through to 25!"

Call it heat prostration- call it insanity- call it anything you like. All I can say is that when we left Panoche headed south on J1, the little thermometer hanging from a branch in a shaded spot underneath the oak tree read 99 degrees. It was 12:30 PM.

20 minutes later, we ford a small stream of water (!?) going across J1- except that this was orange-colored water, and it evaporated a white, alkali- like substance along it's banks. "...Gotta be real good for the WMs," I thought.

Soon, we traversed a small gorge and winded our way into New Idria. The tailings from the mine were piled high along a ravine.

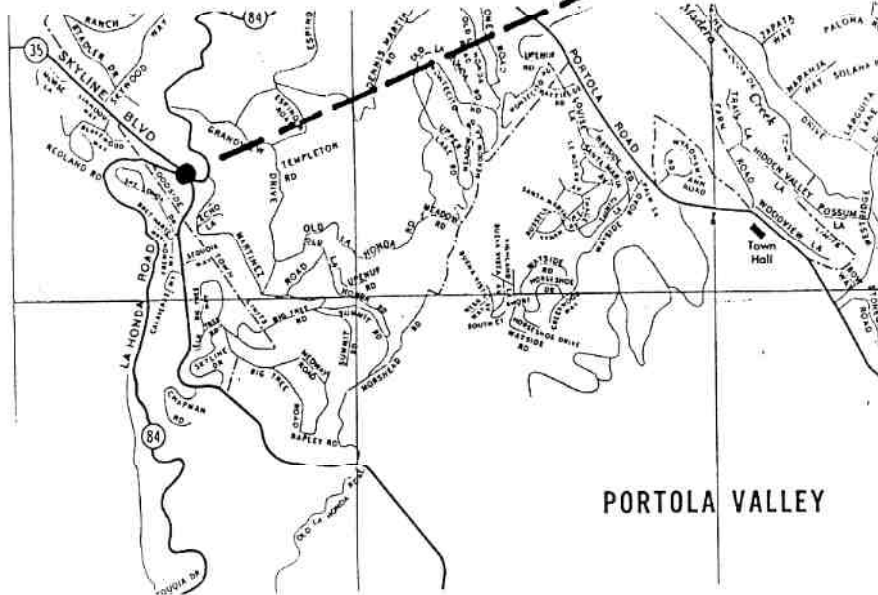


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**BSA**

Picnic after the ride, Huckleberry Flat (Me)



INFO: Mike Burnham, 415-346-1224 days/564-5455 eves

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**NORTON OWNERS' CLUB  
BSA OWNERS' CLUB**

**Old Timer's Ride  
& Picnic  
Sunday, September 13, 1992**

Meet at Alice's Restaurant, Skylonda  
Depart 10:00 AM

Memorial Park) , 10 miles east of Pescadero  
on Pescadero Road



**Norton**

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### Sida Trips

*Continued from Page 9*

There were a few ramshackle huts around the mine's ancient entrance, and the only shade was a tree in the middle of the area which also coincidentally shaded the place's only gas pump and General Store. The last time this device poured "ethyl" from it's nozzle, the price was 23¢ per gallon. We parked by the pump to take advantage of the shade from the sweltering heat. Tom had driven his BMW, probably because he had saddlebags large enough to carry sodas.

As we sat there replenishing our body fluids, out of nowhere came this scrawny, wild-eyed Latino guy with a tattoo of a spider's web on his throat (who could've been the grandson of the notorious Joachim Murrite). Admittedly, the first thought I had was "Dammit Grover! We're too far away from anywhere for anyone to notice our murder!" The stranger slowly reaches into his pocket... and instead of pulling out a gun or a blade, he extracts a notepad and pencil, and commences to write down our licence plate numbers! Whaddahellsthis?!

Somebody in our party eventually regains their composure enough to approach the guy and ask him what's going on- why are you doing this? He replies, "This is my job. I have to record all of the vehicles that stay here for any time. This is a halfway house for convicted felons, and there's been trouble here in the past." I go, "Huh. How many of you guys are out here?"

"Fifteen or so," he replies.

"Hell, ain't no way you folks can get into any trouble out here!" I respond.

"You'd be surprised," he replied in a sinister grunt.

We finish our sodas and proceed like bats out of hell north on J1. Joe led the chase, and I was behind. Frankly, I was too focussed on making it back to Panoche for gas and maybe four beers to give a good goddamn about rider safety... which is a selfish thing to admit, but, hey, the guy in New Idria seemed

too bored to hang there for any length of time.

We get to Panoche, and Joe is swearing. I ask why. Turns out that his speedo drive took a dump on him. An expensive lesson in lubrication, but a lesson nonetheless. Oh- and by the way, where were Grover, Alan and Tom? Omigawd. Have another beer. Fifteen minutes later, they show up at Panoche. Turns out that *Grover ran out of gas!* Alan's Interstate and Tom's BMW came to the rescue. Huh... poetic justice... just as the little thermometer cracked 108 degrees at 2:00 PM. Another beer, six more quarts of sweat, and we're off to Hollister.

We arrive at Tres Pinos- dehydrated, bedraggled and drawn. There's this eatery which espouses great food- and in the tradition of Mike Burnham, we collectively decide to check it out (mostly because the establishment has air conditioning.)

Good holy Hannah, what a feed!- nearly a full pound of prime rib on a sandwich, with an unlimited salad bar, fresh bread, and civilized mixology for under \$10.00! Talk about an oasis!

So it's time to scoot down to Gilroy. Some divinity decided to grace this little band of survivors with a brief respite from their torment by providing a whole 5 minutes of cool (75) air as we descended the foothills. Beyond that, it was still a simmering inferno.

After Joe left our company at Alum Rock Avenue, Grover and I went into San Jose for a couple drinks in San Jose at "Henry's World Famous Hi-Life" - home of what Grover's friend from Chicago calls "The Best Ribs In The World".

We survived.

Don't get me wrong here: the roads were absolutely excellent, and the scenery was spectacular. When the temperature's 30 degrees cooler, this ought to be one of the best new rides that this Club has ever experienced.

*Moral of the Story:* if anyone asks you if you'd like to take a 110-mile ride on your time- ask them: "*Great- 110 miles from WHERE!?*"

*Grover's M-2 Report**continued from Page Seven*

dropping out somewhere along here, especially Ben, who dropped his ElectraGlide on his foot. (After he rode back to Half Moon Bay with Gerald and Shirley and sat around with a very sore foot for a couple of days, they found out that he had broken his ankle. Is this guy tough, or what?! He's from way back when there were iron men and wooden bikes). At Bodie, we objected to the \$5 per bike charge, so we turned around and went back to Bridgeport, then up the road along Robinson Creek to Twin Lakes, a lovely and glaciated valley. There we found still fewer people, so after a soda (ahem) we decided to go back to Dardanelles. After gassing up in Bridgeport again, the rain came. Boy, that smarts on an open helmet. Route 395 to 108 and over the pass the other way was just as great as the morning, especially since the rain didn't last long.

After visiting with James and Beth from Nevada, Phil, Mike Burnham, Jerry C. and the contingent from Monterey, most had ribs or steak or both on the deck at Dardanelles that night, with a bluegrass trio blasting us away. I crashed early, so I wasn't up when Tarmo arrived, and missed the party at the campfire. Oh well. I'm too tired to write anymore, so you don't get to hear the rest.

I've received flyers for two events that you might want to attend. September 20 is the Golden West Classic Motorcycle Show and Swap Meet at the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds (we know where that is by now). Admission is \$3, opens at 8, call (408) 578-1936 for info. October 2,3,4 &5 our Chicken Ranch Racing friends are putting on the Vintage Extravaganza! This will include vintage racing, motorcycle exchange, free camping, and movies. Admission is \$5 per day, or \$10 for all four days. It's happening at "... the larger facilities of Argyll Park south of Dixon, CA. on Highway 113. Call Chicken Ranch at (916) 989-4938! ∞

*Ride Report**Continued from page Six*

improbability. but at first you must understand that our group was graced with an incredibly diverse collection of motorcycles, from Ariel to Vincent. A list of the bikes goes something like this Nine Norton, including Fred's Featherbed Inter, and Jerry Kaplan's P11, an immaculate Ariel Square Four belonging to Ernie Pegg, a Ducati 750S, a Vincent Rapide, several BMW's from old to new, including one with a side hack, an old Harley, several Triumphs, modern dual purpose bikes, a Yamaha SRX6, and the list goes on. While travelling through Occidental, the group makes a right turn at Coleman Valley Rd. right next to the Chevron Station. And what should be in the gas station on our way through town? Why another immaculate Ariel Square Four of course. A few exchanged looks of astonishment, a word or two, and our group is now graced with two Squariels, whose owners, not surprisingly, know each other. At a later point in the ride, I overheard one to say to the other something to the effect of "It's too bad Don Danmeier isn't here, he really missed a good one".

Coleman Valley Road goes out to the coast, first through a valley, then along a ridge, and then descends sharply to Hiway One. At the end of the ridge is a gravel siding off to the right, and this was to be our first scheduled stop. Just before this is a series of tight twisties, and it was along here that I began to notice the rider in front of me. It wasn't enough that he had his dog perched on a pillow set on his fuel tank, sporting shaded goggles and a bandana. Dave decided to maneuver this last series of twisties with his arms outstretched, steering only with his knees. One lefthander required more weight shifting than knees alone could handle. Instead of grabbing his bars like any sane person would do, Dave simply outstretched his left leg and sailed through the turn without skipping a beat. Dave and his dog

*continued on Page Fifteen*

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Norton Notice:

Those of you who are looking for a good book to read ought to check out Bhowani Junction by John Masters (Viking Press, 1954).

It begins like this:

"I had a fine Norton that year, in Bhowani. It's got smashed up since, but it was looking good the day I went down to see Victoria..."

It gets better, too, with his Norton single making frequent appearances.

"Victoria was out in the road looking at my Norton. It wasn't new, but I'd only just bought it secondhand."

"I kicked furiously, and the engine turned over. I twisted the throttle that the engine made the hell of a noise, a real racketing bellow. I didn't dare speak myself, but I could make the Norton say something for me."

Art Sirota- Menlo Park, CA.

-A "novel" outtake there, Art. But you didn't reveal if Victoria liked to ride, too... Ed.

Dear Norton Notice:

I have been a member of the Club for a year and have enjoyed every function I have been able to attend. Our Norton Club is filled with people with very interesting and diverse backgrounds. This is one of the qualities that makes our Norton Club so interesting and different. Because of changes in my business schedule, I am now able to make Club rides, but meetings are still near impossible. Thank you for helping me feel welcome and all the technical help that has kept my bike on the road.

The proposed new by-laws are probably a good idea. I think that limiting the Club membership only to owners of Nortons is a disservice to the Club and it's members. The proposed objectives of the Club state, "...the promotion, encouragement and development of the motorcycle sport and activities..." I agree with this positive and open-minded proposal. To limit the membership to owners only is short-sighted, financially limiting, and contrary to the Club objectives. Does the AMA require ownership of a motorcycle? Does the Sierra Club require you to be a mountain climber?

On the recent Fred Twigg/North Bay ride, there were 24 motorcyclists participating.

There were 9 Nortons and 7 Club members. The ride would not have been as fun if we had allowed only Norton owners to participate. The non-Norton riders were on several different kinds of machines. Many people would like to own Nortons, but are unable to do so because of financial restraints. Does that mean that we should not allow them to join and contribute?

The Club should be as diverse as possible, allowing all those interested to participate on their respective levels. Some people like to ride- others like to polish and bench race. All should be welcome.

The gathering of Nortons was excellent! Next year, let's make it 3-5 days long. See you at the Old Timer's Ride.

James Langan- Sparks, Nevada

*This is the kind of thoughtful, well-considered advice that this Club needs to remain as dynamic, fresh and fun as it's always been. Thank you, James! -Ed.*



Alan, caught in the act of...

### *Ride Report*

*continued from Page Thirteen*

Sprocket proved to be quite entertaining throughout the day. If you're good enough to pass Dave, Sprocket will throw a fit, barking and growling like any good canine should, defending their masters territory. If on the other hand you get passed by Dave and Sprocket, you'll be greeted with a tail wag and tongue outstretched.

So much for the antics. At the rest stop the road edge takes a steep angle to the gravel, and it was here that the first minor incident occurred. Jerry Kaplan's friend Casey from Sacramento grabbed a handful of front brake in the loose gravel with the expected results. Fortunately, it was not serious.

For many people, Hiway One is a great motorcycle road, but for this ride, it was just a mundane way to get from one truly great motorcycle road to another. After a brief stop in Jenner, and a short trip on One, we picked up Meyer's Grade, and the Footpeg scraped contest continues. It was along here, shortly before the road turns to Kings Rd., that shit began to happen. A local, more confident rider on a Bonnieville attempted to pass a group of riders in a down-sweeping right-hander, while the less experience Donovan had some trouble negotiating the turn, went high and got rearended. They both went down, and slid for twenty feet. Fortunately, no one was hurt and the Bonnies came through it remarkably well. Several of us stopped to help, and while doing his good deed to help the riders, Jerry Kaplan's P-11 fell over off the side stand. After Fred straightened Donovan's footpeg, I proceeded to follow her towards the rest of the group, to make sure all was well. A short distance down the road, both Ariels were pulled off to the side. They waved us on, so we continued. As it turned out, one had an electrical system failure, and it took Fred some time to diagnose a failed battery. Fortunately, the Vincent owner stopped to help as well, and they simply

borrowed his battery, as he had magneto ignition, and no need for a battery in the daylight.

While following Donovan, Lawrence passed us at sub-light speed, headed in the other direction, presumably worried about his sweetie. When he cough back up with me, he pulled along side and made a gesture like "What gives?". I responded with a hand signal, pointing ahead to Donovan, then indicating her fall. He then attempted to ask a question through his full faced helmet that sounded something like "Is...something...something OK?". My response was "Yes, she's fine, just a little shook up". He then pulls up alongside her, looks things over, then falls back along my other side, pulls his helmet below his mouth and shouts, "IS THE GAS TANK OK?". I broke into instant laughter, he followed, and I answered, "Yeah, your gas tank is fine", and we laughed some more.

When we caught up to the rest of the group, they were stopped at the far side of a small metal bridge, on a graveled parking area. The spot was about as picturesque as you could imagine, with a creek forty feet below in a steep gorge, while the whole area was a heavily wooded ravine. We waited for quite awhile for Fred to return, and when he did, he related to us the story about the Ariel electrical problems. After which he said, "What else can go wrong?". You really should not have said that Fred. On the way out of the gravel, a Commando rider lost traction, fell off his bike, and landed on his butt, sitting up in the middle of the road, with his legs spread apart. I won't mention any names, but former club presidents shouldn't be this undignified.

At this point, I am thoroughly committed to playing the roll of sweeper, making sure no one will be left out in the middle of the road, out in the middle of the Sonoma wilderness. As a result, I got to look at the scenery, which at times was quite dramatic, in a coastal range sort of way. The road of course was superb. Before arriving in Cazadero there is a tee in  
*continued on Page Sixteen*

**Ride Report***Continued from Page Fifteen*

the road where James and the Ariel riders were waiting for us to arrive, unsure which way to go. Those of you who attended the Flying Lady Ride can probably guess what happened next. I pointed and said, "This way", and in about fifty feet, found myself on a deadend road, too narrow to turn around. So I backed it up. Right into a two foot ditch, and right down to the frame. I was laughing so hard, James had to get off his bike and pull me out. In a couple of miles, we made it to our lunch stop where we exchanged further stories of our adventures on Kings Rd. When I told Lawrence I had Backed into a ditch, he began to laugh and told me he had overshot a turn, went into a ditch, barely missing some case smashing boulders, then skidded sideways to a stop, only to have been followed by a rider on a Commando, who stopped a foot and a half from t-boning him and his Duck. And of course in the light of everything else, it was hilariously funny.

Despite what might sound like to some a plagued ride, it was the most successful Norton Club Ride all year. From the standpoint of turnout, good fun and good roads, this was it.

Asking Fred to put together the North Bay Ride was a stroke of genius. Fred is a most gracious host, who made everyone feel welcome. He put together a splendid ride, and at the end, everyone was invited back to his shop and treated to the same warm hospitality that is his trademark. He served us coffee, had a tape of the Manx G.P. going in the background, and gave away a MANX MOTORS tee shirt to the person who had rode the longest distance to attend the ride-James, from Sparks, Nevada. For those of you who live down on the peninsula and thought that Sonoma was too far to travel for a ride, let me repeat that...SPARKS, NEVADA. Wankers.

I don't know if Andy has prepared a flyer for the Old Timers' Ride as we had discussed, so if not here are the details (again). For the ride, meet at Alice's and depart at 10:00, not

10:30 as printed in the ride's calendar. The ride will end in Memorial County Park at Huckleberry Flat. If you wish to forgo the ride, be there at eleven, or come earlier and help Joe out, or come later and leave hungry. **JUST BE THERE!**

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**NOC Membership Profile***by John Covell***Name:** Phil Radford**Age:** 43**City Resident:** San Jose**Marital:** Yes, 2 dogs**Occupation:** Norton Parts retailer (Fair Spares America)**NOC Member since:** 1980**How First became involved with NOC:** Through NOC UK- was a member of the British Club, met Steve Coburn through *Roadholder* listing.**Club offices held/years:** Secretary- 1983-85**Nortons Owned/described:** Eighteen (1937 ES-2 through a 1975 Mark III)- currently riding an Atlas**Other makes of motorcycle owned:** a couple of BSAs.**What first interested you in the Norton?** It was the bike to have in England in the '60s. A colleague sold me a Dominator 99.**Other hobbies/interests of note:** Hiking**Favorite motorcycling road/ride:** Hwy. 49 through Downievile**If you could redesign the Norton, what one thing would you most want to change?** The gearbox: should've put a roller bearing on the layshaft from the outset on the Mark III.**Favorite or most embarrassing episode on a Norton:** Trying to ride a Honda on Woodside Rd., hit a slick on the pavement and dropped it. The bike fell on me, broke my ankle. was laid up for 8 weeks!!!**Classified Advertisements**

**For Sale:** 1974 Commando 850 Interstate: approx. 70K miles, black w/ gold striping; very good condition- always garaged and meticulously maintained (only two owners). Extras include: color-matched Rabid Transit fairing and three-piece fiberglass luggage on beautiful custom mounts (ask Phil Radford); excellent NBI seat on original pan; Boyer ignition; Mikuni carb and manifold; many other goodies. Garaged in San Diego. \$3950. Will consider delivering the bike to any buyer. Contact Steve Coburn- (804) 296-2814; Rte. 5, Box 327, Charlottesville, Virginia 22901

**4 Nortons 4 Sale:** '73 750, '75 850, '64 750, and '65 750. 2 Commandos restored, low miles, one is a Cafe- \$3900 each; 2 Atlases: original, TLS and disc brake- \$3500 each. They all have stock parts, are expertly maintained, and are very clean. Call Tom at (408) 446-2738

**For Sale-** 1975 Norton 850 Commando Mark III. Restored, low mileage, New John Player paint scheme (red, white & blue), Roadster setup, starter re-worked and beefed up: \$3,000. *Also for sale:* Interstate tank, \$375; Interstate side covers, \$85 the set. Contact Jerry at (408) 262-6518, or (408) 263-7428.

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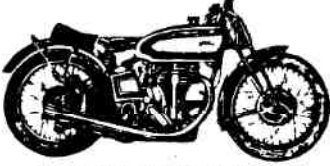
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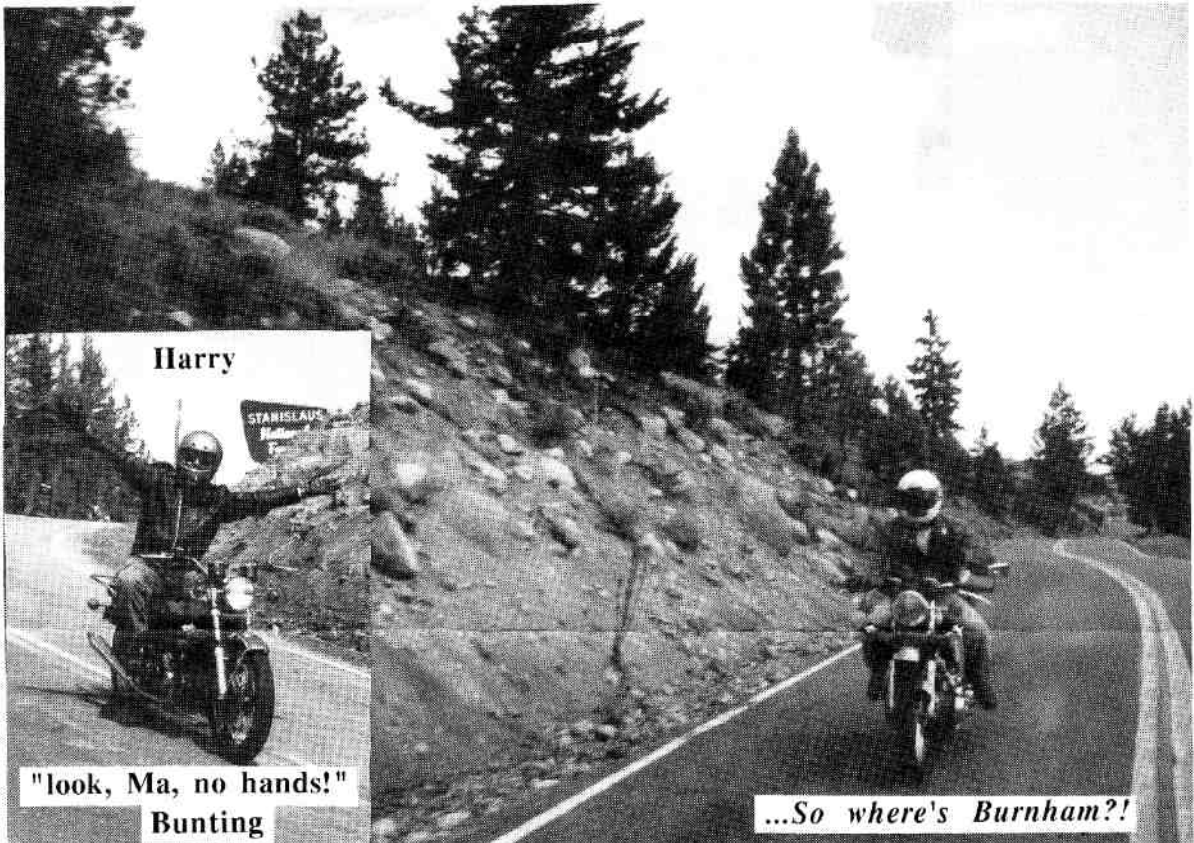
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*Reinstalling the head on yer bike? -  
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 before head installation- reduces the risk of  
 pushrod damage and excess profanity,  
 and makes head installation a  
 one-hand operation!*

*The Gathering of Nortons at Dardanelles...*

*A Photographic Perspective...*



Harry

"look, Ma, no hands!"

Bunting

...So where's Burnham?!

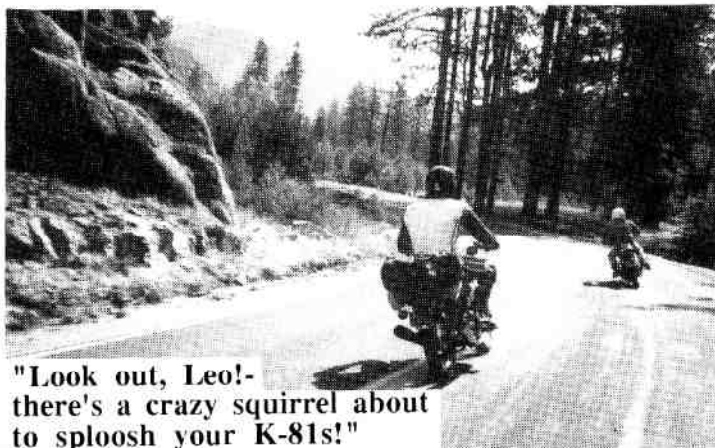


Tom Terry slows to sub-light speed so this picture can be actually taken...

**Gerald Mauricio, contemplating  
the smallness of Mankind in  
The Universe**



**A felicitous greeting from Gerald  
and his redoubtable Mark III**



**"Look out, Leo!-  
there's a crazy squirrel about  
to sploosh your K-81s!"**