



Norton Notice



The Newsletter of the
Northern California Norton Owners Club

No. 188

December, 1993

Our new President has strange bedfellows !!



Also inside:
The first installment of the Rebirth of NORTON



Norton Notice

is published by the Northern California 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.

The *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. (Good taste is somewhat optional, but hey- this is a group of bikers we're talking about here... that's why we have an editor.)

The deadline for items to be submitted for publication is the 20th of each month. The *NORTON NOTICE* welcomes contributions submitted electronically. Material in MS Word or Aldus Page-maker on a Macintosh 3.5" disc is ideal. You may also send it directly to the editor via X modem at the telephone number listed for the Editor; set your telecom software for 8/n/1, use the X or Z MODEM file transfer protocol, and just ring up the Editor who is home most evenings. Also E-mail can be received by using INTERNET to norton2@aol.com.

Membership in the Northern California Norton Owners Club is available for \$20.00 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.

All changes of address should go to the Branch Secretary/Treasurer- NOT the NOTICE editor.

The Northern California 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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NORTON OWNERS CLUB

IMPORTANT (Please take note of the following fine print):

The object of the Northern California Norton Owners Club is to promote, encourage and develop motorcycle 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 Schedule

December- no Club ride- Christmas Party

A new 1994 schedule will appear in next months Notice - **That's a promise!**

Activities at a glance.....

December 4, 1993 - Christmas Party at Maya's

1370 McKendrie St. San Jose Bring an ornament made from a bike part. *Call her at (408) 241-1812 for information.*

December 11th, The Northern California Norton Owner's Club Christmas Party at the Farm House. The menu will give choices of chicken, fish or pot roast. The cost will be \$18.00/person with a no host bar. Call Joe Edwards so he can get a head count of those wishing to attend. (408)365-1058

Meeting Schedule

The Club meets on the second Thursday of each month. The meetings are SUPPOSED to start at 8:00 PM. If you get tired of bench racing, bring a newspaper to read.



December - no official meeting due to Christmas Party

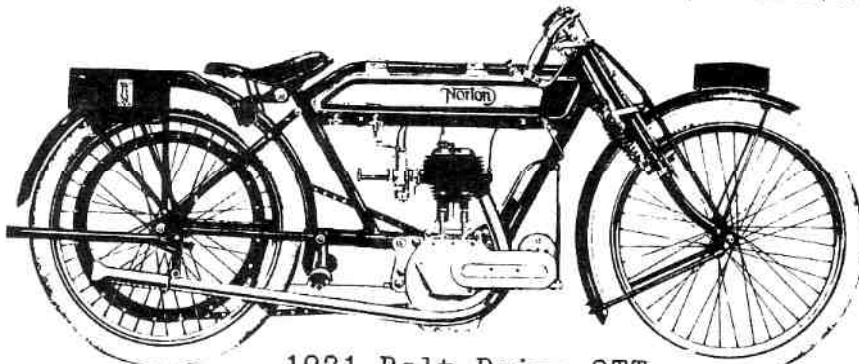
Graphics Contributions

Photography:

Steve Coburn, Alan Goldwater,
Lou Caputo, Alan Mueller

Press Production and Halftones:

John & Carrie Follett:
White Oak Press, San Carlos, CA



1921 Belt Drive 9TT

My Point of View

by Joe Edwards, President

Well now, let's see, how do we wind this up? First of all, let me give a great big thanks to an outstanding group of board members. All of them always giving all that they could whenever needed. I sure will miss those board meetings in Ben Lomon. I feel that the club did do some growing in a lot of ways. A reborn logo, a great looking club pin, a banner that has traveled to two national rallies, thanks to Alan Goldwater. By the way, Alan, thanks for all the help over the past two years. The renewal of the Old Timers Ride and Food Fest. All the Nortons atop Mt. Tam, thanks to Mr. Miller. Thanks to all the great Norton folks that keep us all in parts and great service. A great big thank you to Andy for all the fine work over the years for turning out a great Notice time after time. Now the club will be headed by a new president. I know that Maya will do an outstanding job as the First Lady. Also, Duncan will do a great job as vice-president. The rest of the board will do all they can for the club. All we have to do as members is give them a helping hand whenever we can.

I know that you have heard this from me before, the twenty dollars you spend in your dues, gives you just as much right to the club as anyone else. So take a stand and get behind the club. Let's see if we can get more doers, to make the club show growth among the new members. I know that this club has been around for some time, I know that some of the older members feel that growth is not good for the club, but if you look around most of the meetings show many old members but the new folks are taking a renewed interest in the club. Let us keep up that spirit and

the club will be known for more than Sunday rides. This year if we can, why not see if we can do a charity program on a local idea. We also should try to set up some type of poker run outside of the club. A lot of other clubs in the area make themselves known, so let's get out of the closet (nothing meant here). Every time you take your Norton out you know how many people look at your bike and they either say they had one at one time or they look like they would like to own one just like that. Remember that it is sure great to own a bit of British history, but some of the best people ride a motorcycle. We, as a club, can stand alone but still be a part of the community. There are a lot of other clubs out there that because of small membership that might like to team together to put together some type of community program. **Let that be food for thought!!!**

Now as I wind up these two years as your President, I would like to thank each and every member out there for your support. I know that some of you I have never met, but the growth of the club has been with you in mind. We have a very strong club. We need all of you to make it so. Now as I step back, I hope that all will get together and lend all the support that you can to the new Board Members.

I have just gotten back from a long weekend and heard of the passing away of Maya's brother. I know that some of you might never have met him, but we all should give a best wishes and support to Maya.

Well it's been a hell of a ride, but this is where I get off.... **That's my point of view.....**

Minutes of November Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 8:25 P.M. by President Joe Edwards. The venue for this meeting was Harry's Hofbrau in Mountain View. There were 30 members present.

Joe wanted to thank Don Danmeier for a wonderful Birthday Ride and Party. It was enjoyed by many club members.

Alan Goldwater discussed the upcoming November 14th ride to Santa Cruz. The group is to meet at the Summit Inn on Highway 17 around 10 A.M. The ride will end up at Skinny McDoughals later in the afternoon where everyone can have lunch and enjoy some live music.

Joe announced again that the Annual Christmas Party will be held at the Farmhouse Restaurant December 11th. There will be an ala carte menu consisting of chicken, fish (trout or Salmon ?), and Roast Beef. The tariff is up about \$2.00 to \$18 per person but this is still quite resonable. Call Joe if you are planning to attend so he can get an accurate head count.

Maya stated that her Tree Trimming Xmas Party will be held December 4th starting at 5:30 P.M. Call her if you are planning to attend at (408)241-1812. Her address is 1370 McKendrie, SanJose, CA. 95126. There will be lots of food and drink. Let's all support our new president.

There will be a Poker Run and Food drive given by the Knights of the Black Watch M.C. to benefit the Second Harvest Food Bank. Let's support this event.

It was suggested that everyone

check their mailing labels on the Norton Notice to determine when their dues are due. Everyone need to keep up as the funds are running low as we approach the end of the year.

Bob and Hazel are residing now in Kirkwood, Washington. Their mailing address is still not known.

Hank Wenzel's father is ill in the hospital. Let's wish him well.

Joe announced that Phil Dansby would like to run for Ambassador to the U.S. N.O.A. Please show him support by writing a note to Sue Ballard.

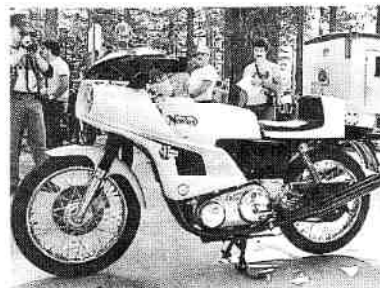
Also, Joe would like our support as he wishes to run for Vice President of the U.S.N.O.A. He would also like us to let **Sue Ballard** know about our support. Her address is **285 Poole Rd., Mercer, PA., 16137...(412)376-4266.**

Alan gave a brief report no the National Rally next year in Sturgis. More information will follow.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Mueller (acting secretary)



Whazz Happ'nin

...regional news of the NCNOC

Don Danmeier's Party and AMAL Retention Tech Tip

by Harry Bunting

Well it's Saturday afternoon and I'm worried that the gas leak in my right carburetor is so bad that I'm not going to make it to Don's party unless I fix it. I came home about 3:00 P.M. Saturday and guess what? Grover Buhr is there waiting to help fix the bike. The fix was real simple. The inside carb bowl screw was missing so we installed a new one which immediately stopped the gas leak. Incidentally, my Ken Armann rebuild is still running great but I can hear the combat cam more than the original cam. I've been told that this is a desirable sound effect and there is a little bit more torque up around 4000-5000 RPM. Grover went to Don's party with Joe Edwards the next morning using the 4 wheel approach so he would be ready for the ride. I biked up with John Bria and Alan Mueller. The weather was impeccable! There were over 100 British Bikes on the ride and we headed up to Occidental, back through Valley Ford, over to the coast and back to Don's house. I am real happy that Grover is back on his bike and feeling much better. Now that NAFTA has passed, BAJA should be happy to see us again next year, so if you want to go, please let us know. Don's party was even better than last year, fantastic food, beer, bench racing, bike judging, bagpipes, Maggie Neato and just plain ole good times. Long live Don Danmeier's 50th birthday parties.

As we all know, the standard AMAL carburetors slide and body wear out which causes the engine to not idle smoothly. The typical fixes are: buy a Mikuni carb or other type, get sleeved carbs or buy new AMALs. I have heard the disappointment and success stories, but on my bike I found that the sleeved carbs didn't perform exactly the same as the standard AMALs with the standard jetting but ran rich and needed to be leaned out. For more information about this, see Lou Caputo's column in the April '93 issue of the Norton

Notice. Two soft metals (i.e. aluminum) vibrating together whilst sliding up and down cause the galling effect on the slide and body. Eventually, the air flow is not consistent because of the vibrating slide in the body so the engine won't idle. I have also seen the insides of the carb bodies warped so much that the slide doesn't move up and down freely and the throttle sticks.

First thing I did was measure the bore in the standard AMALs and my sleeved AMALs and discovered that the bore was about .040 inch larger on the sleeved AMALs. Could this explain the rich mixture? I also notice that many people remove the Norton oil tank vent line from the filter airbox and point it towards the ground. By removing the vent line, you are essentially removing lubricant from the slide/body and are enhancing early retirement of the carburetor. So, I have a few recommendations: Keep the standard Norton airfilter and connect the oil tank vent line to the airfilter box just like it came from the factory, hopefully you have one. This won't fix the AMAL design but it might prolong it's life. The Mikuni has a brass slide so having oil lubricant is not quite as important. Check the bore diameter of the sleeved carburetors you intend to buy against the unmodified AMALs, they should probably not vary more than .020 inch or the machinist had to cut too much gill and warped metal away to make it fit together properly. There is a process called "Hard Anodizing" which makes the surface of aluminum hard as steel. It can be made very smooth and penetrates about .001 inch into the metal and the outside surface of the metal. I'm wondering if anyone has tried this process on a new set of AMAL slides, you need new bodies too! This keeps the bore at factory size and unmodified, the slide about .002 inch larger diameter and tighter in the bore with a very hard surface. Performance should be equivalent to a standard AMAL with improved reliability. If anyone has tried this or has any comments before I do this, please give me a call.

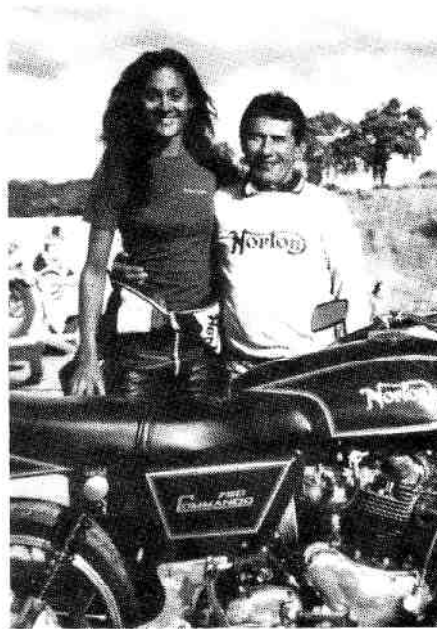
South Bay Report

by Maya Lai

I had a friend from Canada with a Guzzi come down to visit. He was just in time for the Hollister Hills Moto Cross. Seeing how it was for antique's I suggested that we take both of my Nortons. It was a typical ride. Me, John (the Canadian) Mike Pawlak and Bruce McGregor, who took his BSA A65 since his Norton is out of commision right now. John had never ridden a Norton and found it very smooth and powerful and light. I guess that next to a T-3 Guzzi, an elephant would have been light. Down we go on Saturday. Mike carrying posters of David Aldana which I planned to have signed. Lord knows it took me twenty years to do it. On the way my Mk III decided to crap out. Naturally John had no idea what to do with a broken Norton, so he handed it back to me. Oh so lucky me. Bruce and Mike were way ahead of us so it left me to basically push the thing. I rode off the off ramp and there happen to be a bike shop there "EMF" Engine Motorcycle Fabrications. They were more than helpful to me, and would help me fix whatever was wrong with the bike just roll it on over. By then, Mike and Bruce had returned realizing that we weren't with them and apart it went. Guess what? Boyer Brandsen strikes again. Couple of connectors and crimps and off we went.

As for the race, it was great! Saturday were heats and trials and swap meets and such.

Bill Ripley from Raber's won the trials on Saturday on a Bultaco. I bought his and here Triumph bicycles at the swap. Saturday night was a party for the racers. Too bad Bruce had to go home. He knew all the racers including Aldana. He and his brother Neil were both flat trackers in days of yore. He did however introduce me to Dave Aldana, and Dave invited me to the racers party Saturday eve. The party was great! With my posters in hand I headed straight for Aldana. I do believe that I was his oldest fan club member. He was amazed that I rode Nortons and said I was just a kid. Little did he know. (hee hee) thank goodness for no wrinkles. He introduced me to the racers. I made the mistake of telling Brad Lackey he would have done better on a Norton, then Aldana informed me of all the trophies he won on something else. Sunday, the races were excellent! It was interesting to see the +40 riders out there in the mud and dirt. Bill Knight was there on a 850 Commando kick'n mud behind



Bill Ripley on his Triumph. In the twin class, they both came in overall. There is no sound like the big twins and singles out there spitting mud. Phil Radford even got out there on his Gold Star. Thrilled with my signed picture from my high school heart throb, and happy with all the compliments the racers gave me about my fastback, We trailed home. Luckily missing all the rain, and settling happily back into the garage, happy with memories of the weekend.

Side Trips

by Andy McKerral, Editor

There's no doubt about it- this has been one long, wierd and treacherous ride.

When Marick Payton sat me down at his dinner table three years ago and attempted to convey what he had learned in producing this "Norton Notice", an overwhelming feeling of inadequacy bowled me over. I'd never before used an advanced word processor, or even contemplated fiddling with a desktop publishing program. Yet I decided that it was time to get my feet wet and plunge head-first into the job because I loved Norton bikes and I enjoyed the eclectic differences in the Club that made for an amazing amalgam of dynamic fortitude. I made a bunch of friends along the way... and, amazingly enough, a few less enemies. Perhaps that, in and of itself is the definition of a successful tenure of an editor of a specialized publication. Ultimately, I will never know the truth. Maybe it's just as well that I never know...

For me, the absolute highlight of my tenure as editor was the International rally at Lake Tahoe. I'd contributed a profane amount of time in helping restore the Raffle Bike, and I regarded my self-assumed position as the "local reporter" very seriously to the extent that I brought the Club computer along and dialed in the things I witnessed during that very special time. It was a magical four days in paradise... and I was afforded the opportunity to record it for the Club archives. I'm thankful for those moments and I'll always remember them.

There were the other times when things weren't going so well. I didn't like those times any more than you did; nonetheless, I felt that I had a responsibility to record the events that constituted the heart, mind and soul of our Club as clearly as I could, and try to reflect the general consensus with equal substance. There are probably still many of you who will disagree with my views; on the other hand... where were you that you couldn't bother to respond or react? It's your club.

There's a wierd mixture of both joy and sadness that I won't be breaking my ass to get this thing out next month. Some will undoubtedly welcome a change from my stodgy position that we should be an organized lot, while others might be frustrated that an advocate for growth is gone. But this is a

healthy transition. This newsletter is in far more capable hands in January of 1994 than it was in January of 1990. I feel that I've accomplished something good by helping to provide an unbroken continuation of quality.

Thanks go to thank Lynne Miller, Joe Edwards, Mike Burnham, Maya Lai, Art Sirota, Chris Nichols, Grover Buhr, Stan and Lani Beneveds, Bob and Hazel Paradis, Marick Payton, Harry Bunting, Bob Newman, John Covell, Duncan Fergusen, Gerald Mauricio, John and Carrie Follett, and all the other wonderfully demented people who decided to help in making the Northern California Norton Notice a forum for our club that other clubs still aspire to achieve.

My final appreciation goes to two people who made distinctive contributions in keeping me sane during the last year of my tenure as Editor during especially traumatic times in my life. Tom O'Donnel has been an invaluable friend when I was broken and tom. He graciously tolerated my raving and ranting as a brother, and helped me to focus on keeping the faith. Thank you, Tom, and God bless you.

My other friend has been Alan Goldwater... the missing half of my brain, the background of my reasoning, and a central focus point for the pulse of this Club when no other resource would come forward. Alan has consistently been a voice of compromise, caution and logic. It's been Alan's efforts that convinced me to complete my tenure as Editor. His behind-the-scenes advocacy for those who required persuasion to do the "right thing" contributed more to this rag than most of you will ever know. It's to his credit that the ongoing publication of the Norton Notice truly belongs. Remember that... especially when you think that nothing else about the Norton Motorcycle could possibly be printed that hasn't been printed before.

Thanks also go to a "founding father" of this club, Steve Coburn in Virginia, for his enthusiastic encouragement, sensitive constructive criticism and wise counsel. 3,115 nautical miles make for a safe editorial distance, but I appreciated his input over the years. Also, another N.N. editorial fugitive from justice, Lou Caputo, provided me with communications links with the Chicago NOC and relevant, useful material for the Notice... even after all he had been through in his tenure as editor many years ago. Thanks to all of you.

There really shouldn't be a whole lot more to say beyond what's been said before over the last three years, but I think that perhaps one final comment is appropriate: when all is said and done, the Grateful Dead probably said it best: "What a long, strange trip it's been..."

In Search of the Perfect Norton

By Robert Newman

SUBJECT: LUCAS SOLUTIONS

Old soldiers kept their powder dry; Norton Riders should keep their conductors dry. The single greatest enemy of electrical wiring is moisture. Standard Lucas wiring will corrode in humid air, forget rainstorms and roadspray.

If you elect to build your own wiring harness, start at the marine supply:

MARINE WIRE: Excellent insulation - trimmed conductor strands (don't mistake trimmed copper for aluminum) - adequate color variety.

MARINE CONNECTORS: Made with large plastic shields which interlock - solderless, yet reliable when used with sealant.

LIQUID TAPE: Black goop you paint on back ends of connectors to seal where wire enters.

MARINE IN-LINE FUSE HOLDER: Heavy duty - water resistant or water proof.

MARINE HEAT-SHRINKING TUBING: The best-lined with hot melt glue for a perfect seal.

SPIRAL WIRE WRAP: black - for routing wire bundles.

Some further recommendations.

ELECTRONIC IGNITION: RITA OR BOYER: I prefer RITA, but when either is installed, you may strip off the 2 mc capacitor, the ballast resistor and the capacitor block.

FULL WAVE BRIDGE RECTIFIER: epoxy block with center mounting hole. Radio Shack catalog number 276-1185.

FLEXIBLE JUNCTION BLOCK: nylon terminal strip permits mounting inside headlight shell to move forward component connections out from under gas tank.

HORN: standard horn location is insane. use small, flat horn and mount somewhere else. ANYWHERE ELSE!!

IGNITION WARNING LIGHT: controlled by warning light assilator - great for telling when your engine is running - just wire the red light to stay on as long as the switch is on - throw the assilator away.

HANDLEBAR SWITCHES: disassemble, clean with contact cleaner or brake cleaner, lube with dielectric grease or silicon grease.

IGNITION SWITCH MOUNTING: aluminum plate attach to handlebar clamps will mount both oil pressure guage and switch - a more protected location is between left shock mount and descending frame tube...just forward of it.



COOLTEC

Oil Coolers for the Norton Commando motorcycle



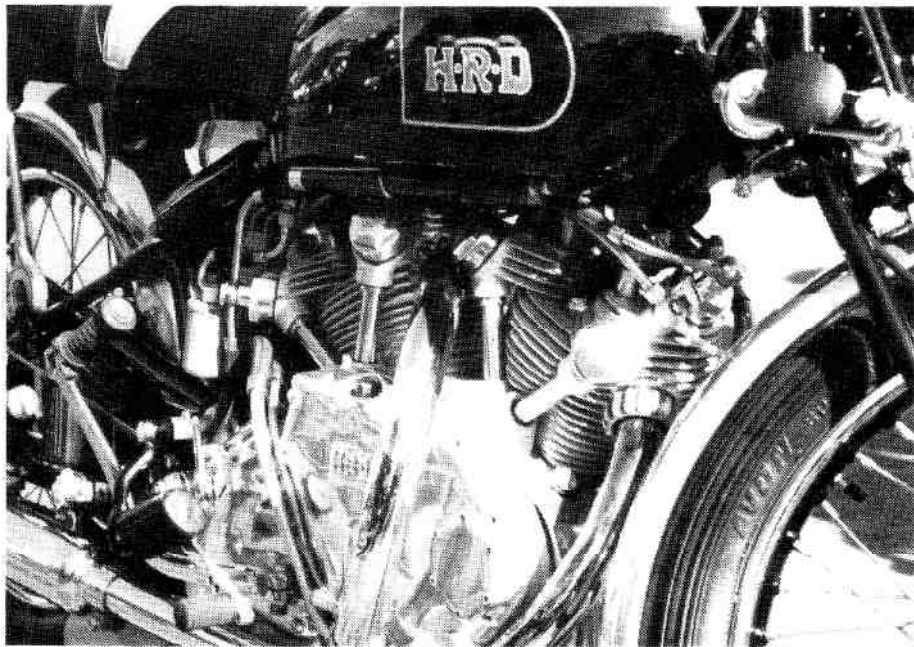
Replacement oil tank cover with a built-in cooler!

- Available in Roadster or Interstate pattern
- Solid-state design - no hoses or fittings to leak oil
- Install easily in just minutes using original bolts
- Lowers oil temperature by up to 15 degrees

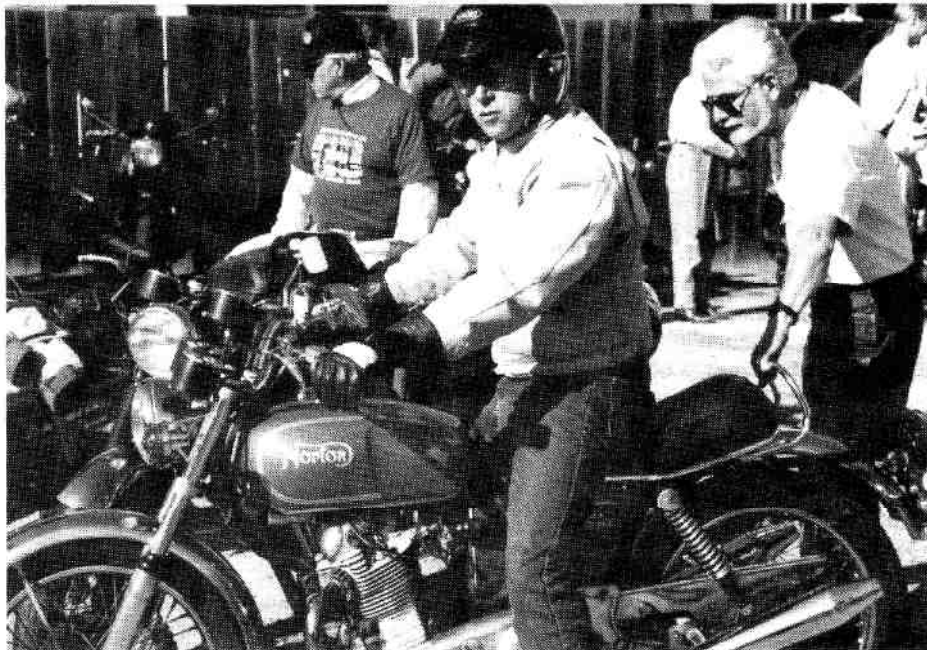
Prices:	primer finish	\$99.95
	painted in original colors, with decal	\$129.95

please specify black, silver, red or primer
and 750, 850 or MkIII decal if painted

Magic Devices
1780 Chanticleer Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
(408)475-7505



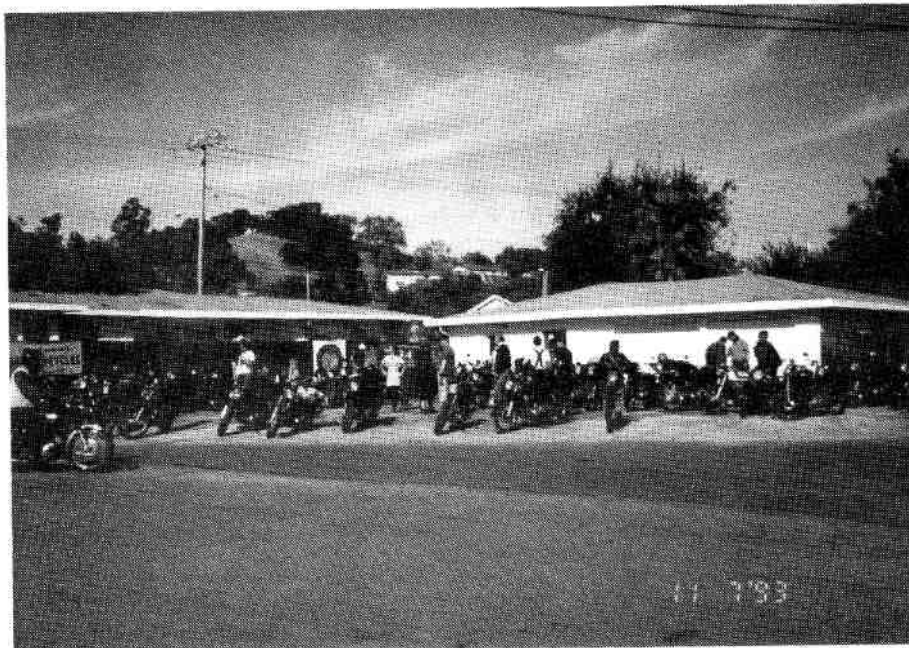
Naw, it aint a Norton...but jeez, it sure is pretty!



Grover wonders why he can't get moving.....



Does Bill Knight really take this in the dirt???



What a turnout!! HAPPY BIRTHDAY Don

NOC Member Profile

by John Covell

Name: Rob Garnick

Age: 44

City Resident: San Mateo

Marital: Married, 3 kids

Occupation: Biochemist at Genentech

NOC Member since: 1992

How first became involved with NOC:
Saw a notice in CityBike and came to a meeting.

Club offices held (years): None yet.
Norton(s) owned, described: '73
Commando Interstate

Other makes of motorcycle: Five
Harleys (antiques: '37, '49, '77, '90, '92)

What first interested you in the Norton?
"I like to tinker. I had a Commando in '71, so it's nostalgia."

Other hobbies/interests of note? Ham radio

Favorite motorcycling road/ride: La Honda, Pescadero Road

If you could redesign the Norton, what one thing would you most want to change? How and why? In the transmission, build it with a better layshaft bearing.

Favorite/most embarrassing episode on a Norton? "Thetime I blew the layshaft bearing, going up a hill in San Mateo, it seized—the kickstart lever turned into a brake!"

Paraphenalia

by John Bria

I can't believe that the year is almost gone. It seems like a lot less than nine months ago that I sent my money in for a membership in the NOC (UK version) in hopes of getting a copy of the Roadholder. You see, when I wrote to them they sent a price list but I couldn't figure out what all the things might look like (they claimed that pictures/illustrations were in the Roadholder). I had heard about problems getting things from them and now I have first hand experience. They are pretty good at communications when they want money. In case you have forgotten, I presented their proposal at a meeting earlier this year for "limited" memberships - looks like I already have one of those and I don't find much to recommend it.

The above was my long way of asking all of you for some suggestions about the kinds of things that you'd like me to stock. T-shirts? Sweatshirts? Patches? Pins? TALK TO ME !!!!

Here's what we have in stock at the moment. As usual, I try to bring most of the stuff to each meeting/function but call me if there is something specific that you want.

**Norton Owners Club
Peripherals Inventory**

Category	Description	Qty	Price
Decals	N.O.C. - Large	39	2.00
	N.O.C. - Small	10	1.25
Patches	Commando Union Jack	4	2.25
	N.O.C. - Large	2	3.50
Pins	N.O.C. - Small	2	2.50
	N.O.C. - Red	23	3.00
Key Fobs	Norton - Black	57	3.00
	INOA 1991 Rally	133	2.50
	N.C.N.O.C.	157	4.00
Shirts	N.O.C. - Leather	14	3.50
	N.O.C. - Clear	7	2.00
Shirts	Medium - Green	4	12.00
	Large - Green	1	12.00
	X-Large - Green	1	12.00
	XX-Large - Blue	3	12.00
Misc.	N.O.C. Metal Badges	1	10.00
	Service Notes	4	5.00
	INOA 1991 Rally Caps	3	5.00

THE REBIRTH AND HISTORY OF NORTON

The following article is copied verbatim without permission from the November 4, 1993 Toronto Globe and Mail

SKALBANIA BACK IN THE SADDLE

Plans revival of British motorcycle firm.

A group of Western Canadian investors led by Nelson Skalbania, who has made a quiet comeback from his 1980s real estate collapse, has put together a financial bailout of Britain's venerable Norton motorcycle company. It plans to revive the Norton Motors Ltd division of Norton Group in a bid to duplicate Harley-Davidson Inc.'s money-making comeback.

Although details of the buyout are still being worked out, it is believed to be worth about \$2-million. (note to readers not in Canada - this is \$ Canadian - 1\$ Can = approx .75\$ U.S.) "I did it for interest and fun and everything else," said Mr. Skalbania, the Vancouver millionaire who quarterbacked the complicated acquisition of the troubled motorcycle maker.

"I was attracted by the name and logo and trademarks of the company. The names Norton and BSA used to be far more famous than Harley-Davidson ever was."

"The company is debt-free, with no liabilities. We can start fresh and clean without the old handicaps and debt that were there. Now, if we screw it up, it's our fault."

Britain's Midland Bank PLC "took a fair bath" on the deal, swallowing a large amount of debt, Mr. Skalbania said. Other sources said the British government provided tax incentives on the deal. The new owners have formed Norton Motors 1993 Ltd to assume production and marketing of motorcycles

that would sell in Canada for between \$9,000 and \$14,000.

The group is looking to copy the phenomenal success of Milwaukee-based motorcycle maker Harley-Davidson. Once threatened with extinction by Japanese rivals, Harley-Davidson saved itself with a quality engineering program, reintroduced its classic motorcycle to cash in on the nostalgia of well-heeled, older riders and launched a line of brand-name clothing and accessories.

Norton, a popular brand name until the mid-1960s, still has a powerful market cachet, kept alive over the past decade by the racing success of its limited production, high performance, rotary engine bikes and sales to British armed forces and police.

It recently launched a prototype of a sleek, ultra-modern model with a rotary engine that would sell for the equivalent of more than \$17,000.

Mr. Skalbania said the reborn Norton company will continue to turn out sports bikes, but will add new street motorcycles under the Norton and BSA marques, probably in six to eight months. (BSA, another faltering motorcycle manufacturer, was merged with Norton in the early 1970s.)

Rotary engines have proved unpopular with consumers. Mr. Skalbania said they are not suited to stop-and-start riding, and have dirtier exhaust emissions, so the new company is looking at conventional piston engines for the planned street bikes.

Major future markets will be in English-speaking and former Commonwealth countries, where the Norton/BSA reputation has outlived the popularity of the machines. Norton, he said, fell on hard times because, like Harley-Davidson, it failed to keep up with Japanese competitors and was stuck with costly production techniques.

In addition, the management that took over the company several years ago raised a lot of money that it invested in unrelated ventures, such as a plumbing supply company

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and fastener manu-facturer, rather than in improving the motorcycles.

In the 1990-91 fiscal year, Norton Group lost about 2 million pounds (\$3.8 million). The loss was cut to 47,000 pounds after new management divested most of the non-core businesses. About 100 people remain on staff.

The core business, Norton Motors, is thought to be making an operating profit, although a small one, from the sale of its existing models. The most valuable asset, and the one that Mr. Skalbania wants to capitalize on, is the company name. It has considerable marketing potential in Britain and North America as a promotional vehicle for sunglasses, jackets, T-shirts, and similar fashionable goods.

Norton faltered in the mid-1960s with the arrival of cheap mini-cars and technologically superior Japanese motorcycles and he effects of trade union action. It staggered on the edge of bankruptcy in the early 1970s, despite a series of bailouts by the British government. The company was eventually sold to Philippe Le Roux, a London merchant banker, in the mid-1980s.

Norton Group is now being operated by David Macdonald, who was appointed at the request of the company's creditors to put it back on its feet.

Mr. Skalbania, who made and then lost a fortune in real estate in the 1970s and 1980s, was coy about his role in the new ownership structure, describing himself as a consultant-advisor. However, he represented a group of Vancouver investors in orchestrating a takeover of Wild Rose Ventures Inc. of Calgary last April. Wild Rose is the lead player in the Norton buyout. Its Norton partners apparently include a private Vancouver company headed by the Aquilini family, long established in downtown commercial and suburban real estate, and an unnamed Dutch company.

To be continued Next Month!!

NEW OFFICER PROFILE

John Covell, PUBLIC RELATIONS

John Covell has been a member of the NOC since 1985 and held the office of President in 1987-88. (Caught napping when Scot Marburger asked for a volunteer and everyone else took a step backwards.) Was the club's Recorder in 1990 and has held the post of Public Relations Officer 1991 to present, including performing this function for the High Sierra Rally of 1991. His presence at NOC events is usually betrayed by the filthiest running Norton in the club. ["I prefer to think of it as the most utilitarian Norton in the club."—J.C.] John feels duty-bound to continue in the post of PRO so long as he still has a stock of NOC business cards to that effect.



John Bria writes

Phone calls out of the Blue!

In a time when most of the phone calls that we receive involve unwanted solicitations or offers of refinancing, it was a real pleasure to get a call from Jim Gray. Jim is not (yet) a member of the NCNOC but he has a Commando in addition to a fair number of Hondas. It seems that seal in his fuel cap had given out and he was a bit hesitant to spend the money for a new cap just to get the seal. (There's really no way to just get a seal?) In any case, he was able to find a Honda seal that fits pretty closely and seems to work as long as you don't fill the tank to less than 1" from the top. The seal is from a 1981/1982 Honda CB900F, part # 17632-469-000 if you have a similar need.



The mournful sounds of the bagpipe calling for Maggie Neato



Walt Disney has revived The Three Musketeers !!

Classified Advertisements

Wanted: - I am a collector of motorcycle postcards. Does anyone have cards of Nortons? I have some duplicate cards for exchange of Nortons (Special racing machines from Sammy Miller's Museum). Greetings from the Land of Snow: Keijo Virtanen, Lievestuoreen asema, FIN-41400 LIEVESTUORE, Finland (it's now - 11 C degrees, stored my bikes 2 weeks ago).

Wanted: 2 into1 exhaust pipes. Any condition. Needed for my '58 Nomad so I can use it for the Old Timer's Ride. Any help appreciated. Call Steve at (408) 476-1319.

Wanted: Interstate Side Covers- call Herb Poppe (818) 248-8135

Wanted: Information of any kind on 1963-65 Norton Electra- pictures or tech info. Call Lani or Stan at (510) 793-0704

For Sale: 1975 Norton 850 Commando. This Norton was one of the last ones made and is still in the original shipping carton. If interested call Alden Jay Glickman (805) 644-7714/642-4509 or FAX (805)658-1458

For Sale: '73 Triumph "Daytona Super Sports" T-100R 500 cc. Rebuilt engine. Boyer ignition. Excellent original condition. \$2500/firm. Call Mike Considine at (916)456-9901

For Sale: 1 Pair Black Cap Mufflers. Excellent cond. \$200.00 B/O. Call Gerald at (415)726-9337 Eves

For Sale: 1963 Atlas Scrambler (G15/N15) Very clean and strong runner. Recent restoration w/new paint and engine rebuilt by Ken Armann. Rare, one of the first 200 hybrids built (Norton-Matchless). \$4000. Contact Rick at (408)894-5220 (work) or (415)969-8917 (home)

For Sale: '75 Mk III 850 Roadster, Gilmer primary drive, single 36mm Amal carb; H4 headlamp, Dunstall 2 into 1 into 2 exhaust, Grimeca front master cylinder, -3 braided hose. \$2500 or**For Sale:** '68 P-11A Ranger, mostly original appearing. Matching frame, engine and G/box Serial Numbers. Non original stuff: very hot photocell triggered ignition and Marzocchi twin disc front end off Ducati, -3 braided hose, Grimeca master cylinder. Needs one-off T-stem made; installed item is Mickey Mouse. Includes COMPLETE spare P-11 engine with engine plates and matching SN G/box (earlier magneto equipped version) and extra Police alternator. Have owned it over ten years, ridden 10-20 miles total. Engine appears to have never had head or cylinder removed! There aren't many of these around. A must have for the Compleat Norton Fanatic! Could include service tools, Whitworth stuff. Call Tom Davenport, 415-924-6558.

For Sale: 1974 Commando. Interstate tank, black, custom paint. Rita ignition, top end rebuilt. Very recent high output alternator, luggage rack, saddle bags. \$2,800 OBO. Call Clark Samson (415) 927-4559.

For Sale: '71 Commando. Fresh red paint, new seat, new Dunlops, rebuilt trans., Konis, rebuilt front end, new Isolastics- all stock-runs great. No leaks. Factory manual- extras- Fred Twigg tuned and ready to ride anywhere. Has oil filter added. \$2,700, or trade for???- Call Chaz at (707) 578-1712

Wanted: BMW System 1,2 or 3 helmet. Size, paint, visor, cushion unimportant - SOUND construction IS - Call Tom O'Donnell at (408)356-9353 any time/leave message.

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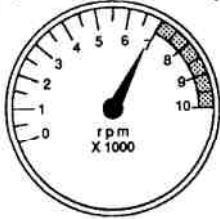
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