

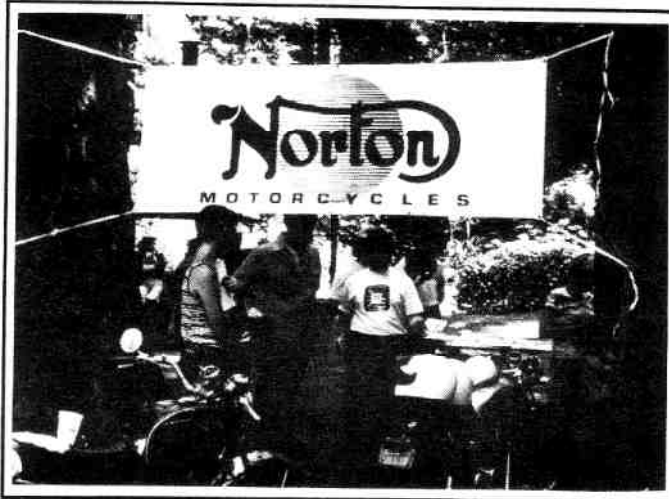
Norton Notice

Volume 2 Issue 7

July 1979



Scenes from the Third Annual Norton Beer Bust on June 10 in La Honda



Published monthly by the
Northern California Branch
Norton Owners Club





The NORTON NOTICE is published monthly by the Northern California Branch of the NOC.

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Advertising

Current and prospective members may place Norton-related ads in the TRADING POST by writing the pertinent information in as concise a form as possible and sending it to the Editor. Ads will normally run for two months, but may be renewed should the advertiser so desire. There will be no fee for any advertisement in the TRADING POST.

Commercial enterprises may advertise their goods and/or services in the NORTON NOTICE for a nominal fee, which will help offset printing costs and thereby support the Northern California Branch of the NOC.

Commercial advertising rates are:

	1 issue	3 issues	6 issues
1/4 page	\$5.00	\$13.50	\$25.00
1/2 page	\$9.00	\$25.00	\$45.00

Input Wanted

Members and other readers are encouraged to submit to the Editor anything at all of general interest to Norton enthusiasts. The Editor will welcome any articles (original or otherwise), technical information, jokes, cartoons, travelogues, comments, photographs, or whatever else you might have that other readers would enjoy seeing, and will try to get everything in sooner or later. Please try to make handwritten items legible, if at all possible, and include a self-addressed envelope if you want your goodies returned. This is your newsletter, and your input is important. Please send it to the Editor.

ODD BODKINS (Reprinted with permission)



Membership Information

There are three categories of membership in the Northern California Branch of the NOC:

FULL MEMBERS: Full members are dues-paying members of the NOC, and therefore have full voting privileges at any general meeting of the NOC and all branch meetings, and also any privileges resulting from affiliation of the Club with any other organization. Full members must pay annual dues to the NOC in England (paid through the Secretary), in return for which they will receive the bi-monthly ROADHOLDER magazine, and may use the NOC Spares Scheme at any time.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS: This category was set up so that any Norton owner wishing to get the NORTON NOTICE each month and be associated with the Northern California Branch can do so for a very modest fee, without having to join the NOC as a full member. Associate members do not pay NOC dues, and therefore do not have all the privileges of full NOC members. They do, however, have full voting privileges at all Northern California Branch meetings, and are equally welcome at all of the rides, meetings, and other functions sponsored by the branch.

SOCIAL MEMBERS: In order to allow Norton enthusiasts who do not own a Norton to be associated with the club, and thereby help them to find one to buy, the branch provides the category of 'Social Membership'. Social members do not have any voting privileges, but are otherwise welcome to participate in all branch activities. Social members will receive the NORTON NOTICE each month, and are encouraged to follow up on any leads regarding Norton motorcycles for sale. The Editor will try to help all social members in this regard, and would appreciate any help from other members.

CURRENT DUES PAID AND PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED:

	PAY:	RECEIVE:
FULL MEMBERS:	\$20	<u>NORTON NOTICE</u> & <u>ROADHOLDER</u>
ASSOC. MEMBERS:	\$5	<u>NORTON NOTICE</u>
SOCIAL MEMBERS:	\$5	<u>NORTON NOTICE</u>

Meetings and Rides

Northern California Branch meetings are held on the second Thursday evening of each month at a location announced in the newsletter.

Branch rides are generally held on the next Sunday, meeting at 10AM at a location also announced in the NORTON NOTICE. In the event of rain, the ride will be postponed a week.

President's Letter

Dear Members:

Hope you all enjoyed the Beer Bust! I certainly did, this being the first one I've attended and, believe me, it was quite a pleasant shock to see all those Nortons parked among the trees. I didn't realize how big this thing has become.

It's nice to know that our humble beginning ten years ago of the San Francisco/Northern California Branch has led to such great happenings!

I have really enjoyed being President this past year, and feel we have a wonderful group of people in the Branch. My professional commitments have prevented me from devoting as much time as I think I should have to our activities, however, and I am getting more deeply involved in my work as time goes on.

Therefore, I will be releasing the reins when my year is up in September, and am sure that the job will be in capable hands at that time. Hopefully, it will be taken over by someone able to devote more time to it than I have.

With a membership of over 150, I feel there must be several able and eager people just waiting for the chance! Those of you who are interested should contact Steve Coburn or me as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, I will continue to enjoy watching the Branch grow and prosper. Thanks for the opportunity to be closer to it all this past year as President.

Best regards to all,



Brooks Cyclery

TRIUMPH
NORTON
SEA

NEW AND USED PARTS
TELEPHONE 295-4341
(408)

MOTO GUZZI
DUCATI

ED BROOKS
OWNER

1615 ALMADEN ROAD
SAN JOSE, CA. 95125

BROOKS CYCLERY HAS BEEN A NORTON DEALER EVER SINCE 1948 AND IS STILL SERVING THE BAY AREA WITH A COMPLETE STOCK OF NEW NORTON PARTS, TOOLS AND ACCESSORIES FOR YOUR NORTON.

- * ED BROOKS - OWNER - 31 YEARS
- * BOB RABER - PARTS - 20 YEARS
- * BILL MANKINS - SERVICE - 12 YEARS

IN ADDITION TO ALL THE OTHER GOODIES IN STOCK, BROOKS IS NOW OFFERING LOCALLY MADE MUFFLERS, HEADER TILES AND 2 IN 1 CONVERSIONS FOR ALL COMMANDO MODELS. THESE MUFFLERS ARE ACTUALLY BETTER THAN THE STOCK 750 TYPE AND LOOK VERY SIMILAR. CURRENT PRICE IS 20% BELOW STOCK.

MR. BROOKS HAS RECENTLY JOINED THE NORTON OWNERS CLUB, AND WELCOMES ALL MEMBERS AT HIS SHOP FOR A CUP OF COFFEE AND SOME GOOD NORTON TALK. STOP BY AND GIVE HIM SOME OF YOUR BUSINESS, OR JUST STOP BY TO TALK AND CHECK OUT THE BEAUTIFUL OLD MOTORCYCLES HE HAS ON THE SHOWROOM FLOOR. IT'S WORTH IT.

Secretary's Announcement

As you now know, Bob Bausch has decided to step down from the Presidency of the Northern California Branch, and so the time is upon us to get someone for the position. My own personal wish is that Gene Austin, former Secretary-Treasurer for several years, volunteer to be President for a year. As one of the most faithful members of the Branch, as well as an extremely knowledgeable Norton mechanic and enthusiast, Gene would be an excellent President. I sincerely hope he will decide to take on the minimum responsibility position, and urge all members to encourage him to do so. If anyone else is sincerely interested in being President, please do let me know.

As for me, I've decided that the NORTON NOTICE is sadly in need of some fresh input and some totally new ideas. I am also beginning to tire of the burden of getting an issue out each and every month. Therefore, I am not going to serve as Editor past the end of this year. My greatest fear is that nobody else will be willing to do the job, and the NN will therefore die after the December 1979 issue is printed. If that should happen, it will indeed be unfortunate, but it's just the way things happen sometimes.

However somewhere out there in those 155 members I know there must be someone with some energy and latent ability to put out a decent newsletter once a month. If you think you might be that someone, please call me and we can discuss what's involved. It's time some of you did something for the Club, and this is your big chance! If nobody volunteers, this thing will die, but so be it.

While I will not be serving as NORTON NOTICE Editor in 1980, I would be willing to continue on as Secretary of the Branch, and handle the various responsibilities of that position. If someone else would like to be Secretary, they should say so, and perhaps I'd relinquish that job as well. It's not that I crave the power or glory (what power and glory?) or anything of that sort. It's just that I believe we have something going here of considerable value, and I don't want to see it die. If the right person volunteers, I'm sure I'll gladly turn over the whole works and settle back into "retirement".



selby motors

- motorcycle parts
- self service
- accessory dept.
- complete service dept.
- machine shop
- insurance
- notary service

See Jack Morris, a branch member and Norton enthusiast for quite a few years, if you're looking for parts or accessories. Jack's got the goodies and will take the time to make sure you get exactly what you need.

Selby's service department is in the able hands of Alan Hook, an experienced Norton mechanic and also a branch member. If the Nort isn't running right and you're unsure about what to do, take it to Alan and he'll see that it gets back into tip-top shape.

346 El Camino Real
Redwood City, Ca. 94062

(415) 369-4112

The Trading Post

FOR SALE

New auto advance unit for early Commando with points mounted ait or engine (also fits some Triumph 500 and 600 twins):\$25
New chrome-plated Girling 1261b. springs for rear Commando shocks:\$15
Used rubber Interstate fender mud Flaps:\$3
GENE AUSTIN: (415)573-9559

One set of Commando brake shoes with virtually new Ferrodo popular linings: only \$12.50 with old shoe exchange, \$25 complete

JOHN D. ROBERTSON: (916)446-1732
2110 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95816

1973 Commando 850, superb original condition except for 2 into 1 pipes. Also many cafe-type Norton accessories including rear sets and clip-ons: \$1175 or best offer

HARVEY LOUCKS: (408)255-7356
7583 Lockford Court, Cupertino, CA

Commando MkIII Roadster seat:\$65

GREG LEVASSEUR: (415)824-1797 (2-5PM)

Dual Mikuni 32mm carbs and manifold:\$75
Single Mikuni 36mm carb and manifold:\$60
1974 Roadster tank and side covers:\$60
2 into 1 header pipes:\$40

Crossover exhaust pipes with flanges:\$35
Various other Norton parts available
ALSO: Laverda 'JOTA' - 1000cc, orange and green, black mag wheels, more.
Serious inquiries only please.

GREG BENNETT: (408)736-2224

WANTED

Front fender for 1973 Commando 850

RAY CABLER: (415)428-1812

Tank and front fender for 1975 Commando MkIII Roadster. Must be in good condition without dents. Also want name of a good bike painter to do some custom paint work on a tank, two fenders and side covers.

BRIAN HALTON: (415)982-7242

Good Idea of the Month

This month's good idea came from Harvey Loucks (see Harvey's letter among the Letters to the Editor. Harvey's idea is that we start highlighting club members and their Nortons in the NORTON NOTICE each month in a special "Member of the Month" column. I think it's a good idea, for all the reasons Harvey mentions, and consider it well deserving of the Good Idea of the Month Award. Now how 'bout a few of you sending in a photograph of you and your Norton, and also a brief word on yourself (occupation, hobbies, aspirations, background, special skills, etc.). If you don't send me something, I may just have to use myself as Member of the Month, and I know nobody wants to read about me. So let's hear a little about some of you.

July Meeting: Monday 7/16

Once again the monthly Branch meeting will be on a day other than the second Thursday of the month. I apologize in advance to any members who might be inconvenienced. The reason this time is that I was unable to get the NORTON NOTICE out as early as it should have been, and thus the 12th would be too soon. Since I shall be flying east 7/18 to visit family in Vermont and Maine, and since I don't want to miss both the ride and the meeting this month, I would like to schedule something a little new and different. On Monday nights, a very good band from La Honda plays their own unique blend of country, bluegrass, jazz and swing at a funky little bar on Cañada Road in Woodside. I've been there quite a few times and think that it would be quite a fun place to have one of our meetings. Since the music is so good, we will plan to hold our 'official' business meeting during the breaks. This place is very easy to get to from I280, and I'm sure that it will be a lot of fun for everyone. I might also mention that there is no cover and the drinks are cheap: \$1 for well drinks and .75 for beers. I hope we'll get a good turnout.

DATE: MONDAY, JULY 16
TIME: 7:00PM - 11:00PM
PLACE: THE HITCHRACK
835 CAÑADA ROAD
WOODSIDE
PHONE: (415)851-1419

The easiest way to get to the Hitchrack is to get off 280 at the Woodside exit (Hwy.84) if you come up from the south, and then go north about 2-3 miles on Cañada Road. It'll be on your right and is well lit up. If you come down 280 from the north and want to get off at the Edgewood Road exit, you will save a few miles. Take the exit and then get onto Cañada Road going south. You'll see the place on your left after a mile or so. Everyone who comes will enjoy the Hitchrack and especially the music of the MINDIGO STRING BAND.

July Ride

This month's ride, for lack of a better venue, will meet at the HOWARD JOHNSON'S just off of the First Street exit in San José. Take the Bayshore freeway (Hwy.101) south, and get off at the First Street exit, and you'll have no trouble finding HOJO'S. The parking lot in front of the restaurant is a convenient spot to meet, and the ride group can decide where they want to go when they get together.

DATE: SUNDAY, JULY 22
TIME: 10:00AM
PLACE: HOWARD JOHNSON'S
HWY.101 AND FIRST ST.
SAN JOSÉ

There's lots of good riding country within easy reach of this meeting place. The Mount Hamilton road would be one good choice, and the Santa Cruz mountains to the south would also be very fine. Since I won't be able to go this time, I think it should be up to the group showing up to decide on a route. Hope you have a good one.

Steve

Letters to the Editor

Since I didn't hear any complaints about this new column last month, I might just go ahead and make it a regular feature. This NORTON NOTICE job is not a totally thankless one you see, and since someone out there might be thinking of relieving me next year, I should share the letters I get. They are all greatly appreciated, believe me! Keep them coming please.

Steve

Steve: Thanks for the letter and NORTON NOTICE. I'm very interested in what other Norton owners are up to, and also figured that ads in your newsletter would be a good source of parts and other necessities for maintaining my bike. Lexington seems to be something of a Norton wasteland. I know only one other fellow who rides a Norton. We never had a active dealer here. I bought my 1974 Roadster from Brian Slark a year ago. It only had 9 miles on it! It's a very interesting bike to ride, and somehow much more satisfying than the Triumphs I've had. I think part of that is the enthusiasm displayed for the bike by the NOC and USNOA. Somehow that enthusiasm really rubs off and I realize there's a bunch of other people out there enjoying the same kind of bike.

Jim Salmon
Lexington, KY

Steve: Thanks for the newsletter. It is nice. I will see you in Colorado in August. I plan to leave on August 22nd and take my time getting there. Are you planning to go the show at La Mirada in October? I would like to put together a Norton Club here in Arizona if I could get people off their dead asses. I believe I met you in Reedley. I know that I met Maya Peterson. I own the Electra that was there. Take care.

John Ebert
Phoenix, AZ

John: I hope you will be able to get something going in Arizona. I'm very familiar with the 'dead ass' syndrome, believe me! Looking forward to seeing you at the USNOA rally in Colorado. Please tell me more on that show in La Mirada. Maybe that would make a good excuse for a weekender south in October. Great riding weather then!

Steve

Greetings! Needless to say, we had a pleasantly outrageous time (at the Bear Bust). Sure was nice experiencing the extent of interest in Nortons. I had no idea! We had a fine return run with no mechanical problems; and much faster - two and a half hours. Hope you consider a ride "up the country". We can provide tree-shaded lawn area and other facilities for 12-14 or so folks, plus turn you on to the finer attractions in the area.

Bernie & Cathy Birleffi
Marc Meniktos, Lena Mello
Dan & Bob Bazzoli
Calistoga, CA

Hello Steve: In deepest Africa and the situation is still far from clear. My trip to the US will be in the fall if things go as planned. I am keeping my fingers crossed. I should be home the first week in July, and I shall be happy to get back to the UK so I shall be able to read the NORTON NOTICES that you have sent to me. I'll let you know what I think of them later but I imagine that they will be pretty good. Thankyou for your invitation to visit and it goes without saying that if you're in the UK I hope you will pay a visit to Cardiff.

Christopher Richardson
Monrovia, LIBERIA
Cardiff, WALES

Thanks for the kind invite, Christopher. You can be sure that I'll plan to stop by at your place in Cardiff when I'm in the UK next year. It should be a nice layover on my way up to the Isle of Man. I hope you survived Liberia and made it back to Wales in one piece! We'll be looking forward to your planned US holiday in the fall, and will try to have one of our club meetings and rides coincide with your visit. It would be a privilege to have you join us for both. Good luck with the ES2. Steve

Steve: I just want to say that you have done one hell of a job in making our club the strongest, most active, and probably largest in the Bay Area. The NORTON NOTICE is very well done - I can tell you put a lot of time and conscientious effort into each one. Keep up the good work! By the way, I would like to suggest a "Bike of the Month" column for the NORTON NOTICE. This would briefly describe both bike and owner - it would give us all a chance to know each other a little better - sort of a nice homey touch - human interest, etc. "Naturally" I would volunteer for one of the spots but I think you should start with current club officers, then previous officers and oldtimers. There are a lot of interesting people in our club that I don't even know but would like to. Knowing a bit about hobbies, occupations, other bikes owned, special skills, aspirations, etc. would really be neat! Maybe we should call it "Member of the Month"!

Harvey Loucks
Cupertino, CA

Harvey: Thanks very much for the kind words, and also for the fine idea. I'll try to get something like that going this summer. Let's hope some members will send in a good picture of themselves and their Nortons, and all the biographical info. It'll never happen. Maybe I'll do one on myself at the end of my term as Editor of the NN, and then the new Editor, if there is one, can carry it on from there. Steve

Steve: I got my first issue of the NORTON NOTICE as a bonafide member and have read it twice. I agree that you truly need some contributors of there. Really can't believe that with all the good riding space (sic) you are lacking in writers for everything from tire pressure to ignition timing. It just don't seem right that it all falls on one guy's shoulders.

Carl Mazel
Chatsworth, CA

Look for much more from Carl in future issues!

A Few Words about the THIRD ANNUAL NORTON BEER BUST

Well what can one say about an event as great as this year's Norton Beer Bust? It was an unforgettable day for those who made it this year, truly a religious experience for a hard core Norton nut! To those of you who didn't come, for a good reason I'm sure, I can only say I hope you plan ahead next year. Ask any member who did attend the "Bust" and I know you'll get an enthusiastic report.

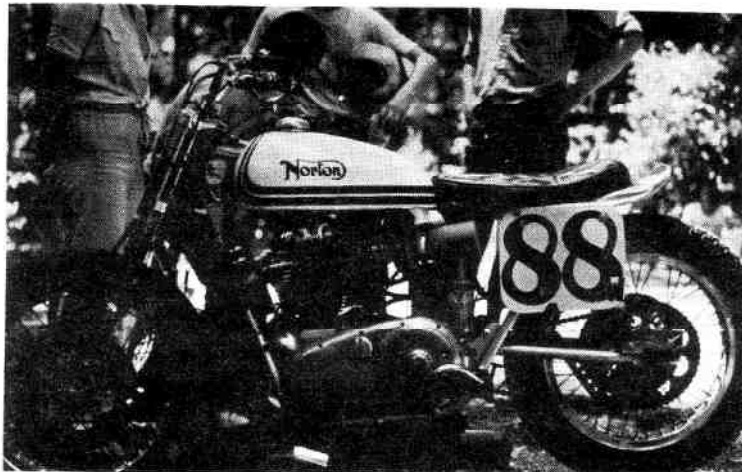
Rather than go into great detail about the event, I'd just like to thank everyone who made it the success that it was. In particular, thanks to Mark Gribble and Gene Austin for their efforts. The beer was great, and Mark's "beer truck" did its job beautifully. Judging from the large number of non-members who showed up this year, Gene did a commendable job getting flyers out to Norton folks all around Northern California. Thanks again to both of you for all the work.

I'd also like to mention that the nice signs with the red and blue trim did a good job in helping newcomers locate the Playbowl. Jeff Pierce made those, and thanks go to him for that service. Also a special thanks to everyone who donated to the Beer Kitty this time. I have no idea who gave how much, but I do know we ended up with \$146.60 which offset the cost of putting the thing on very nicely. Thank you all for that.

Since the three kegs of beer ran out a bit early, five cases of canned beer were bought at the little market in La Honda for \$40. I think we might want to plan to get four or even five kegs next year in order to avoid that unnecessary expense. We did manage to get an excellent deal on the beer kegs this time, thanks to a tip from Michael Bruce. I hope we'll be able to do the same next year. A special thanks to Mike for the tip.

The "Calistoga Bunch", who arrived the night before the Beer Bust, and camped under the redwoods in the Playbowl, seemed to have a great time, pointing out a new possibility that others might want to keep in mind for next year. What better way to truly enjoy a Norton Beer Bust than to come a day ahead of time, sleep out in the woods (there sure are a lot of nice places to do that in La Honda) the night before, and then ride up to Alice's Restaurant for breakfast in the morning? The whole thing worked out very well for Bernie Birleffi and Dan Bazzoli and their whole gang from Calistoga. I hope that others who live outside the bay area will think of doing the same next year. I know you'll enjoy it.

For what it's worth, I'll mention that many attendees joined the club at the Beer Bust, and several more have joined since. We also sold most of the second batch of club shirts and half of the new club pins. More shirts are on order for those of you who couldn't get one in your size. Please be patient.



This flat track racer was one of the more interesting Nortons, as well as one of the loudest, at the Beer Bust. Does anybody know who the owner is?

One fellow came up to me at the Beer Bust and suggested that we have something like this for Triumph owners. Not being one of those any more, I couldn't think of a good reason why I should organize such an event. I suggested that he do so, and he said he just might, but didn't know where to start.

You see, there doesn't seem to be anything in the way of a Triumph Owners Club in the area. Could that be because Triumph owners just can't get it together? I really don't know, but I do think we should try to get together with other British marque clubs, and have an ALL BRITISH MOTORCYCLE RALLY!

Steve

On Accidents

Recently I received, from Branch member Marty Sullivan, a very interesting paper prepared by the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. I'd like to thank them for the use of their material here, and also Marty for sending it in. I hope you find it of value. *Steve*

MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENT CAUSE FACTORS AND IDENTIFICATION OF COUNTERMEASURES
SUMMARY STATUS REPORT

JANUARY 10, 1979

This report summarizes the key findings to date in a study being conducted by USC (the University of Southern California) on the investigation and analysis of motorcycle accidents occurring between 1976 and 1978 in the Los Angeles area. Current findings are preliminary and based on an analysis of 899 on-scene, in-depth motorcycle accident investigations. The findings reported here should be considered tentative due to the absence of exposure data which are now being collected (to be completed in late 1979).

The preliminary findings reconfirm that dramatic gains in motorcycle safety can be achieved if:

- (1) motorcyclists wear helmets, and
- (2) cyclists and motorcycles are made as conspicuous as possible.

GENERAL ACCIDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Over two-thirds of the 899 accidents were investigated on-scene in the presence of the involved vehicles and drivers; the remainder of the investigations were conducted within 24 hours of the accident. The distribution of the initial collision contact points on the cycle is as follows: left side - 36%, right side - 31%, front - 30%, rear - 3%. The front and side contact points are rather evenly distributed; the slightly higher incidence of left side impacts reflects a higher frequency of collisions where an oncoming vehicle turns left and strikes a motorcycle. Fully one-fourth of the accidents were single vehicle collisions attributed in large part to the loss of motorcycle control.

The most frequent accident precipitating factors were: (a) violation of the motorcycle right-of-way by another vehicle (51%), and (b) motorcycle driver error (41%). Right-of-way violations were usually attributed to the failure of the automobile driver to see the oncoming motorcycle until it was too late to avoid collision. It is interesting to note that in almost one-half of the multi-vehicle collisions, the motorcycle/rider combination was rated either inconspicuous or low in conspicuity (now there's a word for you!) against the ambient environment at the time of the collision. Preliminary exposure data indicate that approximately 50% of the motorcycle population drive with their headlights on in the daytime (how many of those have a choice), yet fully two-thirds of the accidents involved motorcycles whose headlights were off.

NEXT MONTH: HELMET EFFECTIVENESS

Save 'em Please!

I would once again like to ask all readers of the NORTON NOTICE to save those brown envelopes the thing is mailed in. They've been costing us about 4 cents each, and that mounts up after a while. At present we mail out about 130 each month. Thanks to those few of you who have returned the envelopes you've received; it's appreciated I can assure you. If more members would do the same, it would save the Branch quite a bit of money in the months to come.

UNITED STATES  OWNERS ASSOCIATION
525 Blackstone • La Grange, IL 60525 • 312/579-0710

For what it's worth, we now have a Chapter of the United States Norton Owners Association right here in Northern California. To the best of my knowledge, we are the second chapter, with the Central Ohio Chapter the first. Since nobody else seemed interested in doing anything, I volunteered to handle the Chapter responsibilities at this end, and have so informed the officers of the USNOA. Linda Snow-Kogut, who is now the Vice President of the USNOA, and also an associate member of our Branch, has said that she will be assisting in the formation of local chapters. Evidently she thinks I don't need any help, because she has yet to give me any assistance. Oh well... Be that as it may, I do hope that more Norton owners in the Branch will decide to join USNOA and get their excellent bimonthly newsletter. I will gladly supply information, application form and encouragement to anyone interested.

Steve

T. T. Motors

2800 Adeline • Berkeley, CA 94703
(415) 845-8233

NORTON ENTHUSIASTS: We specialize in Early and Late Commando Parts, and we offer a complete Service and Machine shop for your Norton work.

STOP BY AND VISIT - CHECK THESE ITEMS OUT!

- * COMPLETE LINE OF BRITISH TOOLS
- * NEW BLACK ROADSTER TANKS
- * FACTORY WORKSHOP MANUALS: MKII & MKIII
- * COMPLETE GEARBOXES, CASES AND GEARS
- * SPEED EQUIPMENT:
 - MEGACYCLE AND NORRIS CAMSHAFTS
 - PM RACING VALVE SPRINGS AND GUIDES
 - BRANCH RACING VALVES
 - SINGLE MIKUNI KITS

- *SERVICE DEPARTMENT--BUILDING AND MODIFICATION OF STREET AND RACING MACHINES:
 - EXHAUST PORT REPAIR
 - VALVE JOBS
 - CYLINDER BORING
 - HEAD MILLING AND SURFACING
 - MAGNAFLUX
 - AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!!!

*FINALLY WE OFFER A 10% DISCOUNT ON ALL NORTON PARTS TO MEMBERS OF THE NORTON OWNERS CLUB (Service work is not included)

History of Norton: A New Era - Part 2

This installment of the History of Norton column comes from the third chapter, 'A New Era', of the fine book, *NORTON*. I again wish to thank Dennis Howard, the author, and Ballantine Books for the use of this material. Next month's column will be the conclusion of this chapter about Norton's development and successes in the twenties, and will lead into the following chapter, 'The Golden Thirties'. I hope you read and enjoy this stuff.

The TT Nortons were not unlike those raced the previous year in certain respects, but the flat petrol tank that had nestled so comfortably between the top tubes of the frame had been discarded in place of pannier tanks, one on each side of the tank tubes with suitable packing between the two units, contrary to the widely accepted notion that this was the introduction of the first saddle tanks on the racing Nortons. What was important, however, was the fact that more petrol could be carried with the new design.

The rather antiquated dummy belt-rim rear-brake system was abandoned in favour of the considerably more efficient internal expanding drum assembly, and, but for a few other very minor detail changes, that was that.

When the show models made their appearance in the winter of 1926 in London, four-speed gearboxes were available on the Big Four and Model 19 road machines, along with other overhead-valve jobs being fitted with separate oil tanks, so following TT practice. Front-brake diameters were increased to seven inches, and a system of automatic lubrication to the primary-drive chain was incorporated, the modifications also applying to the other side-valve model in the range, the 16H. On machines fitted with the new four-speed gearboxes a cross-over final drive was used, thus instead of the main-shaft mounted sprocket being in its former position, inboard of the clutch assembly, it was now situated on the machine's off-side, running on a counter-shaft. Having satisfied themselves that the sporting and utility riders were well catered for, at least for another year, the company turned their attention to devising better systems of engine efficiency, the result of which became yet another remarkable turning-point in Norton History. Already the brains at Bracebridge Street considered that the pushrod-operated overhead-valve engine had its limitations, at least as far as high speed racing work was involved, and one cannot help feeling that had James Norton been spared from higher duties for just a few more years, both his thinking and subsequent action would have been entirely in mesh with the policy that the company was now to adopt.

Now forty-five years on from those exciting early months of 1927, the introduction of the overhead camshaft engine by Norton appears in retrospect all so logical and indeed satisfying. Where other manufacturers admittedly had bold new designs on the stocks, their accountants held supreme power and thwarted moves where the heavy but necessary expenses of racing development were required, and the consequential shelving of potential 'winners'. In contrast to these frustrated firms, Nortons ploughed on in their sure-footed way prepared to offer an honest explanation for any failure, if indeed any existed. No doubt in the fertile engineering mind of Pa Norton thoughts of camshaft engines had existed a long time before.

It was left to Walter Moore to design and to a degree supervise the development of the first new engine. In place of pushrods, which in turn actuated rockers, one to each valve, on the earlier design, a vertical shaft was driven from a set of bevel gears housed in a smooth 'blister' on the off-side crankcase half. Bolted to the cylinder head was an alloy cambox, which in turn contained the camshaft and its own set of bevels. From the two camshaft lobes, short pivoted rockers were pressed onto the tips of the valve stems at an appropriate time in relation to the four-stroke cycle of operation, the inlet and exhaust valves returning to their closed position by the expansion of a coiled spring suitably housed in each case.

Both pushrod and overhead camshaft models were ridden in the TT alongside each other, the strategy being no doubt that should the newer design experience teething troubles, the older versions might take over. It would be well to bear in mind that the older models were still to enjoy their moments of success in other spheres of motorcycle competition for years to come.

All was set for Stanley Woods to bring off his second Norton victory. With the new model, he had already made fastest lap at over 70mph in his fourth Senior TT, but was to retire on his fifth circuit with clutch trouble. Woods of course should have won, because on the first, second and third laps he was leading the second man, Bennett, by an ever increasing number of seconds per lap, but was not aware until after the race as to the extent of these time margins. After four laps Woods came in to refuel, his only pit instructions being that he was in the lead and should maintain his present pace. Alas, the pace played havoc with his clutch and brought about the retirement with only two laps to go and a lead on time of five minutes. One can imagine how Stanley must have felt. However the experience formed the basis of his 'secret' signalling stations around the course in future years, and no doubt contributed to his many nicely judged victories. Although yielding victory to his team mate Alec Bennett on a sister machine, Woods, with an overhead camshaft engine, went on to win the Belgian, Dutch and Swiss Grands Prix and was placed second and third in the Grand Prix d'Europe and the Ulster Grand Prix respectively.

What was the general appearance of the new camshaft model? Firstly, the frame was of the more modern cradle pattern with both single top and front down tubes; in fact in the TT the pushrod motors were fitted into the new frame as well. The fuel tank was of the complete 'saddle' type, dropping naturally over the top frame tube, but the exhaust pipe was still retained on the near side of the machine. Classification letters and numbers were given to both models with the pushrod version, soon to fine favour with the sporting road rider, listed as the ES2, while the very new 'cammy' job would be known as the Model CSI.

Technical Tips

THE 4-BRUSH COMMANDO 850 MkIII STARTER MOTOR

After many months of work, the search for the elusive 4-brush MkIII starter motor has ended in success. Cycle Sports of Santa Clara can get the necessary parts for a tee or \$/3 and can even install the parts for a few bucks.

For those more daring, the parts may now be available from your local Prestolite distributor since the local warehouse, H.C. Makelim in South San Francisco, has indicated that these parts are factory items.

The good news is the new four brush motor works! Assuming a decent battery charge, even cold starts shouldn't be a problem, but it's best to use it only for emergency, like when you've stalled the beast and a semi's bearing down on you.

Parts are as follows:

- 1) Frame Field # 58-241, MGL 2101A
- 2) Brush Plate # 36-863, MGL 1033B
- 3) Spring Set # 50-335, MGD 185S

Any questions concerning the 4-brush modification can be directed to Bob Marshall at (415)369-0597 (evenings).

NOTE: I'd like to publicly thank Bob for this valuable contribution to the Technical Tips column, and invite him to rejoin the Northern California Branch. Whatever the misunderstanding was that led to Bob's resignation last fall has long since been forgotten as far as I'm concerned, and I for one would like to have him back in the club. I hope that other members who know Bob and feel as I do will encourage him to rejoin.

Steve

THE COMMANDO 850 MkIII REAR SPROCKET

For all you MkIII owners who happen to let your rear chain get sloppy and wipe out the rear sprocket, I have help for you. I hate to admit it, but when I got my first Norton (I now have three) I was so excited I drove, and drove, and drove. Anyway, I couldn't find a rear hub assembly, and if I could it would have cost me \$120 or so. I happen to know this friend who owns a sprocket manufacturing company in Oregon House, Calif. by the name of C.T.Alloy, and I went up there with my hub and we got a sprocket together that would work when the old one was machined off.

We ended up with sprocket #252-42tooth at \$20 when I bought it a few years ago. This is an aluminum sprocket with a patent block alloy hardening. You can go up or down 2 teeth before you run into trouble.

The machining at that time cost me \$70. That included cutting off the bad sprocket from the hub, machining a shouldered hub and welding it to the stock hub, drilling and tapping 6 5/6 NF holes to hold on the sprocket. You could use safety wire on the bolt heads but I used Loctite and flat washers. It hasn't come loose yet.

The place is: C.T.ALLOY
P.O. BOX 577
OREGON HOUSE, CA 95962
(916)692-1678

Ask for Conrad DeAlba. Jeff Popjoy
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San Leandro, CA
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Larry Randall and Jan Barton are good people to know. At WEST BAY they have many used Norton parts at reasonable prices, as well as the expertise to help you solve any tricky problems that come up the next time you try to do some repair job. They are definitely the first people to call if you live on the peninsula and don't have the part you need, or the foggiest idea how to put the old Nort back together again.

West Bay also has a good stock of commonly needed new parts. If they don't have what you need I know they'll get it for you, and will probably give you a better deal than anyone else around.

USNOA Rally - Woodland Park, CO - August 24, 25, 26

Well folks, the USNOA Rally is now less than two months away, and our plans are falling together. Jeff Pierce and I are definitely going, and one or two other members have said they hope to. If we can get five or so hard core riders to commit two weeks to this thing, it sure would be nice! It looks like we'll be leaving on August 20th or thereabouts, and riding to the eastern Sierras the first day. After some sleep, we hope to take

off into the desert before dawn on the second day, and ride as far as we can before it gets too hot. We'll probably hole up during the heat of the day and then ride on until dark. Our hope is to have two full days of leisurely riding through the beautiful Colorado Rockies. The Rally is going to be great, and I'm sure the ride will be truly unforgettable.

Steve

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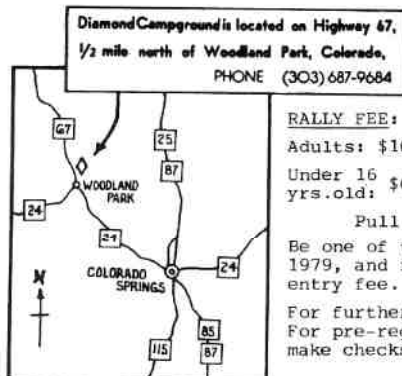
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- chuckwagon dinner/Flying W Ranch

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RALLY FEE:

Adults: \$16.00 (includes tent camping Friday & Saturday night, chuckwagon dinner & rally pin)
Under 16 yrs. old: \$6.00 (includes tent camping Friday & Saturday night, chuckwagon dinner)

Pull throughs & hook-ups are an additional cost.

Be one of the first forty to pre-register by July 1st, 1979, and receive a free rally T-shirt for each \$16.00 entry fee. Post marks will determine the recipients.

For further rally information: Bill Grigg P.O. Box 842
For pre-registration, please Evansville
make checks payable to: Claudia Grigg Wyo. 82636
(307) 265-1419

June Meeting Report

The June Branch meeting was held at the Edinburgh Castle in San Francisco on Thursday the 21st. The turnout was a little small this time, but we all managed to drink an admirable quantity of beer and wolf down quite a few portions of fish 'n chips! All in all, everyone who did show up enjoyed it.

On the business side of things, a number of rather important issues were brought up. The Beer Bust Committee (Gene Austin and Mark Gribble) announced that their expenses for this year's Beer Bust came to a total of \$149.39, which included \$57.75 for the three kegs of beer (thanks to Michael Bruce, they got a very good deal there), \$40 for the five cases of beer purchased in La Honda after the kegs ran out, \$25 for ice, \$12 for cups and tap, and \$14 for mailing the flyers. The donations made at the Beer Bust (remember that helmet box on the tail gate of Mark's truck?) totalled \$146.60 and thus we essentially broke even. I'd like to thank those who were so generous for helping to offset the cost of the event, and would also encourage those of you who forgot to make a donation at the Beer Bust, but would like to do so, to send in a little something when you get the chance. Or perhaps the next time you pay your dues you might add an extra buck or so. Once again, thanks go to Gene and Mark for the fine job they did in making this the best Beer Bust yet.

We next discussed the upcoming USNOA rally to be held in Woodland Park, Colorado August 24-26. So far it appears that Jeff Pierce and I are the only members definitely going from the bay area, with several others thinking about it. Let's hope that some of you 'thinkers' and some of you we haven't heard from yet will come through next month. This is going to be a fantastic trip for those who go, and it would be nice to ride into Woodland Park on the opening day of the rally with a good sized pack from the Northern California Branch. Let's hope....

On the subject of future club rides, it was decided that an overnighter up the Mendocino coast might be nice in August. Adrian Page is going to be in the area in mid-August to pick up a Norton, come to our Branch meeting, and then head up north on the first leg of his 3000-4000mile circle tour through the western states. Adrian, Chairman of the NOC, and his wife, would undoubtedly like some company on the first day of their long trip, and what better way to show them we appreciate their visit than to go with them up the coast. We shall probably go up as far as Mendocino, camp for the night somewhere, and then head back south by a different route the following day. Of interest to antique Norton fans is the recent announcement from Alex McLean (owner of Motorcycles Unlimited in Corte Madera) that he'd like to come along with us on his International! Now if we can get Jan Barton to come on his Manx, and perhaps a few other adventurous souls on their ES2s, Pills, Nomads, etc., we'll really have quite something for Adrian to remember us by. How'bout it?

The final business discussed was the retirement of yours truly as MN Editor at the end of this year. I hope that someone will express an interest in giving this thing a try, so I can work together with him, or her, during the fall. Nobody at the meeting said anything, so we'll just have to wait and see. If any of you out there think you might like to do your bit for the club, please don't be shy. I know there are quite a few of you with the ability to make this rag much more than it now is, and I'd really like to see it happen in 1980. At least let's not allow it to die just because only one person was willing to do it for two years before burning out. *Stone*

June Ride Summary

The June Branch ride was a fine one even though only five members showed up. Gene Austin, Bob Getts, Harvey Loucks, Tom Horton and I had a great time riding on the levees along the Sacramento River. Although the freeway riding up to the area was a bit boring, the riding we did once we got there was most enjoyable. We stopped for lunch at an old 'speakeasy' in Ryde, and crossed the river twice on little cable ferries during the afternoon. It was hot, needless to say, but a lot of fun all the same. On the way back, Tom's Pastback broke down with a layshaft bearing problem (to be the subject of a future Technical Tips article), and had to be left. Thanks to Bob Getts, Tom got home, and was able to get the Norton the next day. *Stone*

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MOTORCYCLES UNLIMITED
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(415) 924-0327

Motorcycles Unlimited is the fine bike shop up in Marin that Branch member Alex McLean has been operating for these many years. If I'm not mistaken, Alex McLean is the very same Alex that Fred (our old hero in the ODD BODKINS strips) always called whenever his Norton blew a piston or whatever. With a reputation like that, you can be sure that it's a good place.

As always, Alex has the largest stock of Dunstall accessories for your Norton in the bay area, as well as good supply of Norton spares. He also has the biggest volume of accessories I've seen in these parts, and a huge showroom full of all kinds of motorcycles. Believe it.

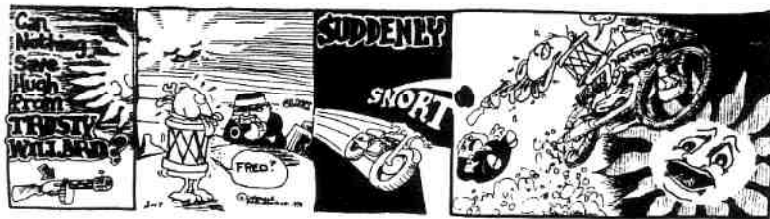
Of interest to classic motorcycle buffs are the two Manx racers on display in the windows upstairs. If you've never had the pleasure of seeing one of these famous machines up close, that alone would be worth the trip to Corte Madera.

Odd Bodkins

(Reprinted with the permission of Dan O'Neill)

Well fans, here we go on another of those strange adventures our heroes keep having. But first, a brief synopsis (what's that?) of the action to date might be in order. For some time Fred and Hugh have been in a quandary as to what they should do about the smog problem in California. They have met a fat pig called GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT who told them "Smog is good for you!!" And then GENERAL INJUN\$ appeared on his brass horse to say 'I love smog.' Then Hugh says General Injun\$ must be a Martian, since the Martian atmosphere is half-gasoline or what we call "SMOG". It seems that the Martians invented the internal combustion engine and gave it to us to prepare our atmosphere for their conquering armies. Apparently most of the Martians in the U.S. reside in L.A., a city with an atmosphere very similar to the one on Mars. Fred also says the Martians in Burbank produce our T.V. shows, which sell us General Injun\$' cars. (Get it yet?)

Anyway, General Injun\$ is after our heroes with sword in hand, when MR. SPANKY suddenly appears to capture them with Tommy gun in hand. Bearing a striking resemblance to one J. Edgar Hoover, Mr. Spanky tastes their thumbs, saying that "No two suspects have thumbs with identical taste". He then tells us that thumb-tasting is an aid in the detection of "pinko wingydingies"! During interrogation, he decides Fred is a fugitive Martian and decides to hang him. Hugh and Fred flee to find the LESSER HOO-HOO, but Mr. Spanky catches them. Asked if he has any last words, Fred says "Buy a used car!" The General calls that "Blasphemy" and demands that Fred recant. While Fred is laughing and General Injun\$ is insisting that "Fred must be silenced", Spanky says he can't shoot him in front of witnesses. The General decides "it's time for the Gift of Tongues!!", whereupon Fred is struck by a bolt. Now that we're up to date, I want to thank Dan O'Neill, the creator of ODD BODKINS, and also Glide Publications for letting me use this.



NEXT MONTH: Fred and Hugh have escaped, for the time being, to a "place of safety", the tree of the Lesser Hoo-Hoo. Meanwhile, Bruce the Highway Patrolman (see him there in the last frame?) gives Mr. Spanky and his friends eleven days to fix their tail light.

The Lesser Hoo-Hoo is not too eager to have anything to do with a goblin with five tongues on a motorcycle. Fred and Hugh must then try to convince the Lesser Hoo-Hoo they are still themselves, before Mr. Spanky catches them. Be sure to catch next month's exciting episode.