



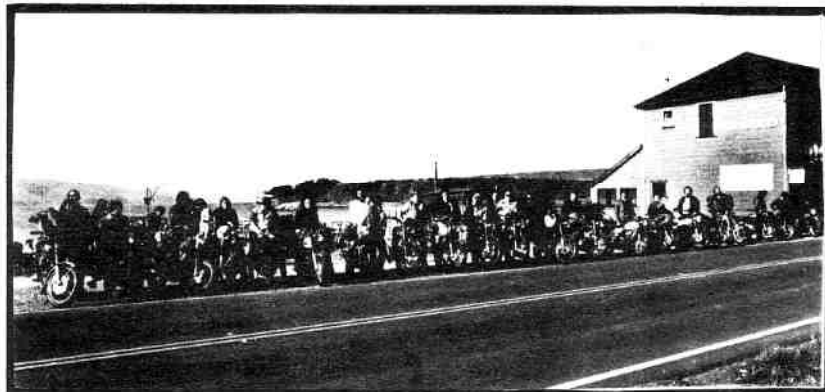
Norton Notice



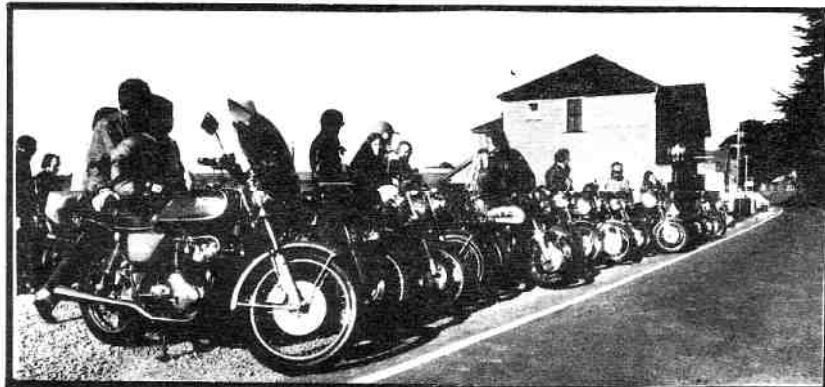
The Newsletter of The Northern California Branch

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 1980



BRANCH MEMBERS ON THE LAST RIDE OF 1979



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	\$10	\$25	\$45
1/2 page	\$15	\$40	\$70

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:	\$25	<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.

THE BEST EVER

The morning of December 16 found about 40 members and friends of the Northern California N.O.C. Branch ready for a brisk ride up the Coast. Clean, well-cared for examples of nearly every Commando and Atlas model mingled with Triumphs, Vincents, and Royal Enfields.

As the Club disembarked on the ride the roar of British twins was a sound to savour. We skirted down onto Hwy. 1, and the machines began to gain speed, and everyone enjoyed a measure of sport motorcycling that is very rare these days: medium high speed scratching on pavement with machines designed and built exactly for that purpose.

Down to Muir Beach, through Mt. Tamalpais State Park, past the Bolinas Lagoon. Now the road straightened out a bit and most machines were playing with 80 - 90 m.p.h.. Then, a brief stop to close the ranks and then another blast on up to the Marshall Tavern for a bit of lunch. After lunch the members were greeted with the arrival of an Ariel Square Four (with a blown head gasket), no less. As the weather was some of the most beautiful of the entire year the ride broke up into small groups that explored a new run or perhaps a favorite old ride.

This club ride was the most successful ever and it is hoped that those out on their first Club ride will keep coming as it's always more fun with a big group. For those of you who haven't been on a Club ride yet, look again at the happy folks on the cover and get yourself on down to Alice's in Woodside on the 13th and join in the fun.

CLUB EVENTS CALENDAR

DATE	TIME	PLACE	EVENT
1-10-80	7:30 PM	Barrington's 414 Emerson Palo Alto	Meeting & Branch Election
1-13-80	10AM	Alice's Restaurant Woodside	Club Ride
2-18-80	7:30 PM	Redwood Inn 6415 Redwd Rd, Oakland	Meeting

A short note on club finances. We're pre' near broke! The reason? -- some members haven't been renewing on time/ the price of the envelopes for the NOTICE went from 4¢ to 10¢/ the issues have been larger, so they cost more to print/ they were heavier, so they cost more in postage. For these reasons we have had to move towards a cheaper newsletter, so, unfortunately, only full members will receive their NOTICES in an envelope and only when the ROADHOLDER is to be sent with it. The paper will be a little thinner to save printing costs and weight. In case you're wondering about your \$5.00 dues, it would cost \$1.20 for envelopes and at least \$1.80 for postage (usually more). We have 8 advertisers a month which nets about \$40 at best. The NOTICE costs between \$60-\$70 a month for printing, not counting photo enlargement and half tones, so just about all of the membership dues end up as a subscription to the Club newsletter with little, if anything, left to finance other club activities. Not too hot for the best motorcycle club on the West Coast.

The solution? I think \$5.00 a year is pretty ridiculous in 1980. I feel we all could afford to kick it up to \$10 a year. What are your feelings? I'm going to move that the annual dues be increased to that amount for associate and social members, but that full membership remain at \$25.00. I'm hoping that others will agree that a branch of the Norton Owner's Club shouldn't be broke. If you would like to help, try dredging up some new advertisers for us. We have new rates, and a few more would make a big difference. Thanks.

MICHAEL

TRADING POST

1971 Norton Commando Fastback. Yellow. Very low mileage. Excellent condition. Luggage rack, new tires.
\$1400 Firm. JOE TUBB
BURLINGAME, CA
(415)347-9266 after 6 pm

1971 Norton 750 Fastback. Good running shape but needs paint and some TLC.
\$900. 26,000 miles.
(415)737-8994

1956 Model "99". 600cc Norton complete. Totally stock.

850 cc "74 parts reasonable.
Call after 8:00 pm, ask for Mike or Greg. (408) 736-2224

Ever get the feeling you're just not as fast on the old Norton as you used to be? Maybe you're just getting old and losing your nerve. Or maybe your Norton is aging faster than you.

Nortons (or when they were new) were one of the finest corner carvers that ever lived. But due to the isolastic vibration damping system and a misdesign or two, the Norton is also the fastest to lose its fine handling edge.

There are two areas peculiar to the Norton that can kill its edge and make it feel like its got a hinge in the middle. The most common and most simple to repair is the isolastics. Periodic checks of the isolastics should be part of your maintenance routine. If they're not, put down this newsletter and pick up your service manual and start reading. Here are a few ideas to make your isolastic adjustments easier and less frequent.

With the engine trying to jump out of the chassis every time it runs and the wheels fighting for alignment, the isolastics are always in a high stress, so something has to give. The normal wear item is the plastic washer between the end cup and collar. The 750 Commando has a white nylon washer which should be replaced with the new type P.T.F.E. washer which is O.E.M. on all the 850's. The P.T.F.E. is a bronze impregnated plastic washer. The bronze makes it more rigid, and it is somewhat self-lubricating. Upon reassembly, a silicone grease must be used if you want your adjustment to last. Dirt anywhere in the isolastics is a major contributor to high wear. Be sure to check for cracks in the gaiters and clean all parts before they go back together.

The Norton service manual lists the recommended clearance for the isolastics at .010 inches. I've found for most cases that .006 is a better compromise for handling with very little increase in vibration. On all Nortons except the MKIII electric start model, maintain this clearance with the use of steel shims. They only come in four thicknesses. With the smallest increment being .005 inches, the final thou or two can be added by increasing the torque of the through bolt a few pounds (but not more than 7 or 8 ft. lbs). If you replaced the nylon or P.T.F.E. washers, you should recheck the clearance after a few hundred miles because they tend to seat or settle in and get pretty sloppy.

The MKIII Nortons don't use a shim type isolastic. To adjust the clearance on these is a joy to behold if you're accustomed to the early type. No disassembly is required for adjustment. Just loosen up the through bolt and screw in the threaded adjuster to the clearance you want and retorque. Why it took Norton eight years to figure it out is a mystery to me, but you can up-date the kick-start model with the screw adjust type. I really recommend this conversion at least on the rear isolastic. Your adjustment time will be cut by about two thirds, and it's a lot easier to experiment with various clearances to see what suits you. The hard part is finding all the new and/or used parts for this model, but it's worth the effort if your Norton gets a lot of use.

Another nice improvement the MKIII Nortons have is a spring loaded head steady. The isolastics have a second function besides isolating vibration. They support the engine, transmission unit. After a few years the power unit begins to sag in the isolastic rubbers. The spring loaded head steady helps support the weight of the power unit and lessens the deterioration of the rubbers and smoothes things out a bit. The nice part about this model is that it's simple, cheap, and, most of all, usually available. The parts required are:

1. 06-5585 Retainer
2. 06-5454 Spring
3. 06-5456 Trunion
4. 06-5457 Bracket

If your head steady is a plate type, you'll also need a box section head steady part no. 06-5459 which you should have anyway because the plate type head steady is prone to cracking. The installation requires only common hand tools and is self-explanatory. Norton recommends setting up the spring so the coils are extended 1.47" to 1.53" or the trunion sits .2" to .5" up the mounting bolt. Feel free to experiment. The weight difference between the MKII and MKIII will change the spec considerably.

DAN BATCHELLER
T.T. MOTORS, BERKELEY

OPERATING TEMPERATURE	TEMPERATURE			
	180°F	160°F	140°F	100°F
CYLINDER WEAR	LEAST	66% MORE	230% MORE	560% MORE
FUEL CONSUMPTION	LEAST	3.5% MORE	14% MORE	25% MORE
POWER	BEST	1.7% LESS	3.4% LESS	8% LESS

For those of you who jump on your bike after it spent a cold night outside and roar off before giving it a chance to warm up, you might be interested in the figures in the following chart. You might also be warned that using an oil cooler without a thermal bypass valve lengthens the warm-up time of the engine. The figures in the chart were provided by United Airlines Ground Equipment Engineering and apply to reciprocating engines only.

GENE AUSTIN

LETTERS

Dear Editors:

Art Sirota's letter in Dec.'s NORTON NOTICE reminded me of a totally unauthorized, stop-gap fix I applied to my '73 Interstate 850 some time back (I hope Brian Slark doesn't read this):

At about 20,000 miles, the old Norton developed a bad case of "light switch clutch" - either on or off - no in between. Inspection showed 2 causes. First was a totally shot, very badly grooved clutch center hub. The second was oily plates. Removing the oil with gasoline would solve the problem for awhile, but 5,000 mi. or so later, the condition would return. How, I surmised, could primary case oil get into a rapidly spinning clutch?

As it turned out, putting 7 fl. oz. of oil in the primary and leaving the bike on the side stand allowed the clutch basket to dip into the primary oil. Use 5 fl. oz. primary oil as per Brian Slark and use of the side stand as seldom as possible helps. But, alas! The oil still appeared in the clutch. As strange as it sounds, the oil was coming from the transmission, down the center of the main shaft, along the clutch pushrod. Yes, the trans vent hole was open and no, the trans was not over filled. Packing the mainshaft bore with grease around the clutch pushrod served as an oil seal -- problem solved!

Back to the shot clutch center . . . Keep in mind that a 2 cyl, 4 cycle engine only pops out a power pulse every 360° of crank rotation; Norton transmissions are not the most robust, and the shock absorbing qualities of the "cushion hub" are almost non-existent. Now, insert a very strong, sometimes grabby, clutch between all this, and you have a perfect set up for various transmission ailments. While saving up \$44 for a clutch hub center I rearranged the clutch plates by first installing two bronze plates together, then steel, bronze, steel, etc. This placed the bronze plate splines on the unworn portion of the hub, i.e., on the high spots between the grooves, leaving, effectively, a 4 plate clutch in place of 5 just like the old 750 fiber plate clutch. The 20% reduction in clutch area makes for nice smooth clutch action - almost as good as my Triumph 500, no slippage and allows double hub life. I know it sounds screwy, but it works.

One more point, and I'll go away: if you've ever been cruising at 3500 and all of a sudden - whack it open only to have Old Norton cough, sputter, and generally not run worth a damn, these two things are likely: a marginal set of coils (aka Lucas) and standard-type spark plugs such as Champion N-3. K-Mart coils are the obvious solution to the first, and projected nose plugs such as Champion N-7Y to the second. Changing to N-7y's solved the high-speed plug loading problem entirely, K-Mart coils provide one-kick starting every time.

Thanks for bearing with me. I'm new to the NOC, so the above may be common knowledge.

CHUCK CAMMACK
Las Cruces, N.M.

P.S. Let's keep NOL and USNOA separate - the difference between the two adds some variety.

STATEMENTS FROM THE CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT

GENE AUSTIN

After much coaxing by several members of our Branch, including Steve Coburn (July NORTON NOTICE, p. 3), I have decided to accept the nomination for Branch president. I had hoped to see someone who has not previously served as a Branch officer step forward and volunteer some of his or her time, but we are fortunate in having several volunteers for other positions in our Branch. I refer, of course, to Carollyn Scott as newly elected secretary/treasurer and Brian Halton, Michael Heth, and Dick Swanson as co-editors of the NORTON NOTICE.

In the past couple years several letters have been written by various members of our Branch to the Club committee in England which have resulted in confusion and bad feelings on both ends. The recent visit to our Branch by the Club chairman, Adrian Page, did much to improve our understanding of what the Club in England is trying to do. I refer specifically to the spare parts program, which I encourage every full member to make use of.

If elected president of our Branch, I think the first order of business would be to patch up our relationship with the rest of the Club. As I know numerous people in the headquarters committee personally, I don't think this would be much of a problem.

For those of you who are interested in my opinion of the U.S.N.O.A., I'd like to state that although I have been a member of it since 1975, my first loyalty is to our Branch of the Norton Owners Club. Having been a member of this Branch since its inception in 1970 and having twice served as secretary/treasurer, I think you can see why I feel this way. With interest in classic British machines on the rise, I feel we have a lot to look forward to in the Norton Owners Club, and I would like to help it grow.

STEVE COBURN

See last month's NOTICE for Steve Coburn's statement.

MAYA PETERSON

If I'm elected president of the NOC, I will do my best to be up to date and keep up with meetings and rides. (Of course, I'll still catch unknown Nortons, but I will try to be helpful in any way.)

New ideas will always be welcome.

I would like it to be mandatory that we remain a chapter of the British branch. So far, they have more to offer than we can have by ourselves. I would like to think that maybe we could extend the Norton Club across the U.S. This would be in addition to the chapters from England. A national network would help those who travel.

I really think that we could start a branch in every few states (including England) and that doing this would prevent Nortons from disappearing. Parts would be easier to find.

I will never make a decision without consulting everyone in the Club first.

All three of the candidates for Branch president are very active in the Club and deserve your careful consideration.

DO VOTE. Don't be apathetic. If you can't make it to the meeting, then use the ballot in last month's NOTICE or just write your vote on a piece of paper and send it to Carollyn Scott before January 10.



FROM THE NEW STAFF

It certainly is not without some degree of trepidation and excitement that the three of us look forward to participating in the "editorship" of the NORTON NOTICE. What certainly has become clear during the last month or so in which the three of us have begun to assume the duties of preparing and distributing the NOTICE is the prodigious amount of work Steve put into the magazine each month. I think we all owe him a large vote of appreciation and thanks. In attempting to fill Steve's shoes, we hope all of the members will be a little patient as we attempt to get the rough spots smoothed out. As many of you may recall, the motivation each of us had in volunteering to participate in putting out the NOTICE is that none of us wanted to see the publication die. At the same time none of us had the time to do the entire job alone. Hence, the idea came up to attempt to share the responsibilities of putting out the NOTICE.

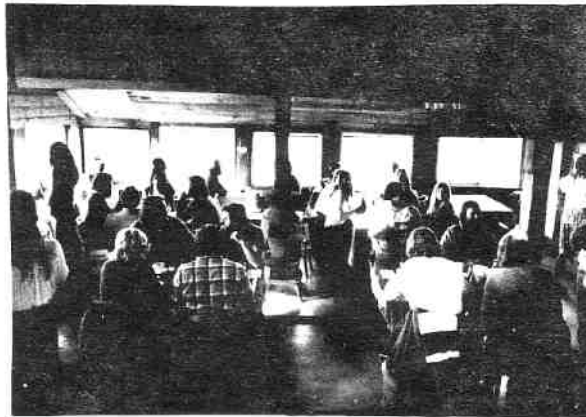
We think it's important (and particularly appropriate) at this point to emphasize that the content of the NOTICE really is the responsibility of all of the members. It can and should only reflect the interests, activities, and contributions of the members. To the extent that each member takes a few minutes and writes the NOTICE concerning such things as: what you want to see more or less of in the NOTICE, what your experiences have been with your bike, dealers, equipment, etc., and on your interests in the Branch, then the NOTICE will be a more responsive magazine.

In a sense, the editors can only assemble and present information and material. If the content of the magazine is to be of interest to you and reflect your interests, then contributions and "feedback" must come from you.

We'd like to briefly describe some of the thoughts that we've had in providing new features in the NOTICE. One idea that Brian Halton is pursuing is to provide a "profile" on various members of the Club to become acquainted with the other members. Another idea Dick Swanson is pursuing is contacting all interested dealers and shops in the area (and beyond) with the idea of having them contribute an article on some aspect of bike repair and/or maintenance. The first of such pieces appears in this edition and is on the adjustment and maintenance of isolastics. Dick feels there should be more articles and features on the technical or mechanical aspects of the Norton, and this idea is an attempt to pursue that notion. If these and other ideas strike your interest, please let us know. Now is certainly the time to get new ideas and suggestions in before we all get very set in our ways and decide our way is the best way to do things!! Anyway, we're looking forward to this as much as we hope you are. In the future we'll be passing on our thoughts concerning the Club and the ways we'd like to see it grow.

'Til then,

The Editors
MICHAEL, BRIAN, and DICK



Branch members enjoying the weather, the food, and the people at the Marshall Tavern on the Club's most successful ride. Why not hop on your motor and enjoy the camaraderie of British motorcycle owners at Alice's Restaurant this month.

Norton
