

# Norton Notice

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



NO. 87 JULY 1985



## Norton Notice

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The Newsletter of The Northern California Branch



is published monthly by the NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH of the NORTON OWNERS CLUB. Its purpose is to inform and entertain members regarding all aspects of the Norton motorcycle, including history, technical advice, and preservation of the marque.

NORTON NOTICE is a reflection of its readership, who are encouraged to submit any article, technical tip, photograph (original or otherwise), as long as it is in good taste, so that other Norton enthusiasts may enjoy it. For Branch members who cannot attend club meetings or club rides, the NORTON NOTICE affords an opportunity to share experiences and information with the membership of the Branch, and to bring the Branch members closer together.

Deadline for items to be submitted for publication is the 21st of each month.

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MEMBERSHIP IN THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH OF THE NORTON OWNERS CLUB IS AVAILABLE FOR \$25.00 PER YEAR.

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE PAYABLE TO THE BRANCH SECRETARY/TREASURER, WHOSE NAME IS SHOWN ABOVE.

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 LOCATED ON THE MAILING LABEL OF THE NORTON NOTICE OR THE MEMBERSHIP CARD. FOR EXAMPLE, 745/2 DENOTES MEMBER NUMBER 745 WITH DUES EXPIRING ON THE 1st OF FEBRUARY.

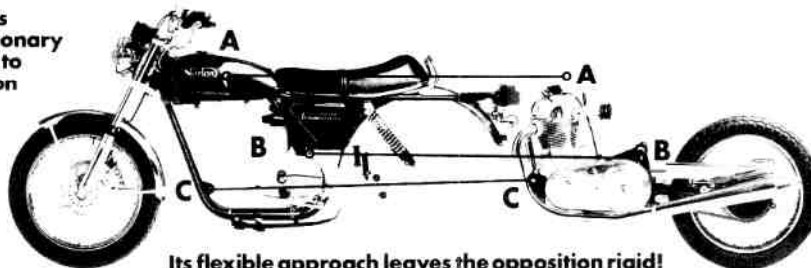
ALL CHANGES OF ADDRESS SHOULD GO TO THE BRANCH SECRETARY/TREASURER, NOT THE NORTON NOTICE EDITOR.

Subscription to the NORTON NOTICE only is available for \$15.00 per year. This does not include membership in the NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH of the NORTON OWNERS CLUB, nor does it afford any of the rights or privileges of membership in the NOC.

Membership in the NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH of the NORTON OWNERS CLUB entitles a member to monthly issues of the NORTON NOTICE and bi-monthly issues of ROADHOLDER magazine, which is sent directly from England, keeping members informed of Norton owners' activities worldwide. Membership provides voting privileges at all NOC and Branch meetings, and allows one to purchase Norton spares directly from England, at significant savings, through the NOC Spares Program.

The cover bike is a Norton Commando, owner unknown, pity, it could have been your bike on this month's cover. Free! I'll go so far as to offer the enlargement Free! after use on the cover.

**Norton's  
revolutionary  
answer to  
vibration**



**Its flexible approach leaves the opposition rigid!**



There are many things people tell you to watch out for, or even worse, not to do, on your Norton. One of these involves over-tightening the coil mounting straps that hold the Lucas coils to the frame up around the head tube. The danger in over-tightening these little devils is that the coil housings will be crushed onto the primary windings of your coil. After a very few miles of vibration, the lacquer insulation on the coil windings will be worn through and the primary windings will be shorted to ground. If this happens on the right hand coil and your bike has a Boyer Bransden electronic ignition, the bike won't run at all because the coil primaries are in series and anything "downstream" from the short is effectively eliminated from the primary circuit. Since the left hand coil is "downstream" from the right hand one, it won't fire. If the short occurs in the left hand coil, the right hand coil, being "upstream" from its shorted neighbor, will continue to fire and you'll have a one lunger until you trace down the problem. With points ignition, the coils are in parallel and the failure of one will not affect the other.

Which, incidently, brings us to how to diagnose a bad coil. Start by checking for spark at each spark plug. If there is no spark, check your points lead to make sure that it is properly connected at both ends and that there are no breaks in the insulation that might cause shorts to the frame. Next, check your points to make sure that they open when they should. Those of you with electronic ignitions won't need to bother with this step, but don't eliminate the ignition unit as a source of your problems yet. Since its less likely that both coils are shorted at once, swap the leads to the primary side of the coils and see if you get spark on the right side. If you do, the left coil is probably dead. If there is still no spark, it looks like there is some other cause for the problem. Just to make sure, though, try putting a known good coil on the right side and again check for spark. If that fixes it, you've just won the Murphy award for simultaneous coil shorting. If you happen to have a resistance checker (ohm meter) in your pocket when this happens, you can check for resistance between either of the primary leads and the coil case. Infinite resistance indicates a good coil. Anything less and the coil is bad and ready for the round file. If you don't have an ohm meter (shame on you) you can use one of the leads that illuminates your instruments. Remove the bulb end from the instrument housing but leave the bullet connector connected to the wiring harness. Turn on your key to the position where the instrument lights are normally on and touch the bulb housing to a good ground and verify that it lights. Then disconnect both primary leads from your coil and touch the bulb to one of the primary posts on the coil. Ground the coil case (its already grounded if its still in the strap) and watch the light. If the coil is bad (ie primary shorted to the case) the light will glow anywhere from bright to dim, depending how many good coil windings there are between the bulb and the short. No glow means the coil is OK.

After following all of these steps the morning of the last club ride and finding a bad coil, I took out the coil and examined the case. As I had expected, it had been badly pinched by the coil bracket. Not suprising since almost every fastener on this bike had been torqued to within an inch-pound of its life by the previous owner. I was still curious to find out just what parts of the coil rubbed together inside the coil case, so I got out my trusty churchkey and went to work on the lip that holds the case to the plastic terminal block. It wasn't long before I had the case off and oil all over everything. I guess they fill the coil with oil for better cooling or something. With thoughts of PCB poisoning flashing round my head, I cleaned the oil out of the case and off the coil body proper. Close examination of the primary windings in the neighborhood where the coil strap had pinched the case showed about a dozen windings with the insulation worn off. When I looked down into the case, I found a slotted sheetmetal baffle that enclosed the coil body between it and the case. My flashlight revealed about a dozen shiny marks just like the ones on the primary windings and in the same location. I pulled out the buffer and found it to be very thin and very sharp sheetmetal, especially sharp along the slots. It was the edge of one of these slots that had been pushed into the primary windings. From looking at the rest of the coil body, the only thing that keeps this buffer from rubbing the primary windings are a few strips of paper wrapped around the end of the coil body. Its a shakey set up at best. Or should I say Joe Lucas at his best? Apparently it is good enough to keep the buffer off the primary windings as long as the coil strap isn't overtightened.

Along the same lines but not quite the same cause, the warning light assimilators mounted on '71 to '74 Nortons are prone to premature failure if water is allowed to get inside and rust the works. All of the assimilators I've pulled apart that don't work are very badly rusted and considering that there are two sets of ignition type points inside the rust is the main cause of failure. To remedy the water problem, wipe silicon sealer around the base of the blade type contacts and around where the can seals onto the base plate. Remount it making sure that it doesn't hit anything as it bounces around in its spring type keeper. This is because there are some very fine wires inside that will break if subjected to shock.



ILLUSTRATIONS: BARRON STOREY

Scut



Bad Vibrations

Tomorrow will be cancelled due to lack of interest.

I know most of you reading this have had excellent reasons, in the past, for not attending club meetings, functions, rides, etc. but when the reason is apathy, don't be surprised when the people who make efforts to organise these things stop doing so. A bad dream for most must be to organise your first party and then have no one turn up for it. My thanks to Dave and Nick who made efforts to arrange our first club dirt bike gathering only to find no body gave a damn. Kitchen passes can be supplied in the future by the secretary if needed.

The Norton Notice has been a quality newsletter for a number of years now. But it needs the regular input of its readers to keep it that way. Many thanks to the editor and those who do contribute to it, especially the regulars. However this branch is faced each month with a bill of around \$ 200 to have it printed and mailed out. This is money that can be better spent rather than sending out an envelope containing nothing new.

Not so bad vibrations

If you're one of those people who are throwing up your arms in disgust because there will be no beer supplied this year at the annual picnic, then I'm sorry. The truth of the matter is that the club cannot afford to put itself in the position of being held liable for supplying free beer to its members or anyone else. It seems that each year someone tanks up on the complimentary suds and then tries to implant himself and his Norton into a solid object. Last year an Atlas and its owner, on their way home, bounced off a tree into a parked Cadillac. The fun part for those left there to pick up the pieces was trying to explain to an irate Oakland cop ( 5 ) what we were all doing there anyway. So this year to compensate the branch will be providing more soft drinks and those hotter 'n' hell sausages. So if you want to drink a beer or two then make sure to bring your own. Anyway do make an effort to be there this Sunday July 21, it promises to be a great event. Drag that old Norton out from under the dust sheets and lets see it at the picnic. I have heard that Dave Crader will have his 1956 Mod. 50 ready by then after a two year rebuild so get polishing.

Good vibrations

Someone should start making bumper stickers claiming I rode the Wankel, this exclusive group is growing by the day. It was especially true on Tuesday June 11, this year when Gene, Scot and myself visited the Norton factory at Shenstone in England. I'm not going to steal our presidents thunder. He promises to write a complete ride report on the new Wankel and our trip to the Isle of Man T.T. races at a later date. But I feel compelled to put in my two cents worth and say its one hell of a motorcycle. One cannot help but be impressed by it. The factory and sales manager Steve Sidney did a grand job of showing us around and making us feel welcome. We were there for 6 hrs., poking our noses into as many facets of the new bike as possible and firing as many dumb questions as we could think of. Anyway, forget all the pictures youve seen of test bikes, prototypes and police machines. When the Wankel is finally released to the public ( or civilian market as Norton put it ). I am assured by Steve that its final appearance will be totally different from what has gone before.

I asked Steve what the red line will be for revving the Wankel engine. Apparently at around 9500 a rev-limiter comes into operation to stop it going any higher. But what if I remove the limiter, I asked, what will it go up to before the rotors go into orbit? The answer is, they dont know. They say the engine is unburstable but the rev-limiter will be made very hard if not impossible to remove anyway. The story goes that one day one of the engineers had an engine on the test bed without said limiter fitted. It revved up to over 23,000 r.p.m. with no ill effects. ( there are only 3 moving parts in the whole engine ). Steve was anxious to add though, that the Wankel engine actually starts to lose power the higher the revs go over the red line limit and gas mileage figures would consequently become horrendous. This should discourage any budding engine tuner.



We also saw at Shenstone the genuine last Norton Commando ever to be made by the old factory. There are many claims to this one, but assurances from Mr. Sidney, that the grey Interstate M.K.III ( # 850-336539 ) in front of us, covered in a preservative coating and zero miles on the odometer was indeed the last one. I found out some other interesting facts and figures about the Commando range whilst talking to Steve. In total there were approximately 70,000 Commandos ever made and, get this, around 55,000 of them came to the U.S.A. & Canada. Of that number it is estimated that 24,000 of them still survive and 10,000 are still being actually ridden. Also around 500 John Player Nortons were sold to the public, which is more than I had previously been led to believe.

One final quote said to me from a Wankel mounted police officer who had ridden to the factory for a tour around the place whilst we were there. "If I'm ever taken off my Norton Wankel and put back on to a B.M.W. police bike, I'll know someone doesn't like me in the South Yorkshire police force, it would be like a demotion."

A final plea from me, there are a lot of /6 and /7 members due for renewal at the present time. If you're one of them and intend to renew your membership then please send in your dues now, thanks

Please welcome the following new members to the club:

Alan Petersen Eureka, Calif.  
Jerry Scott Wewoka, Okla.  
Dave Smith Lynden, Ontario, Canada.

*Phil Redford*

### The Class Reunion

On thursday evening June 13, the Northern California Branch of the N.O.C. held its first meeting at a wonderful new restaurant called The Class Reunion. The new owners of this establishment went out of their way to make us all feel welcome, and the 13 members who showed up were treated to delicious food, pleasant surroundings, lots of beer and very reasonable prices. Because the weather was on the warm side, we held the meeting outside in the rear of the restaurant beside the new lawn, gazebo, and open bar area. A private interior section of the restaurant is available to us in the event of inclement weather. Not much club business was carried out, but everyone there had a good time. We plan to meet there again in August, so everyone is urged to help our club make a better showing next time, see you there.

Art Sirota

### A new member contributes

I am a Traffic Signal Technician and I have dealt with electro - mechanical devices for 20 years, this is a complex field where failures or mistakes get people killed. I have much experience with devices that are measured in the multiple millions of cycles and the physical quality & concept of design is paramount. The sledgehammer techniques suggested in some of your past issues miss the underlying problems and create secondary problems that can lead to failures that are not only dangerous but unnecessary. The substitution of ignition coils with those from cars is a case in point. I have been riding English motorcycles for over 25 yrs. and have watched many dealer profiteer from essentially what can only be described as a major Idiot factor - the owner who's too lazy to research the real underlying causes of his problems.

P.S. If you would like me to elaborate on what I have said please ask,

Charles E. Bulkley



# Norton Notice

these  
 T-SHIRTS T-Shirts are only available in large.  
 BASEBALL JERSEY

All branch logo t-shirts are white, baseball jerseys are white with blue sleeves.

All t-shirts are Hanes Beefy T's  
 Prices : T-shirts (all) \$8.00  
           : Baseball Jerseys \$9.50  
 Pay by check made payable to the  
 "Norton Owners Club"

### T-SHIRTS\*\*\*\*T-SHIRTS\*\*\*\*T-SHIRTS\*\*\*

#### NOC BIG N LOGO

	S	M	LG	XLG
BLACK	*	*	*	*
NAVY	*	*	*	*
YELLOW/BLACK	*	*	*	
WHITE/BLACK	*	*		

#### BRANCH LOGO

#### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH TOOL LOAN-OUT PROGRAM

Get in touch with Harry Bunting if you need one or more of the following tools for working on your bike. A refundable deposit equal to the replacement value of the tool is required at the time you pick it up.

TOOL	DEPOSIT
timing cover oil seal guide.....	\$ 5.00
rocker spindle puller.....	\$25.00
crankshaft sprocket puller.....	\$12.00
clutch spring tool.....	\$12.00
clutch locking tool.....	\$18.00
valve spring compressor.....	\$22.00
exhaust nut "C" spanner.....	\$10.00
timing pinton extractor.....	\$20.00

Harry Bunting (415) 968-2020  
 1401 Gilmore St.  
 Mountain View, Ca. 94040

#### PARAPHERNALIA

4 1/2" sticker	N.O.C.	\$1.00
2" sticker	N.O.C.	\$ .50
2 1/2" x 3 1/2" sticker	N.O.C. sticker	\$ .75
( red, white, and blue )		
N.O.C. keyfob		\$1.50
4 1/2" embroidered patch		\$2.50
Lapel pin, branch logo		\$1.25
T-shirts - N.O.C. and branch		
various sizes and colours call or write for details. Tom Borman		
4278 25th. St.		
San Francisco, Ca		
94114		
415-282-9304		

#### NEW PARAPHERNALIA

Black T-shirts, "MY SUCCESS IS DUE TO MY UNAPPROACHABLE NORTON."  
 Size XL ( US large ) only. \$8. plus shipping, \$ 1.50.

Norton Owners Club Commando Service Notes.

45 pages of technical information produced by the N.O.C. England. Invaluable information to any Commando owner. \$ 5. plus .75¢ postage.

John Player Norton key fob	\$ 1.75
N.O.C. embroidered patch 1 1/2" sq.	\$ 1.50
"Unapproachable Norton" decal 1 x 2 1/2"	\$ 1.00
N.O.C. machine badge 3" x 3"	\$ 6.00
John Player Norton lapel pin	\$ 1.50

On items listed above, please include an appropriate amount extra to cover postage and an envelope, thanks Tom.

#### Barely here

I have received a circular from N.O.C. member Mac McCarthy in Colorado. He is organizing a Brit-Bike ride and meet on July 27, 10:00 a.m. in Glenwood Springs, Colo. The meet will be in the mall parking lot in West Glenwood adjacent to I-70. For info. or for those willing to help, contact Mac McCarthy, 11258 Hwy. 133, Carbondale, Co. ( 303 ) 963 - 2169. I wish Mac luck, my offer for a beer still stands.

Viriato Vieira and Stephen Dukoff, I am working on getting pictures of my Nomad frame and sundries, I will also include pictures of Ed Brooks Mod. 77 which is cherry. The two bikes are similiar in design, they both should help. I showed up at Hollister Hills Sunday, where was everyone?

see you at the picnic,

*Ben*



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

July 11 club meeting, Hotel Utah, 4th. & Bryant st. San Francisco ( 8:00 p.m. )

July 21 club ride will be the picnic, location and map are on page # 7.

August 8 club meeting, The Class Reunion, 2700 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. ( 7:00 p.m. )

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NOTICE : In the event of rain on the day of a club ride, the ride is automatically postponed one week. Also, riders should have plenty of oil and gasoline by the scheduled departure time and all personal problems should be taken care of. In other words....  
FULL TANKS AND EMPTY BLADDERS .

FOR SALE

Dunlop K81 TT100 4.10 X 18 tire slightly used but  
lots of tread left and in great condition: \$ 6 .  
1974 MkI Roadster 850, very original, very clean, many new parts....\$ 1650.  
Used fiberglass "S" and early roadster side panels, \$ 15 each; new 16 H oil tank WW2  
model \$ 25; polished S/S roadster handlebars, new \$ 45; original seat for early road-  
ster and "S", no rips, metal pan \$ 35; Fastback tank, seat, tailsection, all new, perfect  
genuine Norton \$ 385 per set.

Art Sirota  
415-327-3167

WANTED

Front fender and stays for a 1961 Norton ES-2, 500 c.c. single. These are also used on  
models 50, 88, 99, and 650 standard; not on the Atlas, Nort. Pt. # 19362, give me a call

Dick Rutter  
415-945-7996

FOR SALE

At .65 ¢ ea. or \$ 5.00 for a packet of 10 in a zip-lock bag, what you need is a motor-  
cyclocard. Two views are presently stocked with envelopes: Engine of a 1971 Norton Pro-  
duction Roadracer. John Coopers 1972 B.S.A. triple Roadracer, the Fed. Gov.wants the tax  
and of course, the postage is extra, call me, we'll work out the details.

Dick Rutter  
415-945-7996

FOR SALE

850/750 Commando Factory Workshop manual, includes the factory parts list, \$ 30,g.c.,  
Haynes Commando Workshop manual, \$ 10.  
Original Mod. 7 spare parts list, \$ 20.

T. Mullen  
408-978-1851

FOR SALE

B.S.A. Gold Star DBD34 Clubman, 6 gal. Lyta tank, Borrani rims & stainless spokes, Lucas  
racing magneto, John Tickle TLS front brake, Cerriani road race forks. \$2500 Phil.

(408) 293-4548



## Norton Notice



# SERVICE BULLETIN

MODELS: NORTON 750 & 850  
NUMBER: 6/75  
SUBJECT: Cylinder Head Identification  
DATE: February 1975

Norton Triumph Corporation

P.O. Box 275, Duarte, California 91010

### CYLINDER HEAD IDENTIFICATION AND INTERCHANGEABILITY

Norton cylinder heads are identified by part number, and by a code number stamped on the right exhaust rocker box face.

Listed below are the identification marks, part numbers, and compression ratios.

I.D. Mark	Part #	Model	C.R.	Inlet Port Diameter	Remarks
RH1	060988	750	9:1	30 mm	All Commandos up to 1972
RH5	063327	750	10:25	32 mm	1972 Combat (no longer available, use 054097)
RH4	064058	850	8.5:1	32 mm	1973 450 & 1975 MKIII
RH5	064048	750	8.9:1	32 mm	1973 low comp. ratio
RH6	064097	750	9.3:1	32 mm	1973 standard
RH10	065062	850	8.5:1	30 mm	1974 350

All replacement 750 heads shipped from the factory are now fitted with 850 model valve guides. Heads in this condition are stamped with the suffix 'S' after the number, e.g. 'RH6S'.

There are three sizes of intake manifolds that can be used with the cylinder heads and are as follows:

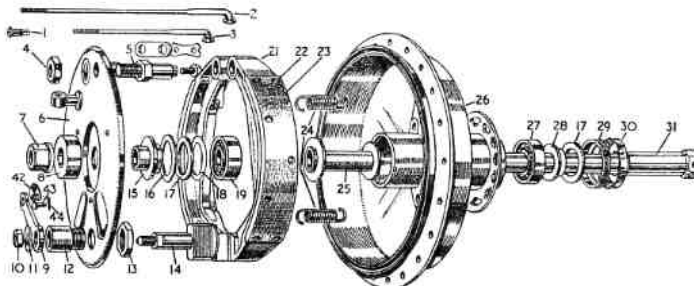
065196 Tapered from 32 mm to 30 mm

062819 Parallel 30 mm

062711 Parallel 32 mm

Ref. N3/84

PLATE. R.







9th ANNUAL Owners Club Picnic &

# Norton

Old Timers  
Motorcycle  
Meet

**SUNDAY JULY 21st 1985**

SAN MATEO COUNTY MEMORIAL PARK  
HUCKLEBERRY FLAT PICNIC AREA #2  
(HALF A MILE WEST OF MAIN PARK  
ENTRANCE ON PESCADERO RD.)

**ACTION BEGINS AT NOON**  
ALL NORTON RIDERS AND  
**EARLY NORTONS**  
**ESPECIALLY WELCOME!**



SPONSORED BY  
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH  
NORTON OWNERS CLUB



**Hot Dogs & Soft Drinks Available - No Beer Supplied**

FOR MORE INFO, CALL SCOTT (415) 455-8776

UPDATE RALLY 1985

The Northern California Branch N.O.C. annual rally is coming. Some bad news though is that the Calaveras Big Trees State Park will not be able to harbor Norton big twins and singles. Consequently, the 85 rally committee has been scouting the mighty Sierras for a suitable location for the rally. We hope to retain the original dates of August 23 & 24. So plan on attending the N.O.C. rally 85, and reserve early by using the form provided in last months N/N. Once again - see you at the rally at wherever.....

Nick Wiltz 978 - 5985  
David Crager 295 - 4968



## Norton Notice

### Hall-Burdette

MOTORCYCLES

Norton

MOTO GUZZI DUCATI

We have been selling and servicing Nortons since 1948 and have a good supply of parts and accessories, both new and used. Our mechanic, Bob Bennett, has been repairing Nortons for over 20 years and is a recognized expert. Thor Berke, our parts manager, has a thorough familiarity with all Norton parts and accessories.

2010 DEL PABO BLVD.  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95815  
PHONE (916) 925-1797

RABER'S  
EUROPEAN CYCLE WORKS, INC.  
"Your source for parts and service"  
BSA TRIUMPH

Norton

DUCATI MOTO GUZZI

the same old guys at the same old place...

Over 60 years combined M/C knowledge...  
( Bill must be older than I thought)

\*\*\*\*\*PARTS: Bob Raber  
SERVICE: Bill Mankins\*\*\*\*\*

1615c ALMADEN ROAD (rear building)  
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA. 95125  
(408) 998-4495

Norton  
Triumph  
Lambretta  
Ducati  
Moto Morini  
**T.T. MOTORS**

Norton Owners - T.T. specializes in European motorcycles and offers complete parts, service, and machine shop for all the wonderful bikes we sell.

Stop by and visit and check us out!

- \* Complete line of British tools
- \* Manuals and spares for your Norton
- \* Speed Equipment:

Megacycle and webcam camshafts  
Single Mikuni kits  
Exhaust port repair \$45 each  
Valve jobs and port work  
Cylinder boring and surfacing

- \* 10% discount on all parts (except Lucas) to N.O.C. members

2800 Adeline Street  
Berkeley, CA 94703  
9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Tues. - Sat. 845-8235

Triumph  
Norton  
MOTO GUZZI DUCATI  
**MUNROE MOTORS, INC.**

MOTORCYCLES  
SALES - SERVICE - PARTS

Munroe has three mechanics that are familiar with Nortons and have been for a number of years. We can replace exhaust ports with the head on the bike and don't know of anyone else who can. The job looks like original factory! Call for a quote on shop prices. We also have a good Norton parts supply.

MUNROE MOTORS INC.

412 VALENCIA ST.  
SAN FRANCISCO 94103  
PHONE 626-3496