



Norton Notice



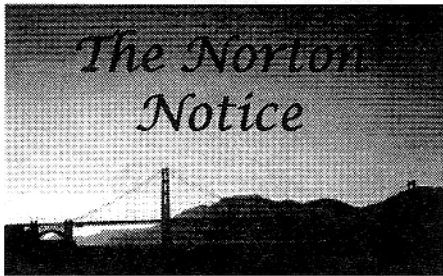
The Newsletter of the
Northern California Norton Owners Club

No. 204

May, 1995



In this issue
"The Sebring Trip From Hell"
and
"Clubs" by Charlie Panipinto



is published by the Northern California Norton Owners Club. Its purpose is to inform and entertain members regarding all aspects of the Norton motorcycle, including history, technical advice, and preservation of the marquee.

The NORTON NOTICE is a reflection of the readership, who are encouraged to submit an article, technical tip, photograph (original or otherwise) as long as it is in good taste, so that other Norton enthusiasts may enjoy it. (Good taste is somewhat optional, but hey-this is a group of bikers we're talking about here.....that's why we have an editor.)

The deadline for items to be submitted for publication is the 20th of each month. The NORTON NOTICE welcomes contributions submitted electronically. Material in any format placed on a 3.5" floppy disc can be read by the editors clever Macintosh. You may also send articles directly to the editor via modem or fax at 415-595-3368. Set your telecom software to 8/n/1, use X or Z modem file transfer protocol, and just call up the editor most evenings (don't wait until the 20th...there is a long line then). The editor also has a fax at his office (415-593-4850). E-mail can be sent using INTERNET to norton2@aol.com.

Membership in the Northern California Norton Owners Club is available for \$20.00 per year. Membership dues are payable to the Branch Treasurer.

Advertising rates are \$60.00/year for a 1/4 page ad!!

Renewal dues are payable at the end of the individual's membership year, which is designated by the last number listed on the mailing label of the Norton Notice and the membership card.

All changes of address or questions about membership or the Notice, call the President.....not the Notice editor!!

The Northern California Norton Owners Club is affiliated with both the Norton Owners Club of England and the International Norton Owners Association. Interested persons can join these two organisations per the terms described on the Branch membership application form.

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NORTON NOTICE

IMPORTANT (Please note the following in fine print) The object of the Northern California Norton Owners Club is to promote, encourage and develop motorcycle activities. The Club's members are owners of Norton motorcycles and they often submit for publication in the NORTON NOTICE technical tips pertaining to motorcycles of the Norton marquee. Technical tips so published have been reviewed for technical content and are believed to be both acceptable and workable, but no guarantee is made or implied that they will work correctly, nor is any liability assumed by either the Norton Owners Club or the members for any problems resulting from the use of these tips. The Club also assumes no responsibility for the acts or omissions of its members in connection with Club activities. NORTON NOTICE articles or other materials express the author's view only and not necessarily the official policy of the Norton Owners Club or its Northern California branch. The editor reserves the right to accept, reject or alter all editorial and advertising material submitted for publication. Advertising published does not imply endorsement of products, goods or services. Now you know.

Upcoming Events

Club Rides Schedule

May 14th

North Bay Ride/Meeting
(See Page 6 for Details)

June 11: Santa Cruz & South Coast Ride

July 30: Fred Twigg Ride

August 12th weekend: Dardanelle
(Unofficial Ride)

September 17: Old Timers Ride

October 15: Mt. Hamilton Ride

November 5?: All-British Ride

November 12: Delta Ride

December: No rides scheduled

If rides are cancelled due to poor weather - plan on the ride taking place the following week - same time - same place. Check with Jim!

April 28-30: AHRMA road racing, Willow Springs, Roasmond, CA

April 28-30: Superbike Laguna Seca

May 21: 12th Annual Rally of European Motorcycles, Santa Cruz

June 23-25: West Coast Norton Rendevous in Southern Oregon

July 19-23: INOA Rally, Reading Center, New York

Sept. 16: AHRMA Steamboat Springs, CO

Oct. 22: AHRMA MX, Hollister, CA

Scanning:
Steve Micheli
A.B.E. Dental, Belmont, CA

Meeting Schedule

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

May 14th

North Bay Ride/Meeting

The meeting will be at The Lord Derby Arms in Calistoga at approx. noon
(There will be no regular Thursday meeting this month)

June 8th - Prince of Wales

July 13th - Harry's Hofbrau (San Leandro)

August 10th - Connecticut Yankee

September 14th - Fremont Brewery

October 12th - Harry's Hofbrau (Mt. View)

November 9th - San Jose Venue

December ? - Xmas Party

Harry's Hofbrau: 399 West El Camino Real, Mountain View, CA., (415)964-8455; just north of Highway 85 on El Camino Rl.

Harry's Hofbrau: 14900 E. 14Th St., San Leandro, CA

Prince of Wales Pub: 106 East 25th Ave., San Mateo, CA., (415)574-9723; off Highway 101 between Hwy 92 and Hillsdale Blvd. Next to San Mateo County Fairgrounds

Fremont Brewery: 3350 Stevenson Blvd., Fremont, CA., East of Hwy 880 near Paseo Padre.

Connecticut Yankee: 100 Connecticut St., San Francisco, CA., (415)552-4440; Vermont St. Turnoff of Hwy 101 North

Photography:

Alan Mueller, Lou Caputo
Joe Edwards

Press Production and Halftones:

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

Maya's Minutes.....

by Maya Lai, President

Well, I had a pretty good turn out at Harry's Hofbrau. We have a new member, who signed up. John Brandt with a 72 combat. Welcome kid!

British Marketing has donated \$50 to Duncan's daughter's fund. That was very kind of them. Jim discussed the May ride which was to be an overnighter, but the club decided that it was still too cold, so it will be a day ride.

Tom Dabel gave up a report on Alan Goldwater, in case you haven't heard. He had an accident while walking his big dog and fell and hit his head. He is on the mend but needs peace and quiet now so that his head will heal. For those of you that want to join the NOC in England, I will be your contact to them. Also I am now in charge

of the new memberships in the club. Any problems, please let me know. We are talking about having a garage sale at the Old Timers Ride this year. This is for those who might have something that they want to donate for the club to raise money. There will be a truck to bring things in and it can be arranged to drop off at homes. Please let me hear some input on this.

I trust the Easter ride must have gone on, but I'm still on the mend myself. For those of you who went on the ride, I hope it was a pleasant one.

See Ya,

Maya

The Veep Speaks.....

by Joe Edwards, V.P.

Well here we roll into the merry month of May, (damn rain). The rides so far have been few, but we can look forward to better days....maybe I should work of the Chamber of Commerce. As we roll into this month, we find one of the Norcal members a little under the weather. Alan Goldwater had an accident while walking his dog, yes walking his dog..not on a motorcycle. Alan is at home getting things together. I know all members wish him a speedy recovery.

At the last meeting at Harry's Hofbrau, some of the members got a sneak preview of the logo for the '96 rally in Quincy. By the time some of the members make the trip back for the New York rally this year, we should have samples for the folks to see at the rally.

The prez has undertaken the task of updating the membership files. From the

looks of things she is starting to get things under control. It might take a month or so to get it back on track. Those of you out there who have not sent in your dues..please do so soon.

Well, we have a great deal for you folks out there. We have just four Norton watches left in stock, we will let them go for a mere cost of \$25 each. Help us clean out this inventory. (We need the funds to build up inventory on club items). Those out there should order a new club patch, those of you who have already purchased a patch, show it to a friend..they are only \$5 each.

We also have a supply of sweaters in stock, the size range is M, L, XL...the price is only \$38.00. If you would like to add a club T-shirt to your collection, we have a stock of red T's and the price is just \$12. We need to sell of these items. We will even pay the postage

.....continued on the next page

Minutes of the April Meeting

...The Veep Speaks continued

for you when you place your order. All you have to do is call me.

Just for your information, the club is now in its 25th year...one of the oldest clubs in the United States. Keep this in mind when you think about the club and what you can do for it. After all these years it's time to step up and help the club when it is at a low point. The best way to do that is to please bring your dues up to date and also order lots of the club items that are for sale.

As always, there will be a Santa Claus!!

Joe

Thanks and Lake Selmac Update:

First of all I'd like to thank all of you who called or wrote for your sympathy during my recent hospitalization. I am on the mend and plan to be back in the saddle for next months ride.

Summer is fast approaching and I hope lots of you are making our weekend rally in Oregon June 23-25 part of your vacation plans. The Northwest Norton Owners have thrown down the gauntlet by promising to beat our attendance at this joint event, so the prestige of our club is on the line. I'd like to have some idea of how many to expect; preregistration would be really helpful. So far I have only 3 signed up although many of you have expressed interest. To preregister, send me \$22 to 1780 Chanticleer Ave, Santa Cruz CA. 95062. For those who prefer motel accommodations, try the Junction Inn at (503) 592-3106. Their rates are \$50-60, and they recommend early reservation as this will be one of their busier weekends.

Best regards to all,

Alan Goldwater

The meeting was called to order at Harry's Hoffbrau. Maya talked about the hand addressed Notices that came out last month. This was due to the fact that she is taking over membership duties. It had come to the attention of the officers that many of the memberships were not up to date. Many people who hadn't paid were getting Notices and many people who had paid their dues were not getting the Notice. All members need to contact Maya to help her update the records.

The May ride was discussed and will be a ride only in Marin. The May meeting will be held during the ride.

It was reported that Alan Goldwater had a bad accident while walking his dog. He spent 8 days in the hospital. He is back home now and recovering from the head injury.

Joe Edwards talked about problems with the overseas Roadholder. That membership has declined. New things need to be done to bring the membership back up to at least 200 members.

The New ideas for the patch for the '96 rally look great. Also we have some beautiful sweaters and t-shirts still for sale.

Lani relayed that there is \$360.85 in the club account and the cost of the notice is \$302. We will be discussing the mail costs.

We auctioned off books "Norton, the complete story" which went for \$23 and a Norton work shop manual that went for \$21. The 50/50 drawing was \$94 of which half went to the club.

Lani Beneveds

Whazz Happ'nin

.....news of the NCNOC

The North Bay Ride and Meeting

This month we will combine our ride with the meeting. The ride will begin and 9:00 AM from Denny's in Emeryville (take the Powell St. Exit off Highway 880). The ride will take us through the Lake Berryessa area. For those of you who did not attend last years ride..it was wonderful with several surprises thrown in. We will stop for lunch, around noon, at the Lord Derby Inn (look for English Pub) just outside Calistoga. We will have our monthly meeting at that time. Let's hope for great weather and let's all get out there and ride.

The Day After Report

by Lou Caputo

A whole bunch started out, maybe 50?, but by the time we got to Capitola, just south of Santa Cruz there were only about 15 of us. We took the usual roads through the area, Stage, Swanton, Empire Grade and they were mostly clear of cars. At one point our leader on Swanton, Mike Burnham, pulled over. I believe he was troubled by a sticking slide, and later reports had him sanding it down by the roadside. Always remember to pack sandpaper. I was half expecting to see some of Harry Wong's group zip by— Keith Code was a guest speaker at Harry's Clinic and there were over a hundred signed up— but, while they were out there, I never saw any of them.

A special commendation to Rick from Colusa who had ridden from Colusa (it's in the foothills) on Sat. to buy some parts from Marshall's. He was too late for the show but decided to stay anyway for the Sunday ride. He left us in Capitola about 3:00 for his 5 hour ride back to Colusa. He says that at one point they had 3 Nort's up and running in the town and we may have to designate him the official Norton Colusa rep in future dealings with that part of the world. But first we need to make him a club member. He was unaware of the NorCal club and the USNOA.

At about 6:00 I cruised on by the Wall in Berkeley, too tired to stop. There were a huge number of bikes there (and on the roads throughout the day). We're back in the saddle again, and in once-sunny California, it's about time. My weekend ride schedule is already about half filled for the next two months. YAHOO!

Memo from Art Bone (President of the INOC)

My book, "Planning Your Motorcycle Adventure to the Isle of Man" and Video, "Manx Memories" were born out of my experiences at the last six Isle of Man TTs. Published by Cycle Art Publishing and Priced at \$20 each or both for \$35, the book offer the knowledge that comes only with experience to the first time Isle of Man visitor while the video offers a unique view of TT Week as seen by the motorcycle tourist. I wasn't an experienced international traveler when I made my first trip to England. . . a fact I proved by losing my wallet and all my credit cards within two hours of arriving. Now after 6 visits, my misadventures will help others enjoy a great trip instead of 2 weeks of frustration.

AS A SPECIAL DEAL TO BRIT-IRON MEMBERS, I'M OFFERING THE BOOK AND VIDEO FOR \$25 PLUS \$4 SHIPPING AND HANDLING. ORDER FROM:

Cycle Art Publishing

Dept. BI

130 Holly Brook Rd.

College Park GA 30349-1702

East Bay News

by Eric Rhodes

The east bay riding scene is still available as a partial overview from The Wall; on Grizzly Peak about 1/2 mile south of the Lawrence Hall of Science.

Mostly Japanese machines show up, but there is also a big dumpster displaying unique and interesting decals and bumper stickers, and the discriminating eye can appreciate the distinctions.

Any Sunday might make The Wall a

good late afternoon stopping place, even if you're not bent on it.

Can anyone recall their first set of new K81's?

To the NCNOC

We would like to express our deepest regrets concerning our motorcycling brother, Duncan Ferguson. Our club is truly sorry....

Richard Keir
President, Monterey Bay European Motorcycle Club (408)648-4905

Obituary: Arthur Gordon Fitch, born April 9, 1914 - died April 8, 1995 in Oroville, California. Mr. Fitch was born in Thunder Bay, Ontario. He was married 46 years, survived by 5 daughters, 13 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. Gordon was a former member of our Norton club and had many British bikes over the years. He rode a Rudge in the Big Bear Run in the '40's.

Easter Morning Ride

by Jim Carton

I woke at 2:06 AM Easter morning. As I squinted at the clock and said to myself..."wow, I got up just in time". But the alarm didn't go off. I looked at the clock again and discovered it was really 12:06..now I knew I would have plenty of time to get ready for the ride. I checked the sky..there was a thin cloud cover and the moon and stars were barely peeking through the clouds. It looked like a go!!

I strapped the rain suit on the bike, just in case and headed for the bridge. One of my most favorite things in the whole world is blasting through San Francisco on my Norton during the early morning hours...no cars and no cops!

I got to the Golden Gate Bridge at 4:10 AM and missed the turnoff to the parking lot. Then I saw the no U-turn or no stopping sign as I went through the toll booth. There was no way I was going to go all the way across the bridge and come back and have to pay \$3 to meet up with the ride. I glanced around, saw no law enforcement officers...made a U-turn

and quickly rode into the parking lot..killed the engine and head light and tried to look as inconspicuous as possible. Sure enough, five minutes later, here came the Ranger...I didn't hear what was said but I think Lynne Miller smoothed in over for me..thanks Lynne.

Around thirty bikes showed up before we pulled out to go across the bridge. Just as we all fired up...it started to drizzle. But I didn't get the rain suit out. We headed across the bridge and just as we cleared the tunnel, the rain stopped. As we pulled into Tam Junction, we saw all the other bikes beginning to leave, so we just continued on.

About half-way up the mountain I started to feel real cold. Every one else must have been cold, too, because the pace was nice and comfortable. We made it through the Ranger station, paid our fee (which was advertised many, many times going up the hill with signs posted everywhere...this reminded me of the old Burma shave ads along the highway).

As we neared the summit, we hit a little fog. That finished off the last bit of warmth in my body..now I was totally frozen. Someone was actually making a small fire in the parking lot as we pulled in. We were still 1 1/2 hours from sunrise!! We headed down to the concession stand for coffee....it was only a dollar for the worst cup of coffee I've ever had...but at least it warmed my hands and insides.

When it got light enough to see, the east bay was overcast... so Mike and I walked over to the east side of the summit and there it was!!! THE SUN, peeking through the clouds. We were actually seeing a bank shot of the sun reflecting off of the bay. Hurrah!!

As soon as we saw the sun, we hopped on our bikes and headed back down the hill. We got to the Lighthouse around 8:00 AM..we were the first ones there. Eventually about 10 people arrived. We all had a great breakfast. As we gathered outside to get on the bikes, Don Danmeier and Shirley arrived. Don was on crutches...an improvement over the last set of wheels I saw him on at the Clubman Show.

What a great morning and what a great way to celebrate Easter!!

*View from the **Bridge**..... by Alan Mueller*

This article is a little late but I think we can all appreciate the importance of these tips.....editor

Shopping Tips

For all of those in charge of acquiring their own Christmas present (or spending money set aside for the wife and children's presents) I'm enclosing this reminder on shopping for old iron

What It Says

What It Means

Rough Condition	Too Bad to lie about
Part Bike	Beyond Repair
Concours	Polished the Tank
Engine Runs Quiet	Using 90W Oil
Needs Minor Overhaul	Needs new Engine
Needs Major Overhaul	Ready for Junkyard
Burns no Oil	Leaks / Thrown Out of Engine
Rebuilt Engine	Cleaned the Plugs
Ride it Away	Owner lives on a hill
Desirable Classic	Nobody Likes it
Rare Classic	Nobody liked it when new
Modern Classic	Manufacturer didn't like it
Stored 20 years	Left outside as fence post / plant stake
Restored	Stored 20 years in barn
Solid as a Rock	Rusted solid
Good Investment	Can't be worth less
No Time to Restore	Parts don't Exist
95 percent there	Other 5 percent doesn't exist
Other conflict forces sale	Wife says me or that xxxing thing is going

Presented by the
**Northwest
N.O.C.**

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24056 26th Ave. S.
Des Moines, WA 98198
(206) 870-1758

Portland
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and

**Northern
Cal. N.O.C.**
Alan Goldwater
1780 Chanticleer Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
(408) 475-7505

150 miles from Redding
295 miles from Sacramento
380 miles from San Francisco
440 miles from San Jose

West Coast

Norton Rendezvous

June 23-25, 1995

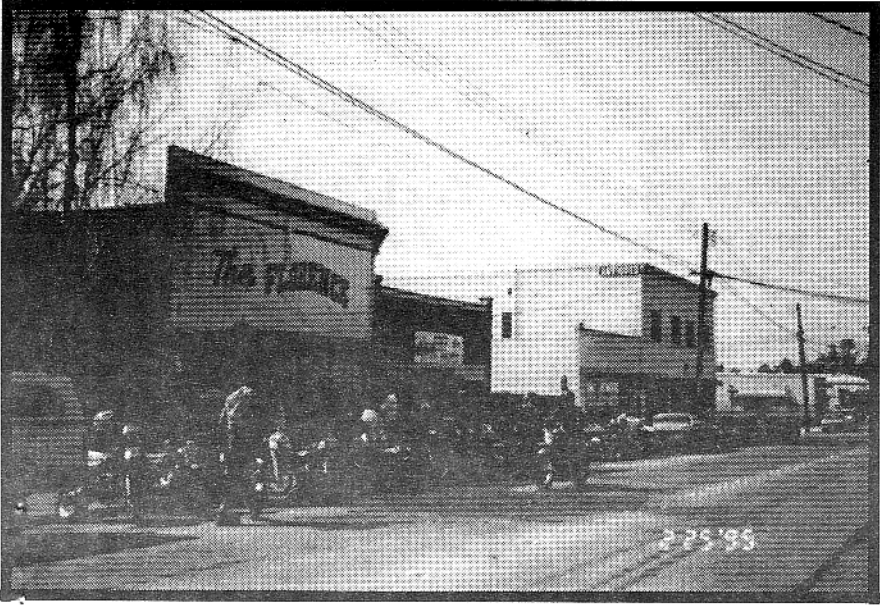
Lake Selmac, Oregon

Three days two nights camping,
banquet, fishing, swimming, and
some of the best Norton roads
anywhere, all for \$22 (prereg.)
Come early, stay late, have a blast!

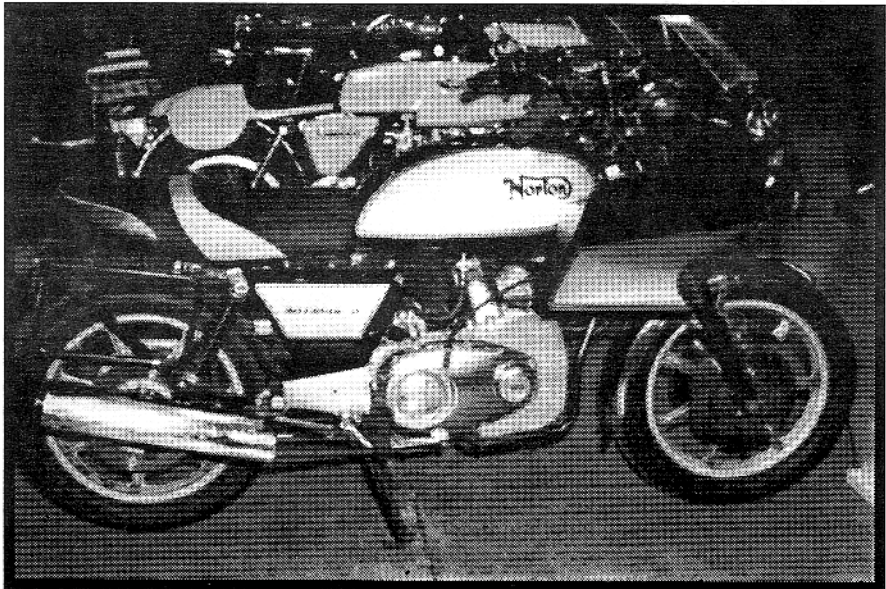
Lake Selmac is:
40 miles west of
Medford on US 199

150 miles from Eugene
265 Miles from Portland
380 miles from Olympia
440 miles from Seattle

You can ride there - on a Norton!
all bikes and riders welcome



Duncan would have loved this turnout!!



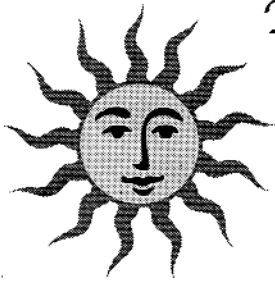
Alan Goldwater's Special Rotary Interpol



Donne Tomlinson visits from New Zealand!



A Small but Determined Group Braves the Weather at the "Flying Lady Ride"



Two Fine Days

by Lou Caputo

I headed for the garage with the BMW keys in my pocket. The weatherman had promised two days of sunshine and with the temps in the upper sixties I had visions of some quality time in the saddle. The Beemer would be a good choice; I was planning some travel on remote roads and well, the Norton was getting on in years—almost 50K on the motor—I was riding it on borrowed time.

I had taken my Interstate to Sears the previous day (I think I had the only Britbike there!) and decided to look it over quickly. The motor had a slight leak at the base of the cylinders in the rear, but everything else seemed to be fine. Well, maybe I could just adjust that tankbag again. Better yet, I'd try the Vetter one I'd bought at the Brit show. Hmm, probably ought to oil the chain. My, that new seat had been comfortable. I went inside and put the BMW keys away.

South it was, to San Luis Obispo, where I have a son who is spending down the family's savings getting, I think, an education. The Bay Area/South Bay traffic was moving at its usual hectic pace and it wasn't until I reached 25 in Gilroy that things began to look up. The wildflowers weren't out yet, except for some poppies here and there, and so I forgot about

sightseeing and concentrated on the road. Easy to do—no cars, clean road surface (lots of evidence of slides but the machinery had been out scooping up the mud), no wind. I passed a minor stretch of road and bridge reconstruction just before Lonoak Rd. where I turned and headed for King City. Just past the intersection I passed a creek which was lined with abandoned cars. I stopped and counted 24, but they disappear around the bend and there are more downstream. I explored a bit in a truck/machinery graveyard and noticed when I returned to my Norton that the tach drive was oozing Mobil 1. I fashioned a bandanna from a shop rag strip, mindful of the "O" ring sitting on my workbench in the garage. As it turned out, the bandanna solved the problem; I'll be looking for something with appropriate colors for the future though.

About this time I realized that I wasn't squinting. Now this may not sound like a major event, but I've always had trouble finding dark enough sunglasses. My photogrey prescription lenses just don't darken enough (I had a pair coated on the inside and that works for me for driving—alas, my vision changed and they have limited utility at this point.), especially behind a visor. So I was trying some cheap shades that fit loosely inside your lenses (Longs, \$2.00, if you can find them), and they worked! No more watery eyes, no more squinting. A major

improvement for touring!

I came into King City with the intention of taking G14 south but went the wrong way on 101 (you need to head north) and finally exited at Paris Valley Rd. (I think) and got on Lockwood San Ardo Rd. This turned out to be a great alternative as it winds through a lush canyon. The road surface is not good (1 1/2 lanes, clean but bumpy) but my suspension was up to it and, except for the suicidal squirrels, had the canyon to myself into Lockwood. There I caught G14, south of a stretch of G14 I had ridden last year, and headed for Paso Robles. Put this stretch on your list of Roads-To-Ride. The views are great, the sweepers are first-rate, and there were NO cars (Apparently weekends aren't busy either—in any event there are plenty of places to pass legally.).

In the morning I took a bucket and sponge and rediscovered the see-through windscreen. I thought I'd better have a look at the plugs since it seemed to be getting. Normally with a hot engine I kick through gently one time and then kick to start. I was having to kick three or four times. The plugs, N7YC, were glazed over with a hard green substance which I attributed to the Mobil 1, since the plugs had been in with the oil for about 4K miles. They were also lightly blistered. I left them in but had a bit of trouble starting up. Junior pressed his button and his VFR roared to life. We headed out to find Indian Valley Rd. which would take me back to 25 and him to G14 via 198. Never did find it though. The towns along 101, San Miguel, Bradley, San Ardo are dying

and we couldn't find a gas station for the VFR which was good only for about 50 miles at this point. As we wandered farther and farther from what my map showed as the entry point for the road I thought, "Just as well; my finesse (ahem) is no match for his brute horsepower." And, he could wheelie the VFR. I've never done a wheelie. In short, this was a good time to just enjoy the scenery. The mature view.

At a lunch stop I swapped out the plugs and that seemed to solve the problem. I told myself that I was going to take it easy on the way back but there's a section of s-curves south of Pinnacles which just seems to say "NOW!" and I didn't settle down until Tres Pinos. Back to the Bay Area traffic where cooler temps made running at 70 easier on the motor. I'll check my valves and maybe move the needles up a notch, and get ready for the next 500 mile trip.

My fears about taking the Norton into the boonies were unfounded. As I think back over the 30K I've put on this motor, I realize it's left me stranded but once—and that was a broken Boyer wire. Next time I won't be quite so timid about running Indian Valley Rd. on my Norton. If I can find it!

Notes: 101 around San Luis Obispo is a revenue's paradise. I counted two cars waiting in the wings (on-ramps) and we were paced for about 10 miles by another. Junior and three others returning from Laguna last year were busted for 65mph. Be forewarned! Also, it's safest to cruise G14 from King City to Jolon at reasonable speeds.

PURPLE HAZE

by Leo Sowers

"THE SEBRING TRIP FROM HELL" PART ONE

When people look at my 1974 Norton and ask why I had it painted 1971 Norton Purple, I just smile and remember "Freak".

Freak and I spent four years together in College and Graduate School putting miles on motorcycles. Freak owned 1971 Purple Norton during those four years. He put approximately 100,000 miles on that bike during that time period.

We had many riding adventures during those four years, luckily none of them were tragic. Although looking back today, some 20 years later, I'm sure Freak and I used up eight of our nine lives. To put it bluntly, we had a lot more testosterone than common sense. This story, "The Sebring Trip From Hell" is based on an incident which took place in 1973.

Author's note: I have been asked by several people if these events really happened. Yes they did. In several instances I have changed names, sequence of events, and locations to protect the characters' rights to anonymity.

The Sebring race track was about 120 miles from our college in Florida. Freak and I had made the trip to see the 12 hour endurance races a couple of years earlier. We had a "good time" if you consider trying to view exotic race cars doing 190mph, while surrounded by 60,000 drunks, a "good time". Anyway, we knew what to expect the second time and had made plans to leave the track before the race ended at midnight. We figured that we could leave around 11:45PM and drive straight back to campus. We planned on getting back to school around 3:00AM.

Freak decided to take his current girl friend. We called her "Catwoman". This female was "different". She had a genius IQ, however, she liked Freak and his friends, which made her common sense questionable. People, who had the pleasure of riding and drinking with Freak and his friends, said she had to be suicidal to ride with us. We called her Catwoman because of a strange habit she exhibited: when she wanted Freak, late at night, she would park herself under his dorm window and make wild cat noises until she got his attention. We were serenaded by her almost nightly. Yes, she was different!

Freak loaded up his bike with Catwoman and their back pack early the morning of the race. Catwoman also had another peculiar habit. She always wore a dress while riding with Freak. I

guessed she hoped someday he would take her someplace fancier than McDonalds to eat. I was still riding my first "college" bike, a 160cc Honda Super Sport. It had straight pipes and topped out at about 90mph. The third rider was Bob. He had a new Honda 450cc bike. Bob never let anyone else ride his bike. We left at 7:00AM in order to get to the track before noon, when the 12 hour race was scheduled to start.

Freak hated riding with Asian bikes, so he immediately took off and left us. I still remember the sight of Freak and Catwoman disappearing over the horizon at 80mph, with their long hair flying everywhere along with Catwoman's dress! Freak would pull over every hour and wait for us to catch up, then he'd take off again. We hop-scotched to the track like this and arrived at 9:30AM. Bob and I parked our bikes, then secured them and our gear. Freak and Catwoman decided to go to the other side of the track, so they left their gear with us and headed off on the Norton.

In order to get to the other side of the track, they had to drive the Norton over a steep, thirty foot high, arched, wooden vehicle bridge, which crossed over the track surface. When Freak arrived at the bridge there was a long line of cars waiting to cross over, with a local policeman directing traffic. When Freak finally pulled up to the base of the bridge, the Norton was running hot. The policeman was yelling at him to start up the bridge and Freak was yelling back that he wanted to let traffic clear the top of the bridge before starting up the steep grade. Freak was really concerned that his drum brakes could not hold him, Catwoman, and the Norton on the steep grade if they were forced to stop before reaching the top. Finally it looked like the Porsche 911 in front of him was about to clear the top. Now the Norton was overheating and Freak decided he had to go. He dropped the clutch and the started up the bridge. Just as they got ten feet from the top, the Porsche stopped. Freak grabbed the brakes but the Norton started to slide backward. Freak hit the throttle and let out the clutch to stop his backward slide at about the same time the Norton's overheated clutch welded up solid. The Norton lifted the front wheel about three feet up in the air, leaped up the bridge, and planted its nineteen inch Dunlop tire in the middle of the Porsche's rear deck lid. As Freak, Catwoman, and the Norton, started to tumble off the bridge he heard the Porsche's engine fan hit the collapsed rear deck lid, followed by an expensive grinding sound from its gear box and lots of smoke.

To be continued next month.....

CLUBS

by Charlie Panipinto

Club....the very word lacks any obvious punch, but put the right word next to it and things catalyze. BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB, if you really hate someone, sign em' up, get a subscription from psychology today (a fine selection of self help reading), it's hell trying to get out of this one, happened once to me you know, the person that did it is dead now....true story, but that's not what we want to talk about. Club has positive and negative connotations, it sort of lacks the formality of organization, or association, and doesn't have the impact of gang. I once started *something* but right off the blocks we were in trouble, we needed an identity, why does it have to be so hard?

We had to call ourselves something, we didn't care for any of the gang stuff, granted we all rode motorcycles, but to increase ridership we needed to appeal, "Motorcycle Gang" had no appeal. We had no marquee under which to ride, none of us rode the same brand or model, a guy rode a Kawasaki A-7 Avenger....but the name Rotary Club was taken. After one of our unplanned ride/dinner ride/cafe for coffee and desert things, the bunch of us realized that this was a very cool deal, but no could name the deal. There on a well stained napkin a plan started, and grew. We struck a charter, we looked at what we were doing, and how we were doing it. What had started out so naturally and innocently was becoming something we had to put a name on.

About twelve of us sat at a place called the Beverly Hills Cafe, they had good coffee, and a cinnamon roll that was a treat for anyone who had the foresight to leave room for it, we'd actually eaten dinner over in Hollywood at a place called Gorky's (a Russian brewery), I had a white fish in some sort of sauce, real

tasty. The streets we'd ridden left many of us with just a little empty spot, and all of us thinking how with just a phone call to come after you'd called someone and told them to call someone etc.....Anyhow here we were, all together all talking about being a thing, but what? We'd done it a couple of times, and everyone knew to call someone, and not to drive a car, this became a rule (this automatically eliminated Dave Webster and his van loaded with screaming kids). On the napkin the rule read: **Putt-up or Shut-up**, the rule was one, of two, the other being, **Ride to Eat, Eat to Ride**. What's a club without rules? Anyway, here's this mass o' people without a name, we were a sad lot, so we looked at our goals, aims, purposes, and devises. Fact: we had no structure, fact: we had no agenda, fact: we all disliked freeways, fact: we all had good appetites. The facts were all totaled up and the **Back Street Irregulars** were born. Sometimes there were many, other times few, but, anytime anyone was ready we could always find someone else ready to go.

Well, now I'm here and a million things have passed, the original members moved, wanna-bees found other things to want-to-be, jobs, and schedules, and broken machines, and lost keys, and on, and on.....Here I am.....(415)988-9133.....and boy, I'm hungry.

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NOC Member Profile

by John Covell

Name: Steve Petersen

Age: 44

City Resident: Sausalito

Marital: Single

Occupation: Interior woodfinishing & painting contractor

NOC Member since: 1992

How first became involved with NOC:

"It was recommended to me through Robert Newman, who was doing some work on the motorcycle at the time."

Club offices held (years): None.

Norton(s) owned, described: 1971 Commando 750 (with Hemmings "big valve" job)

Other makes of motorcycle: 1964 Vespa; had a new '71 Commando once that was stolen twice! A 650 Bonneville before that. (Detroit was a rough area, story recounted below.)

What first interested you in the Norton?

"The performance and the handling. It was a step up from the Bonnie. And when you gave it gas...."

Other hobbies/interests of note? Baseball (Men's Senior Baseball League), guitars, and a '76 Mercedes 280C restoration project.

Favorite motorcycling road/ride: The Bolinas Ridge, from Mt. Tam to Bolinas.

If you could redesign the Norton, what one thing would you most want to change? How and why? Original electrics needed some help; vibrations, too.

Favorite/most embarrassing episode on a Norton? "I'd have to go back to the fact that the first Norton that I owned was stolen, and I got it back though it had been 'streamlined.' When I was preparing to take off to South America, it was stolen again! But, who knows, maybe if I'd taken it to South America I wouldn't have made it back."

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WANTED: After a small mishap, I need a new speedo and bracket for a '74 Commando, also a sissy bar (rusty ok), rim (would love alloy), and misc. hot parts (racing brake, fork brace, Boyer, single carb..) Contact Chris Wilcox @ (916)448-2182 (ormail..cvwilcox@ucdavis.edu)..(3/95)

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FOR SALE: 1968 Commando Fastback, excellent condition, 2nd owner, very low serial number 126178 - the 54th Commando off the Production line!! \$2,800. Call Howard at (408)298-6850

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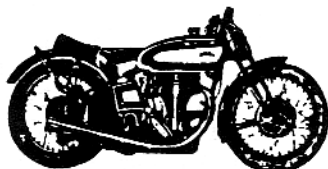
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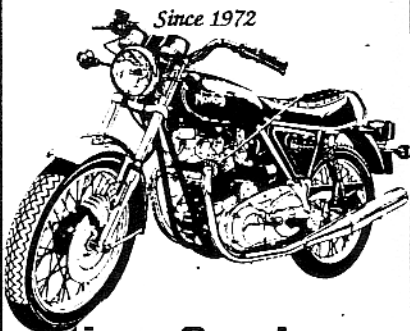
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