



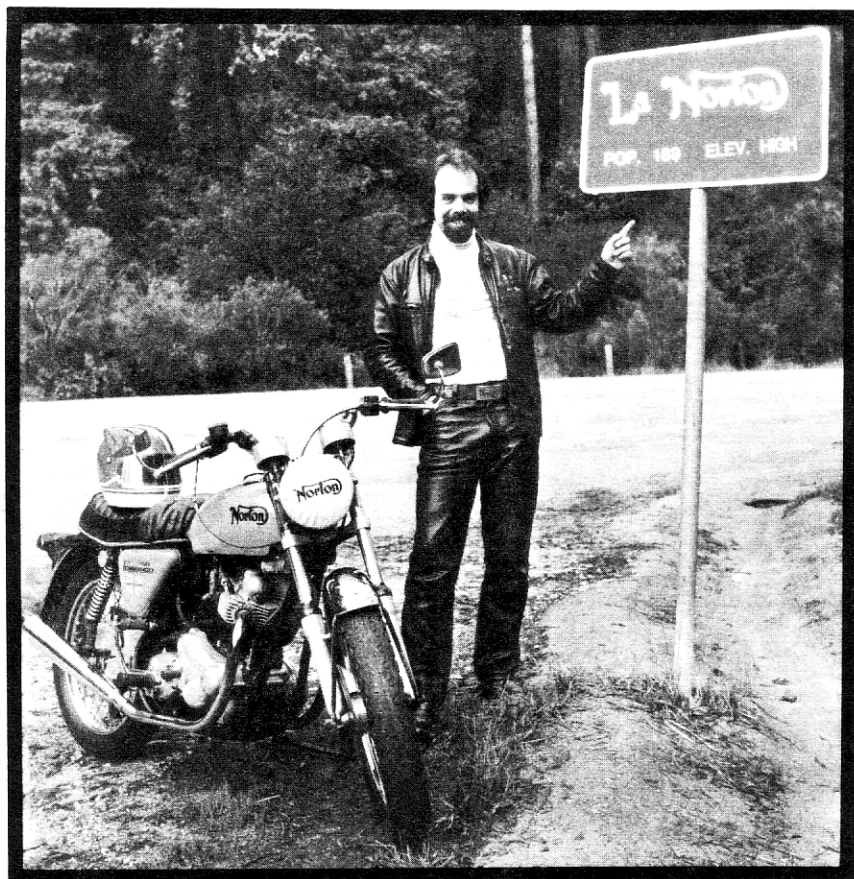
Norton Notice



The Newsletter of The Northern California Branch

Volume 2 Issue 12

December 1979

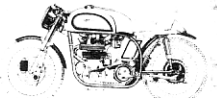


IN RESPONSE TO THE MANY COMPLAINTS I HAVE RECEIVED FROM NORTON BUFFS, BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD, I HAVE FINALLY CHANGED THE NAME OF LA HONDA, THE TOWN IN WHICH I LIVE, TO SOMETHING MORE APPROPRIATE. NEVER AGAIN LET IT BE SAID THAT I LIVE IN A TOWN NAMED AFTER A JAP "FIZZ MACHINE"!

Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year
to all Norton Nots! Steve

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.

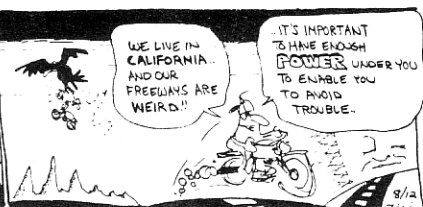
Commercial advertising rates are:

	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)



NOTE: Membership cards are here at last!!!
Let me know if you need one. Steve

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	NORTON NOTICE & ROADHOLDER
ASSOC. MEMBERS:	\$5	NORTON NOTICE
SOCIAL MEMBERS:	\$5	NORTON NOTICE

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.

December: A Christmas Bash!

The Northern California Branch meeting for the month of December will be a NORTON CHRISTMAS BASH at the Edinburgh Castle in San Francisco on FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14. As was the case at the Christmas party last year, we have been given permission by the owner of Edinburgh Castle to bring whatever we want in the way of food, and other non-alcoholic goodies. All booze, etc. must be purchased from the bar, but otherwise we are to free to bring along most anything.

Maya Peterson has kindly volunteered to get it all organized this year, and has already done a considerable amount of work. The latest word is that we will have music, although probably not live, and that you're welcome to bring any good boogie music on cassette tapes. Maya says she hasn't heard from very many of you yet and she hopes you'll call her soon if you plan to come to this gala event. In particular, she'd like to know what, if anything, you want to bring with you. If everyone who comes brings a little something for the gustatory pleasure of the others, this should turn out to be a feast to remember! So...please put that date on your calendar, and please give Maya a call as soon as possible. Thanks. (415)885-6769

There will be no business agenda at this one, folks; it's just a chance to get together at this festive time of the year and share some good cheer with other Norton enthusiasts. I really do hope all members who can possibly come will try to make it this time. If you haven't ever been to a Branch meeting, why not make this your first? I think I can guarantee it'll be a lot of fun for everyone!

GALA NORTON CHRISTMAS BASH

DATE: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14TH
TIME: 7:30PM 'TIL WHENEVER!
PLACE: EDINBURGH CASTLE
950 GEARY, SAN FRANCISCO
PHONE: (415)885-4074

December Ride: Sausalito

The Branch ride this month will be Sunday, the 16th, and we'll meet at 10 AM in Sausalito. As is usually the case when we meet there, we'll plan to go up into Marin, along Hwy.1 if the weather is decent that morning, or perhaps by the Nicasio Road otherwise. We shall plan to meet for lunch at the Marshall Tavern between noon and 1 PM, and then plan a good afternoon run from there. The coast can be outstanding at this time of year, but the weather is very unpredictable. Please try to come unless it's actually raining that morning. In the event of rain the ride will be postponed one week to Sunday, December 23rd. If in doubt on the ride morning, feel free to call me at (415)747-0326 between 7 and 8 AM. After that I may be gone.

DECEMBER BRANCH RIDE - MARIN

DATE: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16TH
TIME: 10 AM (LEAVE AT 10:30)
PLACE: SAUSALITO FERRY
PARKING LOT (NEXT
TO SAUSALITO HOTEL)

This is always a very popular ride. I hope you will be able to make it and join the fun. *Steve*

Events

DATE	TIME	PLACE	EVENT
12-14	7:30	EDINBURGH	GALA NORTON
FRIDAY	PM	CASTLE, S.F.	CHRISTMAS BASH
12-16	10:00	SAUSALITO FERRY	DECEMBER
SUNDAY	AM	DOCK PARKING LOT	RIDE
1-10-79	7:30	BARRINGTON'S	JANUARY BRANCH
THURS.	PM	414 EMERSON	MEETING AND 1980
		PALO ALTO	'PREZ' ELECTION

Good Idea!

The GOOD IDEA award goes to Rick Hjertberg this month for the excellent suggestion he made at our last meeting. After considerable urging on my part, Rick actually typed up this superb idea, for which I am really very grateful. As far as I'm concerned this one deserves the award for GOOD IDEA of 1979!

The NOC should have two interests: the membership and the machines. To help promote the latter, each meeting should feature a Norton announced ahead of time. The bikes would include antiques, classics, specials, and heroic standard models, all with owners and experts present to explain the features, technical details and virtues of each. One Commando tune-up session and one motor apart (mid-rebuild) presentation should happen each year. These have great appeal to non-mechanics and friends, as well as to do-it-yourselfers. Many of us would otherwise never see inside a Norton. We could become more educated! Photographs, drawings and measurements could be made with plenty of light, indoors, in the winter. Maybe the meeting places should be chosen with machine-viewing comfort in mind. Norton buffs seem to enjoy each other more when the machines are present.

Rick Hjertberg
Palo Alto
(415)324-0510(Work)

Thanks Rick! Let's hope we can put your suggestion into effect this winter. If I am elected President in January, I shall surely try to get the ball rolling. In the meantime, would any member doing a rebuild this winter like to do the first session? This should be a great opportunity for all of us to learn something. *Steve*

USNOA REPORT

Not much to report this month. The plans for the 1980 "Rally in the Redwoods" are starting to come together, and detailed information should appear here (and in the NORTON NEWS) very soon. If you want to make vacation plans, it looks like we will be having the Rally in early August.

I also want to announce that John Ebert, a member of our NOC Branch, has just put the USNOA Arizona Chapter together. Way to go John! And thanks for your offers. *Steve*

UNITED STATES Norton OWNERS ASSOCIATION
2018 W. Mulberry • Phoenix, AZ 85015
USNOA ARIZONA CHAPTER

November Meeting Report

The November meeting was held at Barrington's in Palo Alto on November 15th. About twenty or so were in attendance for the business portion of the meeting, which turned out to be quite a lively affair. The action went as follows.

Steve Coburn opened the meeting with a brief discussion of the planned Branch Christmas party, and a vote was taken to determine whether it should be on Thursday the 13th or Friday the 14th. The group present split right down the middle. Subsequent discussion with Maya Peterson has revealed that almost everyone she spoke with by phone preferred the Friday date, and so it has been decided to have it on the 14th. My apologies to those of you who will be unable to come on Friday, but we have to go with the majority. As previously announced, it will be in San Francisco at the Edinburgh Castle, and all members are encouraged to contact Maya as soon as possible to let her know if you plan to be there, and if you can bring along something for the party. Anything other than alcoholic beverages will be welcome (those must be purchased there), and Maya would love to hear from you. Her phone number is (415)885-6769.

The next item on the agenda was the 1980 USNOA Rally, which will be held here in Northern California in early August. Steve is coordinating the rally committee, and is eager for members interested in helping out to contact him. Help will be needed during the spring and summer in the organizational phase of the rally, and also at the rally itself. If you would like to be of some help, please contact Steve at (415)747-0326 or 497-6601. Also, ideas and suggestions would be greatly appreciated, so don't hesitate to put in your two cents worth. And do it now!

The USNOA Chapter in Northern California was the third item on the agenda, and Steve informed the group that not much will happen until someone is willing to take the initiative. The consensus of opinion at the October USNOA meeting was that a Chapter here would be good, but that it should not be allowed to conflict with or otherwise detract from our NOC Branch. Therefore, we will do what we can to let Norton owners here know about the USNOA and encourage them to join, but will otherwise let it ride for now. If someone would like to be "the President of the Northern California Chapter" and is willing to do some work, then things might progress. Until then....

At this point Bob Bausch, outgoing President of the Branch, announced that he had a few things on his mind that he wanted to bring up. Briefly, he emphasized that the Branch is first and foremost a Branch of the NOC, and that any direct affiliation with the USNOA would not be a good idea. He stressed that such an affiliation would dilute our relationship with the U.K., which is, after all, the birthplace of our machines, and possibly result in our Club being expelled from the NOC altogether. Needless to say, a heated discussion ensued, and it soon became obvious that things were going nowhere. Steve reminded the group that since the USNOA idea is now at a standstill anyway, there is really no reason to be so alarmed. That seemed to satisfy most everyone present, and we moved on to other matters.

After Carolyn Scott was formally approved by a unanimous vote as the Membership Secretary for the Branch, Bob brought up the President issue. He suggested that we not have a formal election at the Christmas party, as originally planned, but rather postpone it until the January meeting. It was agreed that we would do that, and that the nominees would be encouraged to submit statements to the NORTON NOTICE Editor for publication in the next issue. Four members were nominated and seconded. They are:

<u>NOMINEES</u>	GENE AUSTIN	<u>EVERYONE</u>
<u>FOR</u>	STEVE COBURN	<u>PLEASE</u>
<u>PRESIDENT</u>	MAYA PETERSON	<u>VOTE</u>
	ALEX STEWART*	

Please try to make it to the January meeting if you possibly can. Otherwise, you're encouraged to vote for one candidate on the list by sending in a ballot with your signature to Carolyn Scott no later than January 10th, 1980. You may use the ballot form at the bottom of this page, or make your own if you'd prefer not to cut up the NN. But all members should vote one way or another, and that includes those of you who live outside the bay area or outside of California.

Although not part of the agenda at the meet, Steve mentioned that one of our members was injured recently while racing at Riverside. Gary Broeder sustained a fractured clavicle, badly bruised hip and a ruptured eardrum in an accident caused by another rider going down immediately in front of Gary. All the group wished Gary a speedy recovery. It was clear to me, when I saw his helmet, that if he hadn't had it on when he hit the wall he would no longer be with us. I mention that for the benefit of those members who like to ride without a helmet. Gary stated that this particular type of accident could just as easily have happened on the street as on the track. A word to the wise is sufficient.

A brief mention of Barrington's for those of you who didn't make it to the meeting. They provided us with quite an impressive spread of meats, cheeses, vegetables and crackers to go with the half-price draft beer, and also an ideal area for the meeting. There were very few people present, other than ourselves, so everything worked out quite well. After the formal meeting, the entertainment for the night, a male duet called "Friends", did their thing on a wide variety of mostly English popular songs. And quite well too, I might add. All the old Beatles and Rolling Stones hits seemed very appropriate somehow. It was decided that we should have the January meeting there, and the manager agreed to have us again. So be it.

I'd like to extend a special thanks to Jerry Henry, who was at a Branch meeting for the first time, and unbeknownst to everyone at the time, was buying all the beers. Not until he'd left did we find out that he had bought many rounds of Guinness, etc. for everyone at the meeting. Thanks from all of us, Jerry. It's greatly appreciated. *Steve*

B PLEASE VOTE FOR ONE CANDIDATE ONLY, BUT PLEASE VOTE!!

A GENE AUSTIN STEVE COBURN MAYA PETERSON

L PLEASE USE IF YOU

L CANNOT ATTEND THE

O JANUARY MEETING.

T

Signed: _____

Mail CAROLLYN SCOTT

to: 1970 LATHAM #14

MTN.VIEW, CA 94040

*Alex Stewart declined

President's Letter

This will be my last note to you as President of the Branch, and I will try not to bore you. There are, however, some points that need to be made in the interests of the Branch, so herewith:

I started this Branch of the NOC nearly 10 years ago and ran its affairs with the help of my wife for the first several years. Interestingly enough, for quite a few years we didn't have the office of President, as we didn't feel it necessary to the operation of the Branch. We were indeed a naive and fun loving lot, merely content that we were members of the Norton Owners Club of England and, at that, members of their farthest outpost.

As the years went by we waxed and waned in numbers with the fickle winds of change, but persevered nonetheless and gradually built a reputation second to none in the NOC. People like Gene Austin and Bob Getts helped to solidify our gains and maintained the solidarity of our Branch and our ties with England.

At this point I would like to stress that we are and always have been a Branch of the Norton Owners Club of England. That is our sole purpose, the nugget of truth at our core, and we have always been happy in that knowledge. Our machines were made in England and are steeped in the traditions of that land, and as owners of such machines, we were interested in maintaining ties with the country of their origin, the factory and Norton owners in many other countries. The tradition of racing and the long history of Norton form a background for our bikes. We are a fan club, as it were.

Now there is word from Steve Coburn that "my personal goal is to get the USNOA and the NOC together in some form". Steve goes on to say that "I've decided to serve as President during the next year", and "If I do end up being President of this Club", (Branch)... "although I have no desire to debate the wisdom of such an effort... I will nevertheless continue to bring us" (USNOA and NOC) "together in my own way." Quotes are taken from the November issue of the NORTON NOTICE. At the November meeting Steve told me he didn't see why the NOC had to be headquartered in England, why not San Francisco? What??

I have gone on record numerous times thanking Steve for his support and strenuous efforts to help the Branch succeed and prosper. Steve's hard work, combined with the demise of the Norton factory, has resulted in a great increase of interest and membership in the Branch.

However, I emphatically disagree with Steve's proposals outlined above, as I feel the evolution of his ideas will produce something very different than a Branch of the Norton Owners Club of England, the very thing we have been all along.

Bob Bausch, founder and current President of our Branch, requested that his letter appear in the December NORTON NOTICE as written and in its entirety. He asked that I kindly refrain from injecting any editorial comments into the letter. I have controlled myself, and will answer the many questions raised in Bob's letter in a separate editorial. *Steve*

As to the evolution of his ideas, what are his ideas? Is there a local USNOA group? Or is Steve planning to just change this Branch into the USNOA? What an easy way to start a local chapter of a club - for Steve. But what happens to the Branch? Is it just absorbed into the USNOA and all ties with England severed? What exactly is Steve proposing? Does he want us all to make him President and give him carte blanche to do what he wishes? I have asked Steve several times what exactly he has in mind, how he intends to "bring us together in my own way" and what shape and name this club might have after he carries out his plan. Thus far I have received only vague answers to these questions. I think we had better know fully what Steve intends before electing him President.

I have nothing against the USNOA, in fact many members of our Branch belong to it, but I feel the USNOA and our Branch of the NOC should continue to exist as two separate entities. A combination of the two can only dilute and most likely terminate our standing with the NOC. It seems inconceivable to me that most members would want to cut off our relationship with the NOC of England.

One of the more tangible benefits that results from our membership in the NOC is the Spares Club. Jan Barton at the last meeting loudly voiced his disapproval of the NOC by saying "What do they do for us?" I failed to understand Jan's logic when Bob Getts related buying pistons for \$45 through the Spares Club, the same pistons Jan sells for \$90. The Spares Club works, and is available to any full member of our Branch.

I find it difficult to see any advantages that will be gained from the union Steve proposes, and the real possibility of some grave disadvantages. Steve tells me he already has the support of the majority of voting members. Well, this is a matter which would not only have to be "debated" in spite of what Steve feels, it would also have to be voted upon.

It is your club, and you, through voting, can make any changes you feel necessary. I feel, however, you should know exactly what these changes might be and what effect they will have on all of us. That was the reason for my writing this.

It is an interesting fact that some people, when coming upon a thing of beauty devised by simpler folks for their own enjoyment, cannot help themselves from trying to change it to suit their own ideas and interests, with the thought, of course, of improving it. Unfortunately the sweetness and purity of the original is usually lost.

Please make your feelings known, all of you, in the January election for President.

Thank you.

Bob
Bob Bausch

Editorial

I honestly can't believe it's come to this! After working my butt off for this club for the past two years, I now find myself in an unfortunate situation of having to defend my efforts to help the Northern California NOC Branch grow and prosper. All I really wanted to say in this, my final editorial before I retire as Editor of the NORTON NOTICE, was that I've really enjoyed all the good times we've had during the past two years and the part I've been privileged to play in helping it all happen. The interaction with Norton enthusiasts, whether here in Northern California or elsewhere in the state, country and world, has been most enjoyable for me. In the time I've been doing this I have learned so much about people, motorcycles, newsletters, and self-discipline, that I can't begin to thank all of you enough. I know that some of you who read this rag regularly have gotten something from it, and I thank all of you who have been so thoughtful as to tell me so. The words of thanks and the compliments that have come my way have made all the work a pleasure rather than the tedious labor it would otherwise have been.

However, now that you have read Bob Bausch's letter, you can hopefully understand why I've chosen to write the following editorial. As I stated above, I can't believe it's come to this, but apparently it has. When I first saw Bob's letter, and read it through twice, I was truly astounded. So I called Bob, and for more than half an hour talked with him about the feelings that brought him to write it. As a result of our discussion, in which he made it clear that he would like me to answer all of his admittedly "rhetorical questions", I've concluded that Bob has been living in a total vacuum with respect to the membership of the Branch and the NOC in general. I mean absolutely no offense to Bob, and he knows that. But I do wish to make it known that by his own admission to me, Bob has had essentially no contact with the members of the Branch, other than the few he has seen at the occasional meetings he's attended, or with the officers of the NOC. And yet he has tried to give you the impression in his letter that I have some sort of malicious far-reaching scheme all planned out for the Branch, and that as a result we will be booted out of the NOC. How absurd! Anyone who has had the opportunity to come to meetings regularly or discuss these issues with me separately is well aware that Bob's implication couldn't be further from the truth. I shall go through his various points one by one, as he requested, so that whatever doubt there might be in anyone's mind about my motives will be cleared one and for all. I can't believe this, but here goes.

Bob refers to the Norton Owners Club of England as if that were its official name, thereby giving the impression that my off-the-cuff remark at our November meeting was pure blasphemy. If Bob took the trouble to read the "Rules of the Club" or, for that matter, to look closely at the ROADHOLDER, he would see that nowhere is the Club referred to as the "Norton Owners Club of England". It is an international club, which happens to have been started in England. And it concerns itself with a motorcycle which was manufactured in England. Jolly good! Does that mean that we should all get down on our knees every day and sing "God Save The Queen"?

In his second paragraph Bob makes the point that the local Branch, then referred to as the San Francisco Branch, "waxed and waned in numbers with the fickle winds of change" and that "people like Gene Austin and Bob Getts helped solidify our gains and maintained the solidarity of our Branch and our ties with England". I have nothing personal against Gene and Bob, and I'd be the first to admit that Gene, in particular, did a lot for the Club during his terms as Branch Secretary. But why is it that the membership of the Branch was never more than forty in some seven or eight years of existence? I really don't think the "fickle winds of change" had that much to do with it. As I have become increasingly aware during the past year, the real reason is that there was no real effort to help it grow. With an obvious exception in the form of Maya Peterson, none of those old guard members really wanted the Club to be anything more than a relatively small clique of Norton owners who wanted to keep the group small for some reason. Since the NORTON NOTICE came into being almost two years ago to replace what had previously passed as a Branch newsletter (a single page with the Trading Post on one side and an announcement of the next meeting and ride on the other), the Branch has increased its membership five-fold. On the basis of what most new members have told me, the NN has been the main reason for this incredible growth. As most members are well aware, I tend to keep in touch with the membership of the Club, and have some idea what the majority thinks. This ongoing contact has encouraged me to suggest a number of new ideas and possible changes from time to time during the past two years, and perhaps these are what Bob is most concerned about. I will therefore try to address them directly.

He mentions my wish to see the NOC and the USNOA get together in some form. The way it reads, you'd think that I had some sort of sinister plan for the Club, and that I was planning to do it completely on my own with no member support whatsoever. How ridiculous that is! I've merely tried to bring the members' wishes and suggestions to the front at our meetings and in the NOTICE. Perhaps if Bob kept in touch with as many of you as I have, he would realize that too.

Bob asks, "what are his ideas?" Well, as all of you know, with a few obvious exceptions, my only idea is that of most of the members I've talked with, namely to try to get the NOC and the USNOA affiliated with each other in some form in this country. Whether they continue to have separate officers and their individual newsletters, etc. is not the real point. The fact that their purposes are the same is what indicates to me that they ought to try to get together somehow. Would it be logical to have two separate Energy Departments at the Cabinet level in the U.S.? Of course not, and by the same token it makes no sense to have totally separate Norton clubs here in California. Mark Gribble's point at our October meeting was well taken and the consensus of opinion at the USNOA gathering was in agreement. The USNOA can have a Chapter here, but let's not have it conflict with what we already have. That's my stand too, as I have clearly stated.

I have absolutely no intention or desire to change our NOC Branch into a USNOA Chapter, as Bob's letter implies. I like the Branch, and the amount of time and effort I've put in to help it grow should be indicative that I want it to continue. All I want to do is let those of you who aren't involved in any way with the USNOA know about it. Some of you are already members, some have even been to one or more USNOA rallies. You know what it is all about and realise that it's a pretty good group. Many of you, including Bob, are not members and know very little about it. I get the impression that Bob thinks the USNOA getting together with the NOC here in Northern California would be like having blacks sitting right up in the front of the bus with the white folks! I realise my analogy may be a bit extreme, but nevertheless it does seem to be appropriate. We won't contaminate our precious "thing of beauty" or corrupt its "sweetness and purity" if we let the other kid on the block come and drink a few beers with us. And just because the motorcycle we ride happens to have come from England, that doesn't mean that the Club that started there is the only real Norton club. If Bob had gone to the USNOA rally in Colorado this summer I suspect that his eyes might have been opened as mine were and he'd probably agree that the USNOA is doing quite a service for the Norton marque here in the U.S., and wish, as I do, that the two groups could join hands.

Bob states that he has nothing against the USNOA, but goes on to say that a combination of the USNOA with the NOC "can only dilute and most likely terminate our standing with the NOC". Says whom? I asked Bob whether he had received some indication to that effect from the NOC Committee or any of its officers in England. He said he'd heard from no one. Perhaps he is divinely enlightened! If there were indeed some possibility that we could be booted out of the NOC for associating with an upstart organization like the USNOA, then I'd be most interested in hearing about it. We're now the largest Branch of the NOC by far, in terms of total local membership, and if the NOC Committee would consider kicking us out of their Club for getting together with the USNOA, then I think we should seriously ask ourselves whether we really want to be members of the NOC. I'll not belabor this moot point, since it's so unlikely. Suffice to say that Adrian Page, the Chairman of the NOC, is currently planning a return trip to the U.S. since he had such a good time this summer in the western states and at the USNOA rally. I really do believe that Bob is writing from a total vacuum when he makes these absurd implications about what could happen to us if we should associate ourselves with the USNOA.

Finally, with regard to my candidacy for the Presidency of the Branch, I would like to go on record as having asked for volunteers two months ago. Not until after I'd received no indications of interest, and a flat refusal from Gene Austin when I asked him if he would serve if elected, did I write my statement in the last NN. Bob quotes me correctly, but does not mention the context of my remark. I also said "assuming that nobody else is interested." I would hope that anyone interested in reading the complete statement from which Bob has taken these few phrases, would look at page 15 in the November NORTON NOTICE. It speaks for itself.

Even though two other members, including Gene Austin interestingly enough, have now expressed an interest in serving as President, I am still planning to run for the office. I am concerned that these old guard reactionaries will do what they can to close off the silent majority of the Branch membership, and return our club to its former state of relative insignificance. I for one think that the growth of our Branch has done the Norton cause in northern California a lot of good; I'd hate to see it stop now just because some narrow-minded individuals prefer to be nothing more than "a naive and fun-loving lot, merely content that we were members of the Norton Owners Club of England". The growth of the local Branch has had an effect on dealers in this area. They are more encouraged than in the recent past to keep Norton parts in stock and to employ qualified Norton mechanics so that we can keep the machines on the road instead of holed up in the backs of garages. Ask them; most of the bay area Norton dealers are members of the Branch and advertisers in the NORTON NOTICE, and I'm sure they'll have good things to say about it and the associated membership growth. This growth has also had an interesting effect on the people who own these machines. While there used to be a fairly small group of hardcore Norton enthusiasts, and then a large group of individuals who had bought a Commando 850 MkIII back when they were quite a good deal, but had taken to riding a Jap bike instead, there is now much more interest in being out on the road on a Norton! Lots of guys are realising that those old machines really are superior in many ways, in spite of the oil leaks and worthless electric starters, etc. A lot of motorcyclists, young and old, are now leaving the Yamaha or BMW or whatever back home in the garage on Sunday morning and taking that faithful old Nort out on the mountain roads. I think it's great that the interest in these machines is once again on the rise, and I want it to continue unabated if possible.

For all of the above reasons, I am going to run for President of the Northern California Branch of the NOC in the January elections. I hope all members will read carefully the letter that Bob Bausch has written, and if there is any doubt as to my "motives", please feel free to contact me by mail, phone, or in person. I really do enjoy talking about these various issues with all members of the club; I hope to hear from some of you sometime in December. Perhaps the Christmas party Maya Peterson is organizing on the 14th will be a good opportunity to talk on a one-to-one basis. I invite anyone who can be there that night to come and discuss any issues Bob has raised. I know that such communication will help to clear the air of any misunderstandings that may have been created.

Alex Stewart has asked me to mention that while he appreciates the nomination he received at our November meeting, he will not be able to serve as President because of his frequent overseas travels and lack of time to participate in club activities. Maya Peterson and Gene Austin have each agreed to serve if elected, and I am very pleased that the ballot offers such a wide variety of choices. Hopefully Maya and Gene will write something for the January NN so that I'll not be the only one to publish a "statement".

Looking forward to seeing you,

Steve

NOC News : Adrian Page

This month's NOC News brings you a very recent letter to the Branch from Adrian Page, Chairman of the NOC. Adrian and his wife Wendy visited us in August, attended our meeting at Edinburgh Castle and went with us on the ride up to Mendocino. They then took off for Yellowstone Park and ended up at the USNOA Rally in Colorado for a full weekend of fun in the Rockies. After an apparently enjoyable ride via the Grand Canyon to L.A., where they left the Interstate I found for them at West Bay in Palo Alto, they were in the air again bound for England. As Adrian says in his letter, a lot of work on the part of Jan Barton and Gene Austin made it possible for the bike to carry them on their long adventure, and although I wish all of the work I did hadn't been clouded by the problems they were forced to deal with, I am nevertheless happy that they had an enjoyable trip all round. I am also very pleased to learn that they are planning to come back to the U.S. next year (?) so that they can take in some of the country they missed. I hope they'll make it back to California for the USNOA Rally in August; they're both very fine people, and it would indeed be a pleasure to have them join us at the Rally in the Redwoods. Here then is Adrian's letter to the Branch:

Steve

To: ALL NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH MEMBERS

The chilly winds of England's autumn make thoughts of the summer sun of California seem so remote that the memory is more like a dream that is recalled, in various stages, long after waking. It seems a lifetime ago since August saw us enjoying the sunshine of the California coast and undertaking what will remain for both of us a uniquely exciting adventure of a holiday.

To all, and each, of you I owe a number of things and whilst I may never be able to repay all of the debts in full, I hope you will accept at least this expression of my gratitude.

First of all though, I owe you an apology for having taken so long to write. I had not intended to delay so long but it has taken me a long time to settle back into the 'routine' and to catch up on all the outstanding work I had left behind to accumulate during my holiday. My re-election as Chairman of the Norton Owners Club has added to the amount of work, and letter writing, that I have had to do since my return to the U.K. in September, so my spare time has been in very short supply.

I also owe to you the 'explanation' of some of the things we talked about at the meeting in the Edinburgh Castle. Having apologised for the long delay in writing I should also apologise for any failings that the delay will undoubtedly cause in my infamously poor memory! I can, however, remember the importance of the question of N.O.C. subscriptions, and so I'd like to re-state my views on the subject.

Subscriptions we've raised for all members in September 1977, as a result of a number of contributory factors. By September '77 subscriptions had stood at their contemporary rates (£2.50 U.K. and £4 overseas) for 4 years, a time during which we'd seen massive worldwide inflation and sharp increases in cost of everything from peace to petroleum. The increased costs alone of such things as paper and postage, two items of heavy expenditure of the Club, would have, by themselves, accounted for a large proportion of the increase in subscription that was necessary at the time.

However, the most important reason for the increase was not in the spiralling costs of maintaining and running the Club, but in the long overdue acceptance by the members present at the A.G.M. of September 1977 of the inauguration of an official Club Spares Scheme. The final, and 'total' demise of factory production of the Commando in '75/'76 marked the end of a production run of seven years, during which time thousands of Commandos in many shapes and guises were sold at home and abroad, and, to my mind at least, marked the end of the last 'true' Norton. Even in 1977 it was becoming difficult, in some cases almost impossible, to obtain some spare parts for Commandos, and without a factory maintaining output of spares the future looked grim indeed. With this bleak outlook in mind the Spares Scheme was started, its intention being to purchase, manufacture or have manufactured, spares for as many models of Nortons as possible, to provide a service to Norton Owners Club members, and to endeavour to keep the name of the world's best motorcycle alive in the most practical way possible - by keeping it running! (When did you last see a 1969 Honda 750-4 on the street?) In the two short years since the Scheme was started, the Club has purchased over £2,000 worth of Norton spare parts, and sold more than twice that amount in spares through the Club that have been purchased through dealers. The service and the stock are expanding, though we are obviously limited by capital available, and this section of the Club's activities is of ever increasing importance to the Club. In order to start the scheme capital was needed, and the best and easiest way to get it was to include it as part of the membership subscription. From every subscription received £1.50 is paid directly to the spares fund, and it is largely this money that keeps the Spares Service, and to a great extent the Club itself, alive. The service operates on the minimum possible profit margin, which enables us to sell spares at very good prices, and often much cheaper than any Norton dealer. So, £1.50 of the £7 that the Norton Owners Club receives for each subscription is paid to the Norton Owners Spares Club. That £1.50 is at present funding the only scheme of its kind in the world (to my knowledge), a scheme which is intended to enable every member to get the spares he needs, at a reasonable price. Undoubtedly the Club is a long way from being able to guarantee EVERY possible part, but we have come a long way in only two short years, and have a long way to go in the future. I believe fervently and passionately in the Spares Service; I believe it is the most important feature of the Club, and I believe that the Club will, in years to come, be a major supplier of Norton parts world-wide. I know that many of you might say you don't use the Spares Service, and have no need of it, but I would ask you to think of the future. Many dealers are finding it "unprofitable" to stock parts for Nortons (they don't break down as often as Japanese 'bikes') and are stopping selling spares. The N.O.C. is working the opposite way and trying, with some success, to increase its stock and turnover of spares.

We are doing so without the motive of high profits. We exist to keep ALL NORTONS alive, and the Spares Service is our paractical proof.

What of the rest of your subscription? The majority of it covers the expense of the "Roadholder's" production and postage, the cost of providing badges and etc., again at minimum possible prices. I can assure you that you are NOT subsidising events like the Annual Rally and the T.T. Reunion, which, generally, realise a break-even, or slight profit. The benefits of membership may seem slight, particularly when compared to the cost of membership of the U.S.N.O.A., but the difference in cost should be related to the difference in cost of the services offered, and the postal costs of the two organisations. The continuing weakness of the dollar against sterling makes the 'problem' more complex still, for, although the Club receives £7 in subscription from each member, the fluctuating exchange rate of dollar to pound makes a great difference in the amount you send. At an exchange rate of \$2.20, the Club receives the equivalent of \$15.40 which if remitted in dollars makes the amount received even less still, because of bank charges incurred. (I should point out here that all dues sent to the NOC by our Branch are sent in Sterling in the form of an International Money Order, and the charges incurred are paid by us, not the NOC - Steve) The rest of the money paid goes into the treasury of your own Branch, over which the NOC has no control. The insurmountable problems of administration made it impossible for us to adopt a tiered or structured system of subscription when it was suggested by the (then) San Francisco Branch in 1977, though it was agreed at the time that overseas membership subscription rates would be held at current levels when the next 'price' rise is necessary. This means that if a subscription increase is necessary in 1980, the overseas subscription will not be increased at that time, and will, therefore, remain static for at least four years, from 1977. Not bad these days! That will be equivalent to an average increase in subscription (not including Spares Scheme) of 75c a year, and even including Spares Scheme increases, amounts to an average of only \$1.25 per annum. I must admit I found it rather incongruous to hear 'complaints' about the increase from a country that enjoys such a high standard of living, particularly when the only such complaint came from San Francisco, where I found the average cost of living very low in relation to the high average income. I do, though, fully understand the apparent basis of that complaint, especially in view of the quality of the services offered by the Club in the years up to 1977. I'm sure most of you would agree that the services of the Club have improved considerably in the past two years, and, I sincerely hope, will continue to improve. I believe, biased though my belief undoubtedly is, that the NOC is good value for money for any Norton owner, and for many the cost of subscription has been saved many times over by obtaining discounts, spares, technical advice and etc. But, as much as it does offer good value for money it also offers a unique opportunity to be a part of a growing movement that wishes to see the historic survival of the name Norton, from 'model dot' to Commando.

At the Edinburgh Castle I mentioned the attempt to start re-manufacturing genuine 'S.S.' silencers (mufflers to you!), and the Club is still pursuing this aim. We have collected some 400 in advance deposits, and are pleased with the way things are going at the moment, though progress is slow.

We also recently purchased a stock of pistons (mainly Commando) that were sold by the factory some time ago as alloy scrap!! Les Emery, the Spares Officer, has been negotiating with Andover Norton Ltd., who now deal in spares for Norton and Triumph machines, with a view to obtaining spares at more competitive prices for outlet to NOC members. The A.G.M. in September agreed to appoint an extra Committee member to be responsible for those spares not listed as stocked by Les Emery, the idea being to improve the service provided. We also appointed a new Spares Officer for "singles", and his, I imagine, will be the hardest job of all. The Club is trying hard to broaden its scope and increase and improve its service to ALL members, and I hope that you, as much as anyone, will benefit from our attempts.

One of the other things we discussed at your Branch meeting was the present position of the Norton factory. I expressed views on the Wankel rotary-engined Norton that is expected to be announced soon, and I would like to make it very clear that the views expressed were not intended as representative of the opinion of the Committee or Club members, and were very personal opinions. I still don't know for certain when the new Norton will be released as a 'production' motorcycle, but I'm told a number of 'bikes have been assembled for use as test machines for road press. I hope we'll soon be able to judge the machine on its merits, rather than on hearsay (particularly from me!) or rumour. Price and availability are still unknown.

Before I close my letter I must say thank you to each and every one of you for affording Wendy and myself youe time and hospitality, for showing concern and interest in the Club's activities, for riding with us, and showing some of the beauty of California, its people and its ways of life. I would also like to extend personal and very sincere thanks to: STEVE COBURN, for all the time and effort he spent on our behalf in organising meetings, rides, accomodation et al. JAN BARTON, to whom I owe so much more than thanks. If it had not been for Jan's long and hard work on our Interstate, we would not have managed to complete our 3,800 miles in two weeks, we would not have enjoyed utter (eventual) reliability, first time starting, 50 mpg fuel consumption MINIMUM, and fault free running at any altitude and speed. Our mileage, our route and our load conditions would have been a stern test of the resilience of any motorcycle, a test which the Interstate passed with all credit, and much of the credit is owed to Jan. Thanks Jan, we would not have made it without your help. GENE and PAT AUSTIN, who 'rescued' us from despair, showed us some hope, and revived our broken spirits. I cannot say enough thanks to two people who showed us such warm and unexpected friendship, spared us no facility and spent so much of their precious time for, and with, us. Thanks Gene and Pat, we would not have wanted to make it without your help.

(continued →)

ADRIAN PAGE'S LETTER (continued)

CAROLLYN SCOTT, who to our constant surprise, insisted on calling us "you guys"!, who earned our every respect for her riding, and our gratitude for her company and companionship. Thanks Carolyn, we would not have enjoyed the Colorado rain without your help.

Our holiday was a unique and memorable event, and we owe our thanks to all of you for making it so enjoyable. THANK YOU.

Safe riding to you all,

Adrian & Wendy Page.

P.S. I am attempting to have some of the silver 'Norton' badges, that many of you (especially Maya) expressed an interest in, made by a member of the N.O.C. I will send details directly to you when they are available.

A special thanks to "you guys" (sorry Carollyn) is definitely in order too. Not only did your visit last August greatly enhance the significance of our meeting, but your company on that Mendocino ride and at the "Rally in the Rockies" was greatly appreciated as well. This massive "letter" (actually I'd sooner call it a book!) will no doubt clarify the dues questions we had and probably encourage many "associate" members to become full members of the NOC. Thank you, Adrian, for taking the time to spell it all out for us thick-headed Yanks. Although I'm sorry we of the Northern California Branch are the only ones who "complained" about the dues, I nevertheless feel that it is our right to know exactly how the money we send to England is spent, and what exactly we get in return. You've covered it beautifully, as far as I'm concerned, and I hope that I speak for all of us when I thank you for taking the time and trouble on our behalf. Keep up the good work that you personally are doing for the cause...we over on this side of the pond do appreciate it! We will look forward to your next visit and hope to see you at the 1980 "Rally in the Redwoods" next August. In the meantime, I wish you both a pleasant, even if cold, wet and miserable, winter (wouldn't you like to come live here?). KEEP ON NORT'N! *Steve*

The following items are extracts from the most recent NOC Committee meeting minutes (Meeting held on the 7th of October, 1979):

BRANCH & FOREIGN MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (R. Moore) Has written to Northern California and St. Paul about slow passing on of dues. Got a long letter from N. Calif. Apart from the usual complaints about money, they also said they would like a supply of membership cards for giving out to their branch social members so that they can get discount. As branch socials are not members of the N.O.C. we will not be complying. Their letter anticipated this by saying that they would get some made locally. The Committee hopes they will not be forgeries of the official card which must only be given to full club members. The Chairman will write to N. Calif. in the hope that they will see our point of view.

Well I guess that hassle is now behind us. I am sorry for whatever trouble or ill will I may have caused, but at least I tried. *Steve*

Peter Thistle

I also received a very thoughtful letter from Peter Thistle, the Secretary of the NOC, and feel that it too should be seen by the members of the Branch. Here's what Peter has to say:

Thank you for your recent letter and the October issue of the NORTON NOTICE which I enjoyed reading as usual. I must point out though that the practice of wrapping fish and chips in newspaper was stopped over here some years ago, either as a result of people complaining about newsprint on the chips though I do recall a couple of fish fryers got lead poisoning or something because of their practice of licking their fingers to separate the leaves!

Thanks also for clarifying the membership card position. I think the best thing for me to do is to read it all out at our meeting next week. I cannot agree that Ron deliberately misrepresented your intentions; it is more likely he misunderstood them. He has done a fine job for the Club and I have every confidence he will continue to do so in future. I don't see why or how he can bear you any personal animosity.

I appreciate you may like to give a card of some sort to your members who do not pay our subscription, but I personally feel it ought to be one of your own design with your branch badge on it. There are, I think, two very good reasons to support this view. Firstly, anyone who does not pay the full membership fee is not as far as we are concerned a member of the N.O.C. and entitled to any privileges resulting from membership of the mainstream of the Club. Receiving the exclusive membership card is part of this full membership entitlement. Secondly, this card also contains extracts from the Club rules, so it is rather pointless giving these cards with rules to people who are not in the Club in the first place and therefore do not subscribe to them.

Printing costs in England will probably be cheaper if you do want to print branch membership cards. For instance, this headed notepaper cost us £55 for 2500 sheets including 15% tax which does not have to be paid on export orders. Think about it. I will be happy to get a quote from our printer if required, and you let me have details of your requirements. The 55 would have been somewhat reduced had we required the printing in only one colour. I must say though that we already had the printing blocks in our possession.

Glad to hear that you are not vacating the scene entirely. There all too few people willing to devote the time and trouble to developing a branch like you obviously have done over the past few years.

I won't say goodbye, just au revoir.

Peter Thistle

Thanks Peter. Your offer is most kind, but we have already had cards printed as you suggested. Problem solved, O.K.? *Steve*

▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶ **PATRONIZE THESE DEALERS** ◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀

NOTE TO MEMBERS: These people are helping the Club by paying each month for their ad. Their money covers the cost of having this newsletter printed every month, and so is helping to keep our dues down at only \$5.

I suggest that we all try to patronize these "dealerships" as much as possible, and thereby let them know in their own language that we appreciate the support they're giving the Club. Remember to tell them you saw their ad here.

T. T. Motors

2800 Adeline • Berkeley, CA 94703
(415) 845-8235

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)

LARRY RANDALL

English Specialist

West Bay Cycle Dismantlers, Inc.

**ENGINE REBUILDING & MACHINING FACILITIES
USED PARTS & ACCESSORIES
USED MOTORCYCLES**

750 San Antonio Road
Palo Alto, California 94303 (415) 494-8033

10% DISCOUNT TO NOC MEMBERS ON ALL NEW AND USED PARTS. A DEAL!

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.

MOTORCYCLES UNLIMITED Sales and Service

ALEX S. MCLEAN
OWNER

(415) 924-0527
5776 PARADISE DRIVE
CORTE MADERA, CA. 94925

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.

selby motors

- motorcycle sales
- 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

These advertisements are all here together on one page for several very important reasons. Firstly, it makes it very convenient for anyone who needs to get a particular part or a service of some sort to find a place to get it quickly. With all these dealers' addresses and phone numbers at your finger tips, you should be able to get in touch with someone who has what you need with minimal hassle.

Secondly, it provides a convenient list of dealers and what they have to offer that you can stuff in your pocket or tack up next to the phone or whatever. It is not intended as a means of enabling readers to avoid seeing the ads, since one can easily avoid reading them even when they're mixed in with all the text of the newsletter. Last, but possibly most important, it makes my job easier!

Brooks Cyclery

TRIUMPH
NORTON
BSA

NEW AND USED PARTS
TELEPHONE 295-4341
(408)

MOTO-GUZZI
DUCATI

ED BROOKS
OWNER

1615 ALMADEN ROAD
SAN JOSÉ, 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 PIPES AND 2 INTO 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.

PALO ALTO YAMAHA

YAMAHA • TRIUMPH • NORTON
SALES • SERVICE • PARTS

3960 EL CAMINO
PALO ALTO, CA. 94306
415 493-3414

PARTS AND SERVICE

GARY BROEDER: EXPERT MECHANIC
N.O.C. MEMBER

Although not emphasizing British bikes on the salesroom floor, PALO ALTO YAMAHA has one of the bay area's best British motorcycle mechanics back in the shop. Gary Broeder knows as much as anyone in the area when it comes to making NORTONS run right. With his racing experience, Gary can work wonders on your machine when it needs help. I highly recommend PALO ALTO YAMAHA the next time you need a good mechanic for the old NORTON.



NEW HOSS CYCLE PARTS AND SERVICE

Steve Murray, co-owner of New Hoss Cycle, is an associate member of the Northern California Branch. If you're looking for "the long deal" on TIRES, TUBES, BATTERY, etc. for your Norton or Japanese bike he is the man to call. He really wants your business, and will give you a good deal.

Unfortunately, New Hoss does not service English bikes. (Yet?) However Steve hopes all you Norton fans with a Japanese bike will stop by and chat sometime. If he can do anything for you let him know.

NEW HOSS CYCLE PARTS AND SERVICE

MIKE DORKEY
STEVE MURRAY

1001 MAIN ST.
CORNER OF MIDDLEFIELD
REDWOOD CITY, CA
366-1336



cycle sports

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S

Leading Norton Dealer

IN & ON NORTONS SINCE 1970

SALES • PARTS • EXPERT SERVICE

dunstall
POWER

NOW CLOSING OUT
DUNSTALL ODDS & ENDS
35% TO 50% off

2355 EL CAMINO REAL
AT SAN TOMAS EXPRESSWAY

SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA

(408) 247-1313

ADVENTURES OF A 'REAL NORTON': Jan Barton and 'Harold' Manx in the U.K.

Steve has asked me to write a short bit on my recent experiences in and around Britain and So. Ireland. As some of you know, each year I travel to the Emerald Isles to participate in Vintage Rallies. The two in this case being Sondersfoot, which is organised by the Welsh Section of the Vintage Motorcycle Club, and the Irish National Rally, run by the Munster Vintage Motorcycle and Car Club of Cork. Both events are open to pre-1953 motorcycles and three-wheeled cycle cars. Each attracts about 120 entrants, with about as many different types and makes of vehicles. Some are common, and some are so obscure that only one or two were ever produced.

The Rally itself is a time and distance affair ridden over back roads for the most part, at an average speed of 24mph. This by no means implies the speeds travelled by some of the entrants. There are checks en route for time watchers and pubs which serve real Guinness! There is usually enough time to get to each check, and always enough for the pubs. Ah the pubs...often copied over here but never duplicated!

This year I decided the time had come to take my own machine back to England for a breath of back-country air. 'Harold' (that's my Gardengate Manx) had been in the U.S. since the mid-50's and was eager to visit his old haunts. I had, for the past five years, borrowed various makes of machine and had managed to mangle all of them during the course of the events. Mind you, I usually ride from Kent, across England and Wales, and then on to Ireland, do the Rally and then ride back. This makes for a lot of miles, about 3000 this year. Borrowed equipment never has the same feel as your own, and besides, some of these older machines have their peculiarities, most of which their owners fail to tell you about until the fault occurs. That usually delays you en route and makes you late to the bar...last one pays. And always the joke is on the Yank. "Didn't you know that clutch always does that?" or "Sure they shift funny; they all do." Having been the object of hilarity on more than one occasion, I had had enough. This year I was going to ride my own machine and show these guys how it's done. The Manx was extracted from Customs after about five days of bureaucratic hassles, and five minutes before the docks closed for the weekend. Next day sees me setting out across the city of London headed for Wales on one of Bracebridge Street's finest, sporting a California license plate which reads SNORTN. Old Bill didn't even look twice, even though Harold runs a straight through pipe. Believe me, the sound of a big single banging off the Houses of Parliament is a sound to behold.

The ride to Wales was uneventful and just great. Harold took the British roads like he'd been on them all his life. Once or twice I was passed by a big Jag or Mercedes, but always after being given a hello sign and a wave of appreciation and amusement. The Sondersfoot Rally is over in one day. It's really a warm-up for the ten days in Ireland. So I won't go into it except to note that the finish is only five miles from the Pendine Sands. This is a beach area that runs for some eight to ten miles straight and flat. For many years it was the site of land speed efforts in the 20's and 30's. Now it's just a picturesque resort spot. I decided to pass on a blast down the beach. Sand and salt water would do no good for Harold's magnesium bits.

Ireland: Land of Saints and Scholars, REAL GUINNESS, and some of the best riding area in the world. The Rally starts in Cork on the east coast and proceeds to wind its way west to Tralee in County Kerry. Every devious route imaginable is used, from goat paths to main roads; very jolly indeed. Then there is the rain, but not the heavy, sodden, uncomfortable type found in other parts of the world. The Irish enjoy a fine, "soft" type of rain which seems to drift down lightly and give the countryside an emerald hue. The rain is usually not uncomfortable to ride in, as the gulf stream weather keeps the temperature about 60° except during the winter months.

I could, without much trouble, go on and on about riding through the west country, but I won't. Suffice it to say that it is an experience that must be done to be fully appreciated. For the moment, Harold is enjoying an extended stay in the south of Kent, eagerly awaiting my return in the Spring for the TT races on the Isle of Man.

Since returning to the U.S. in October, I've been fortunate enough to locate a proper double overhead cam engine, which I'll somehow manage to take with me on my return trip to England. Once again Harold's song shall be heard along the Glencrutchery Road, over the Mountain Mile and around the Governor's Hairpin. 'Til then lads, it's this poxy Yank beer and nights wrenching out in the cold lock-up.

All power to the rear wheel...

See you on the road...

Jan Barton

I want to extend a special thanks to Jan for writing up this account of his adventures and also an invitation to any member of the Club who might like to come to the U.K. with Jan and me in the Spring. If you're a lover of the REAL MOTORCYCLE, and think, as I do, that it's about time to go ride one around on some of those back country roads Jan speaks of so fondly, why not come with us? We hope to fly over to London in late May, pick up Jan's Manx down in Kent and find me something to get about on for a few weeks, and then ride across England to Wales. We've had several very kind offers of hospitality so far, which should make the adventure most enjoyable. After a stop at the home of one of our Branch members, Christopher Richardson in Cardiff, we'll probably head up to Liverpool for the ferry across to the Isle of Man. I'm told by Jan and Adrian Page that it's very important to make reservations early for the I.o.M., and so anyone interested must get going on it NOW. After a week on the Island we'll probably take another ferry over to the Emerald Isle and visit some of those special places Jan talks about. I for one am looking forward to visiting the areas in the south of Ireland where my ancestors came from, and I can't think of a better way or time to do it than on a Norton in June. There will be much to see and do, I'm sure, and it would be great to have another Norton Nut or two join us. I do hope anyone who can take some time off in late May and early June will give this idea a little thought and get in touch with Jan or me if interested.

Steve

History of Norton "In Ascendant": Part 2: 1931 (cont'd.) and 1932

This month's column picks up where November's left off: right in the middle of the report on the exciting 1931 TT races. As usual, I thank Dennis Howard and his publishers, Ballantine Books, for letting me reprint this material. Let's not waste any more time getting back to the cause at hand, the fifth chapter of NORTON, "In Ascendant", and the 1931 Senior TT race.

The Senior results were even better with Hunt, as forecast, winning from Guthrie and Woods respectively. Stanley's ride was not without incident, rather minor, but annoying things happened such as the petrol filler cap that would just not close, requiring a glove to be stuffed in the hole in consequence.

Jimmy Simpson made fastest lap at over eighty miles per hour, the first occasion on which the Island Course had been lapped at such a speed, but alas retired during the race.

Norton Team won ten Grands Prix and were placed third in four of them. Norton standard range of models virtually unchanged from 1930. His Majesty the King of the Belgians placed another order for a British motorcycle. King Albert was then over fifty years of age, was a keen sportsman, and took an interest in mountaineering and aviation as well as motorcycling. His new mount was a Norton, the third machine of the make that he had owned. The King was a tall man and had the brake position altered to suit him, and had also expressed a wish to have the rear chain totally enclosed.

1932: Those two well-seasoned racing men, Alec Bennett and Freddie Dixon, were talking freely to the Press about the demise of the single-cylinder racing engine and the need for multi-cylinder units to replace it as soon as possible. Norton in concert with other manufacturers stated that it might be desirable, but the cost would be terrific, and while they were winning so many races with comparative ease using the proven single-cylinder engines, they were not immediately concerned. It was stated that HRH Prince George was to visit the Isle of Man to watch the Senior TT in June. Prince George and his brothers had in the past taken a keen interest in the sport, and the Duke of York (later King George VI), besides being a keen motorcyclist himself, entered a machine and rider for a number of Brooklands events.

Bill Lacey had covered 110.8 miles in one hour at Monthery, on a Norton. The Inter-Varsity speed trials at Hexton Manor, near Luton, the home of Sir James Hill Bart. A description of the scene on that mid-February day is most pleasing. "Enthusiasts worked away at an assortment of motorcycles, wearing in most cases that utterly roguish look that comes of removing the fuel tank, and substituting something about the size of a cocoa tin. Their friends wandered around asking where numbers could be obtained. Piercing-looking gentlemen in white overalls played devastating arpeggios on Bugatti throttle pedals. Officials played with miles of telephone wire apparently not in the least bit worried by the fact that it was one half hour past the advertised starting time." Malcolm Muir (Cambridge University) won the 350cc event on a Velocette, and made two third best times in the 500cc and unlimited capacity classes on his Norton. 'Spug' Muir had already won the 1931 Senior Manx Grand Prix, and later in 1932 was to win the classic Hutchinson '100' at Brooklands.

Syston and Donington Park Road races, Easter Monday, 1932. Appropriately called the Dolphin Cup Race, held in a shower of rain, the irresistible George Richards (Scott in sidecar) was freely tipped as the winner provided his motor could stand the towing. However, those in the know (a delightful expression) said "watch George 'Kim' Collett", for although he was down in the programme to ride a 588cc Norton and sidecar, he was to actually use a very special 596cc overhead camshaft-engined outfit. A terrific battle took place between Richards and Collett until Collett's magneto worked loose, and he retired from the contest. Richards won, with C.E. Williams (490cc Norton s/c) second, while Bill Rose, also Norton-mounted, was third. More will be written about the type of Norton engine that Kim Collett was using, for it formed the basis of the power units that most of Britain's greatest sidecar aces were to employ in the immediate pre- and post-Second World War, National and World Championship meetings.

Over at Donington, Jimmy Simpson made a very unusual appearance but was not placed in his events, although Dennis Mansell, son of the then Norton managing director Bill Mansell, won the sidecar race on his 490cc outfit, while C.D. Bruce was third on a 495cc model, the capacity suggesting rather a special motor. Imports of motorcycles into New Zealand revealed that out of 1,601 registrations fifty-six were Norton.

Stanley Woods took third place in the Senior race of the North West 200. TT Nortons were very little different from the previous year, other than more generous finning of the cylinder barrel and head. Senior models had a compression ratio of 7.25 to 1, while the weight of the complete machine was 312 lbs. Tyre sizes for both 500cc and 350cc models were 21 inches by 3½ inches rear, and 21 inches by 3 inches front. The Junior machines had compression ratios of 7.5 to 1, while in turn their weight was 298lbs. Certain weight-saving measures were taken by the fitting of dural (dual? - Ed.) mudguards and special alloys for clutch and front brake levers. An extraordinary long front brake lever was used and gave the rider considerably more power over control. Wheel rims were made of a special light gauge steel, these weight-saving matters applying to both Senior and Junior models. Larger petrol and oil tanks allowed ¾ gallons of fuel and ¾ of a gallon of oil to be carried. The very comfortable Dunlop little rubber racing saddle permitted a rider to actually walk away from his machine after some 265 road-racing miles.

At the Whitsun meeting at Syston, Harold Daniell enjoyed a field day on his CSI Norton, including the Manx race, the prize being the necessary expenses to help a rider to enter for the September races in the Isle of Man. Harold was a really tough character, and, in the way of the racing man of the early 30's, would load up his Norton sidecar float with the CSI, prop his brother on the pillion, and with tins of dope, tools, leathers, chains and every other piece of

More Racing Highlights starring Woods, Simpson, Guthrie, Hunt & Co.

paraphernalia required by the racing man, set out from his Forest Hill home, win races at Syston on one day of the Public Holiday, cross over to Donington, putting up at the famous Hall over night; and then proceed to clean up most classes on the famous Leicestershire Circuit. In discussion with Harold some years ago, he said that both he and his brother were just about fagged after two days of racing, plus the various journeys involved, but with "some tidy wins beneath ones belt we found heart to sing as we thumped the old Norton float back to London."

Norton TT racers carried experimental tension springs, mounted on the forks to act as dampers.

The official Norton team for the TT: Tim Hunt and Stanley Woods, plus the Jimmys Simpson and Guthrie. Three additions were the New Zealand rider Mattson (of Auckland Speedway fame), plus the original "Muscle Man" S. "Ginger" Wood, and C.B. Taylor. Both Wood and Taylor retired in the Junior race, while there was no further mention of Mattson at all; presumably he was a non-starter. Stanley Woods won the Junior and Senior races; in the latter event Guthrie and Simpson were second and third. The Groote Prijs van Nederland - The Dutch TT Senior class won by Tim Hunt with Stanley Woods second. Reverse finishing order in the 350cc race.

The French Grand Prix with Woods and Hunt first and second in the 500cc class. Jimmy Simpson won the Junior event; admittedly the French Jonghi opposition did not materialise as all three works machines packed up in the early stages of the race, but this was no lesser credit to Jimmy who always appreciated a fight, in the most sporting sense of the word. Charlie Dodson was considered to be the menace at the Belgian Grand Prix at Francorchamps. Charlie was riding an extremely fast Excelsior JAP and the Norton camp eyed him with every caution. During the course of the 500cc race Dodson struck a terrific bump when very well placed, the impact being such that he suffered a dislocated shoulder, and was taken in great pain to a local doctor who soon put matters right with Charlie out to the world "under a whiff of gas." Tim Hunt was also a casualty when he broke his collarbone. The results were: Senior race, Woods first 77.66mph, while Simpson and Guthrie were first and second in the Junior event at 72.94mph and 72.93mph respectively - a very close race indeed. At St. Andrews during July 1932, Jimmy "G" riding his 490cc Norton for the Hawick Club won the twenty mile 600cc sand racing championship, and also the unlimited class.

Donington Park, August Monday. The great "Character" George Vesey, a Nottingham Clubman, put it across the "regulars" on their sophisticated camshaft Nortons, riding his famous Norton "flat tanker" of earlier vintage. Stanley Woods won both classes of the Swiss Grand Prix, at one time the world's fastest road race. Woods won the 500cc event at 85.15mph, while Tim Hunt, now back in action, was second at 84.18mph.

An interesting article appeared in The Motor Cycle in which "Torrens" described the camshaft Norton International as the ideal model for high speed touring and in so doing caused many a frustrated speed enthusiast to rush to the shed to plant a well-aimed kick at his modest touring side valve.

In the Manx GP in September Norman Gledhill and Harold Daniell took first and second places in the Senior, and a young man by the name of Frith motor-d home in fifth place in that event on a 350 Norton.

During the autumn of 1932 the Norton factory introduced two additions to their already generous list of road models, for release in 1933. There were to be single- and twin-port editions of a new 350cc model, catalogued as the 50 and 55. The two machines, apart from differing exhaust systems, were identical, with 71mm bore and 88mm stroke. The object in the minds of the manufacturers was to offer to the public a 350cc machine of high performance at a price rather below that which was possible with the overhead camshaft design. In line with the current Norton practice, a gear-type oil-pump attended to the dry sump lubrication system, while the magneto was chain-driven from the camshaft, and positioned behind the cylinder. A pressed steel cover protected the primary chain and a system of automatic lubrication was arranged from the crankcase breather; thus a fairly steady oil mist sprayed onto the primary drive. A four-speed gearbox was fitted as standard and gear selection was either by hand or foot according to the customer's wishes, although no extra charge was made if the foot system was required. Tyre sizes were 19 inches by 3.25 inches on the special Norton quickly detachable and interchangeable wheels, while the brakes were of seven-inch diameter. Both standard and the more sporting upswept pipes could be supplied, and it was claimed that a speed of seventy miles per hour was well within the capabilities of either model.

A new silencer of the venturi pattern also made its debut at this time, not unlike the famous "Brooklands Can" in appearance. Inside the silencer body was a pepper-pot baffle that silenced the exhausting without impairing the efficiency of the engine, and the whole assembly was set off with a pleasing fishtail end. Unlike many silencers of the period, this device could be readily dismantled for cleaning purposes.

All petrol and oil tanks were now chromium plated, with aluminium enamelled centre panels, and as an addition a very neat instrument panel could be supplied to fit into a suitable recess in the tank top. The panel also incorporated a rain gutter which prevented the rain from driving down hard onto a rider's crutch during bad weather. The design was ingenious, for the complete instrument assembly could be removed when the complete fuel-tank in turn was to be taken off, without disturbing any of the electrical wiring. The hub caps on all models were plated, which gave the wheels a distinctive appearance. Only the side-valve range retained three-speed gearboxes, while all pushrod over-head-valve models had improved rocker ends, which in turn made line contact on the valve stem end.

To wind up the year 1932, Debay won the Montlhéry Grand Prix on his Norton with Prince Nicholas of Rumania in attendance as an interested spectator. Stanley Woods passed on his tip for clearing rain-splattered goggles: by the simple expedient of sewing a piece of chamois leather to the back of his racing glove, and a crafty wipe from time to time.

Technical Tips: Carl Mazel

This Technical Tips column is going to talk about the preventive maintenance that was discussed briefly in past issues. Now most stoppages are the result of failure to respond to signs that become evident as odd vibrations or irregular running. There was a motorcycle that came here some time ago that just wouldn't idle down. I tried to adjust the carburettor, but it did no good. Just on a hunch I put a wrench on the nuts that held the carburettor and tightened them. The engine died almost immediately. The whole tuning sequence was repeated and the results were amazing. It ran like a train, and it started much easier.

I would like to go to the cables now. First, are they frayed at either end? Second, do they have just enough lubrication to be easily operated? And third, do they have any sharp bends or are they being squeezed at any point of the run? All of the aforementioned items can bring you to a condition of stoppage or at least partial discomfort. Clutch cables are especially vulnerable to having sharp kinks or are squeezed by the fuel tank. When inspecting the cables, a bright shiny spot is a clue that it is rubbing on something because of a sharp bend or some high localized pressure. It doesn't take too much looking to find something obvious.

At this particular point in time I would like to correct a mistake I passed along in the October issue. In reference to the Lodge spark plugs, I said they were checked at 360 lbs. pressure. That statement should have read thusly: Racing plugs are factory-tested at 600 psi at 360°F. This is why the professionals used them almost exclusively. Anyhow, my sincere apologies to all readers. However, outside of Gene Austin and Mark Stockslager, no members have written.

Another point of interest is the handlebar levers. These should be loose but not sloppy. They should also have a little grease on the bearing points so that as the load increases they will not bind. Ever think what you would be doing if you broke a clutch cable? How many right turns would you have to make before you could breathe easier? I am aware that you guys in the north country have some beautiful long roads to ride so it really wouldn't be too bad, but what do you do in town? As a matter of conversation, has anybody lubed or checked anything that I have brought to light in any of my ramblings? I hope you don't think that it takes care of itself. (I can't speak for the other members up here, Carl, but I've followed some of the advice you've passed along, and am really most grateful. Might have prevented trouble. *Steve*)

Now, let's take some hypothetical stoppage situations. First, you are riding along and the model dies. It has been running well up 'til now so nothing is really evident. The first thing to check is the fuel tank, and you have enough fuel. However, when you took the filler cap off you heard a very gentle hissing noise. Not enough to mean anything, you might say. You put the cap back on and the model fires up and runs along quite well. It pulls power and is very flexible, but after a few miles it dies again.

This is the sign that you are having a vacuum created because the breather is clogged, and will effectively stop the fuel from getting into the float bowl and then to the carburettor. Sometimes you can run a short way on the reserve section of the fuel tank, but the vacuum will soon make its way over there too. The thing to do of course is to clear the hole and the problem will go away. Another thing regarding the fuel supply is a situation like this. Riding along with a tank full of fuel you go to pass someone, and you know that you have power to spare. Perhaps you even shift to a lower gear for added acceleration. Okay, you downshift and pour on the power but the machine fails to respond and almost falls on its face. Now what the hell is wrong, you ask yourself. The first thing to look for is the most obvious: lack of fuel. The line is cracked to the bowl and the fuel supply is verified. Next, the supply is checked at the main jet; this is where a good portion of the problem can be. If you take the main jet out you will notice that it is about half the size it should be; hence the fact that it runs okay on low throttle, but when you need the additional supply the restricted jet does not let it in. Sometimes if the obstruction is loose you can run the engine up to 3000 or 3500 rpm and just hold your hand over the intake bell. As the engine starts to die, take your hand away, and it'll start to run again. If the swarf (?) was loose it will have been sucked through and you are home free. This is a very simple thing to do, and the real trick is to not choke the engine too much or foul the plugs. If the aforementioned trick doesn't do the job, a complete disassembly is the only thing left; for the most part though, dirt is the culprit.

Okay, let's look at another thing that can be equally aggravating. Riding along without a care, full fuel tank, full oil tank, and everything is A-OK. You look at your watch and decide that you need a little speed. A careful look around to see who might be watching, and then you gradually increase speed. The bike starts to go ahead but then stumbles, and it sometimes even lets a "pop" out the carburettor. A backfire out the exhaust soon lets you know that all is not right. What has taken place is a spark plug failure due to a temporary internal short. Sometimes it will clear itself, and sometimes it gets worse. When this condition exists, you can ride along and very easily give it more throttle. Sometimes you can get it to clear itself because the pressure rise is gentle, and then sometimes the plug will break down because of the buildup of carbon. If a spark plug shorts out on the outside it is all through because you have a path of low resistance and the spark will always take the path of least resistance. I am not sure what happens electrically, but it does happen.

Another thing that is very aggravating is the gradual deterioration of the high tension wires. Some of these of lesser quality dry out and crack resulting in leakage, so the correct amount of voltage does not get to the spark plug. This becomes evident in the form of misfires and backfires. You can check by watching the wire at night to see the corona, or if you are brave run your finger up and down the wire. A good wire will not bite, but a bad one will bite you badly, and if you happen to have a high energy system it'll make your day for sure!

CARL MAZEL'S HELPFUL HINTS (CONT'D)

The capacitor discharge system is pretty good because it will fire a semi-fouled plug for whatever reason that it has or can think of. Good wires are a necessity in the high voltage section as well as the low voltage section. The wires in the low voltage section have crimped connectors and if an overzealous hand does the crimping it is possible to start a fracture with the resulting breakage that is sure to inconvenience you at a point in time that is not of your choosing. The soldering of connections is good, but if they are allowed to shake or vibrate the solder joint will soon fracture and break, causing another inconvenience. I myself have used wiring that is made up of AN spec wire that can be purchased in small quantity without any penalty. The quality is about 1000 percent better than the wire normally available, and it has a life span of many years. The quality control is excellent, and there are several different grades with one, two or three different coverings.

Now, what shape is the battery in? Have you checked the water or cleansed the battery box area lately? Do you have any corrosion in the general area? A good, simple hydrometer is available that has three little colored balls that will rise or fall with the specific gravity of the acid in each cell. The cells should all read very close to the same level of acid as well as specific gravity. If all cells read the same then a simple, slow recharge is all that is necessary, bearing in mind that a good check of the charging circuit is in order to make sure all is okay. There is a type of battery charger that will take a lead acid battery that is sulphated, and with very careful use it will restore a battery to useful condition. Its circuitry is called "Asymmetrical Alternating-Current Battery-Charging Technique". This circuit was invented in 1954 and patented in 1956. It has been the subject of a great deal of controversy, but it does work, and for those that are interested in something out of the ordinary this will blow your mind. It does take a little bit of thinking however! (The following bit is from another letter Carl sent recently - Steve) Would you believe that Gene Austin is the only one that has written to me since I mentioned the battery charger in an earlier Tech. Tips? I really don't believe that nobody is interested in the advancing of their knowledge; it really is amazing!

I am looking forward to your band of pioneers, when you can come down to the land of milk and honey, and a lot of information exchange, as well as a lot of smoke. I was also very pleased to read Pete Thistle's nice comments; it really is a nice group. Again, most of those guys don't write either! I sent Al Osborn a copy of the Battery charger and am awaiting his reply if he hasn't ever seen anything like that.

Another thing, what happens when the new group takes over? Will it still be proper for a southerner to write for the north?

Anyhow, looking forward to our impending debacle. My best to all, and have a good, safe trip.

Yours sincerely,

Carl

P.S. If you have any difficulties on your way, and are not too far away, call here collect and we can go from there.

Thanks Carl - for everything! Steve

Trading Post

Please send legible ads for the TRADING POST to the new NORTON NOTICE Editors in c/o:

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Letters to the Editor

Steve: Your newsletter is outstanding; it is my privilege to receive it. Our Branch's Secretary is looking at it along with many other Clubs' newsletters to get ideas as we begin to publish our own. Too bad I missed seeing you on my trip to San Francisco in September. I did get Brian Slark and the fellows at H.P. International when I was in the L.A. area. I look forward to seeing you on another trip out west, possibly in the late winter or spring.

MIKE PISARCIC
TRENTON, MICHIGAN

Dear Mike: Thanks for the kind words, and good luck with all of your efforts in getting the Michigan Branch going. I'll be looking forward to seeing your newsletter when the first issue comes out. Feel free to come visit next time you get out this way, and by all means try to make it to one of our meetings if you can. In the meantime, KEEP ON NORT'N! *Steve*

Steve: Unfortunately our Sunday schedule did not allow us to stay on at Alice's or ride with the group. However, we enjoyed seeing lots of Nortons and talking to the others. I don't know about the other members, but I'd like to join the USNOA. I think it might broaden our horizons somewhat and be useful resource to our machines. I believe that group affiliations in one's area of interest are always beneficial; I wish the others all saw it that way. Safe ridin',

TOM SKILLINGTON
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Dear Tom: I appreciate your feelings on the USNOA issue and especially the fact that you've put them down on paper. I wish others in the Club would speak out, in whatever way they wish, and let it be known how they feel. I still feel that the vast majority of the membership agrees with us, but unfortunately the vocal minority manages to maintain the status quo whenever the issue is brought up at a meeting. Take it easy. *Steve*

"John Player Nortons"

-words by Art Sirota
-sung to the tune of Bob
Dylan's "John Wesley Harding"

John Player Nortons roamed across the West.
No one in their time could ever catch them.
Of all the cafe racers ever built,
they were the best.
There's never been a motor bike to match them.
Yamahs and Hondas would do their best to pass.
So would Moto Guzzis and Ducatis.
But they'd soon feel the thunder
as a blur of fiberglass
shot ahead with speed that shook their bodies.
It was down in Orange County,
some new bikes came to town;
and claimed the J.P.N. was over-rated.
They raced down U.S.101
at twice the speed of sound.
The Player proved that Class can't be outdated.

Great song Art! I haven't heard it yet on the radio, but then again Northern California does tend to be a bit slow compared to you swingers down there! I'm sure it'll be on the charts in the very near future. Definitely a hit! *Steve*

Dear Steve: I'm sending you a picture of my J.P.N. so that you can eat your heart out. The only trouble it's given me was with the clutch. When I first purchased the bike, I took the clutch apart, checked the plates for warpage and scoring, cleaned them off well, and re-assembled everything. I remembered talking to a Norton dealer named Rick Farrow a couple of years ago, and he told me that his clutch plates kept getting too much oil on them and he would have to disassemble everything every 1,000 miles and clean the plates off or otherwise they'd slip. My clutch, it turns out, did the opposite! Even though the clutch was adjusted properly, the plates were still grabbing when the clutch was pulled in because no oil was getting to the plates. It's a dry-type clutch, but apparently some oil was needed to let the plates slip on each other when the clutch was pulled in. So I simply disassembled everything, cleaned off the plates once again, put some oil on them, and slapped the whole thing back together again. End of problem! Out of all the bikes I've driven, the J.P.N. is the most fun.

I'm putting new pistons (.010" oversize) in my black Interstate, and I'm still in the slow process of restoring the 500T, but I'm having a lot of fun. I hope you're able to come down here sometime in the near future and sample a bit of my Southern California Jewish New York Burbank Over Thirty Middle Income Hospitality. Can I tempt you with char-broiled steaks in my back yard, Alice B. Toklas brownies, and an opportunity to toss my glow-in-the-dark Moonlighter Frisbee?

Norton's idea has always been: "If it's a really good idea, it's got to be simple." So I've applied that idea to my reverse gear problem, and come up with a very simple solution that really works. No complicated engine changes or figure-8 drive chains are necessary. Simply get off the machine, grab it securely, and push the bike backwards! By golly, I don't know why I didn't think of that before!!

I'm also enclosing a copy of my latest smash hit, "John Player Nortons" - hope you like it. Your friend,

ART SIROTA
BURBANK, CA

Dear Art: Tempt me no more! I'm on my way! Get the grill fired up 'cause I'll be down in time for supper! Actually it looks like we'll have a regular landing party coming to visit some weekend in early December. I know Jan Barton wants very much to come to meet with Carl Mazel in Chatsworth, and I'm pretty sure that Charlie Taylor is also very interested in coming along for the same reason. Also, I think Jeff Pierce, whom you'll remember from Colorado, wants to come with us. So we'll have a good size group for you to entertain with your many songs and jokes. Congratulations on your new reverse gear idea. I think you've finally come up with a real winner! I tried it myself the other day, and it really does work! I'll be sure to demonstrate it to all the members who show up for our December ride. Glad to hear you're enjoying the J.P.N. so much. That fine picture you sent is making me eat me heart out! Keep on Nort'N! *Steve*

Letters to the Editor (continued)

Steve: I loved the last newsletter (November); it was great. I didn't know that Art (Sirota) was working with you and Brian on the next Rally. You have got quite a crew and I hope I can be of some help to you. Locally there isn't much going on; it turned real cold the last few days. As a matter of fact, it reminds me of the ride back to the camp site after the dinner and awards. COLD!! I plan on hitting up the local shops for door prizes in the next few months. Would like to get shop manuals, T-shirts, gift certificates, etc. When you get a copy of the Rally flier send it to me and I will copy it and get it spread around. I have heard that the CAMA bike show is going to be in Palmdale; don't know for sure as of yet. Ride safe.

JOHN EBERT
TUCSON, ARIZONA

Dear John: Thanks for the kind offer. I think it would be great if you (and other USNOA folks) would try to solicit whatever you can get in the way of "door prizes" from local Norton shops. I know they will be greatly appreciated at next year's "Rally in the Redwoods". I haven't heard anything yet about the 1980 CAMA Rally, but will definitely let you know when I do. And I'm sure it will be announced in the **NORTON NOTICE**. Maybe if Frank Conley reads this he'll send me one of the official announcements for inclusion in one of the issues this winter. Good luck with your new Arizona USNOA Chapter, and thanks again.

Steve

Steve: Here are some envelopes to use for NOC. Sorry to see you quit being Editor, but glad you will be around as Pres. We've had some long stretches of beautiful weather; no real cold and no snow yet. I've put on several Norton miles with afternoon trips. I made it as far west as Lake Tahoe in mid-August. I had planned on going to San Francisco and was going to look you up, but we never got it together to leave Tahoe. We stayed in North Lake City for five days - very nice. Went to Reno and saw some old motorcycles in Harrah's collection. I never had driven out west before. We came through Denver on the way back and thought about the Rally, but we were about a week too early. I'm hoping to find an Interstate sometime soon. I looked at a beautiful '69 Fastback the other day. 8000 miles and only \$800. My Roadster runs better all the time. If it doesn't snow 'til Christmas, I may be able to put enough miles on it to break it in. Hope you are doing well. Enjoyed your coverage of the Rally. Keep on Norton.

JIM SALMON
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Dear Jim: Many thanks for the envelopes and the kind words. All are greatly appreciated. I have not been elected President yet, but hope to be at the January meeting. Sounds like you had a fine trip last summer; I'm only sorry you didn't make it all the way to the coast. I think you'd have enjoyed it here. Too bad you missed that Rally on your way home; that was really great, and would have been the highlight of your whole trip I'm sure. Maybe next year? Sounds like the Fastback is a pretty good deal. I'd snap it up. Good luck with the break-in of your Roadster, have a good winter, and of course KEEP ON NORT'N!

Steve

Hello Steve: Thanks for your letter. I am now getting your mail O.K. Yes, I took your advice and wrote to Al Osborn about a Tech Tips series, so we will just have to wait and see. At the moment I am listening to my T.T. sound story records, 1957 to 1963 and 1967. All bliss!! Those old Manx Nortons sound beautiful. I have enclosed a cartoon which appeared in a recent copy of Motor Cycle Weekly over here, that I quite liked. I am slowly getting the pieces of my ES2 together. I have just had the wheels rebuilt with alloy rims and the hubs cleaned and polished. I have new bearings to go in them and they can be put aside finished. Engine plates remain a problem, but I have some N.O.C. members on the look out for them. What I can't seem to get is the exhaust valve lifter that fits onto the cylinder head, and handlebar clamps to fit my top yoke. Still, there's time before the T.T. one interesting purchase I have made is a 12 Volt conversion for my dynamo, which is of course 6Volt. It does away with the regulator and control box, and doubles the output, while running cooler and therefore more reliable. Sounds good, doesn't it? I'll let you know how it performs. I have managed to get a twin leading shoe front brake. In fact I bought two of them. They were cheap, and one will make a good swap for something I need to finish the bike, which at the moment is a lot. Our weather is absolutely terrible and I really don't feel like getting into my small garage at the bottom of the garden in the evenings and working on the bike. So I am working on the small bits and pieces in the house when time allows. I envy your California sunshine right now. Merry Christmas,

CHRISTOPHER RICHARDSON
106 TAFF EMBANKMENT
GRANGETOWN, CARDIFF CF17BH
SOUTH WALES, U.K.

Dear Christopher: And a merry Christmas to you! I'm sorry to hear about the miserable weather you've been having, but I do hope you'll manage to get it finished in time for the T.T. meeting. I've printed your complete address just in case any readers of this rag should want to get in touch with you. Maybe someone will have that exhaust valve lifter you need. The 12Volt conversion you got sounds like a winner to me. Hope it works out well. Keep on Nort'N!

Steve

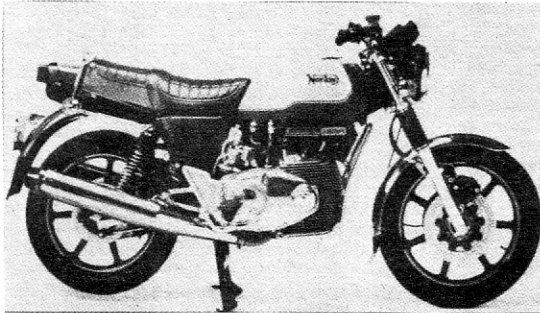
Dear Mr. Coburn: I was led to believe that you could help me join the Norton Owners Club. I have a 1973 Norton 750 that leaves different flavors of oil on the floor. Not only that, but it only runs properly about 50% of the time. If that doesn't qualify me as a true Norton fanatic I'll turn in my Dunlop K-81's. Please send me all necessary information on joining your Club. Many thanks!

MIKE CONLON
BUELLTON, CALIFORNIA

Dear Mike: Different flavors? Imagine that! Hope you'll get that Nort running well 100% of the time, and welcome to the Club!

Steve

Norton Wankel Update



The photograph above and the following article appeared in the December 1979 issue of CYCLE WORLD magazine, and I hope that Allan Girdler and his staff won't mind my reprinting it for the members of the Club. I'm sure that if some of you rush out and buy your very own copy now, while it's still on the newstand, they'll find it in their hearts to forgive me! Thanks guys.

Britain's long-awaited foray back into the superbike market, the Norton Wankel, has been further delayed. Plans were for the 135mph twin-rotor machine to be introduced during September but Dennis Poore, head of the holding company that owns both the new BSA Co. Ltd. (making mopeds and Yamaha-powered trail bikes) and Norton Motors (1978) Ltd., which has been developing the rotary-powered machine for production, has been reported to have indefinitely delayed the bike's first appearance because of the uncertain political atmosphere surrounding the Triumph co-operative. The machine is, however, ready to go. Twenty-five production prototypes have been built for evaluation, and if the experience of our technical editor is any guide, it should be a jet. (!) Weighing 450 lb. wet, it develops 75 bhp at the back wheel, zips through the quarter mile in under 12 sec. and gets 45 mpg. There won't be many made though in the first year, perhaps 500. Not surprising at the \$7000.00 asking price in Britain.

Well there you have it folks. If anyone should hear something new on this fascinating subject I hope you will let Michael Heth know. Thanks.

Many of you Norton enthusiasts have no doubt been wondering about that Norton Wankel you hear rumors about from time to time. Right? Well, the latest word is that it will indeed be going into production this year (1980 model year), and that it may very well be available here in the U.S.! Brian Slark, former Service Manager for Norton Villiers here on the West Coast (I hope I have that right, Brian!), tells me that it is approved for import and that he is expecting to see some of them during the winter or spring. In fact, one Northern California Branch member (I won't mention any names) has already placed his order! Believe it!

It is hoped, especially by me, that there will indeed be one of these things here in California in time for the 1980 Norton Rally. I feel it would be a great attraction at the Rally, and hope that Brian and his prospective buyer will do their best to get the machine over in time. I'll try to let you know of future developments as they arise.

Steve

New Editor(s)

I would like to remind all NORTON NOTICE fans that beginning with the next issue a fresh team of Editors will be putting it out. Please send all future NORTON NOTICE correspondence to:

MICHAEL HETH
87 ORD STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
94114

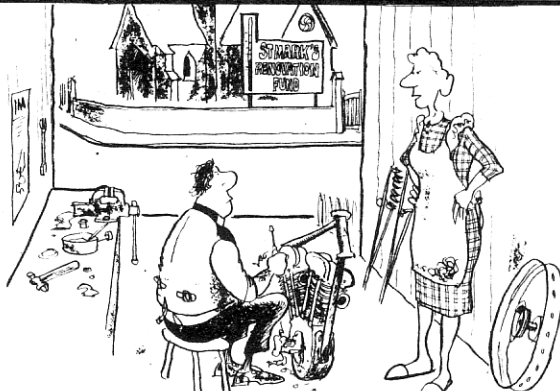
Mike's phone number's are:

(415)863-7843 (HOME)
(415)771-1962 (WORK)

Assisting Mike with this enterprise will be Dick Swanson and Brian Halton, although it is still not clear to me who will be doing what. Look for the complete story in their first issue, January 1980. Here are Dick's and Brian's addresses and phone numbers:

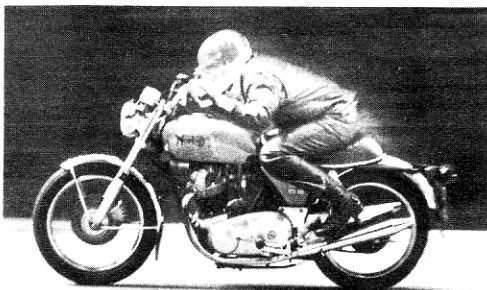
DICK SWANSON	BRIAN HALTON
3342 SACRAMENTO ST.	1126 KEARNY STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CA	SAN FRANCISCO, CA
94118	94133
(415)922-5993 (HOME)	(415)982-7242
(415)644-6534 (WORK)	

Thanks go to Christopher Richardson, of Cardiff, South Wales for this interesting cartoon. He said it came from a recent issue of the English mag, MOTOR CYCLE WEEKLY. The cartoonist was Roger Beale. We thank you both, guys!

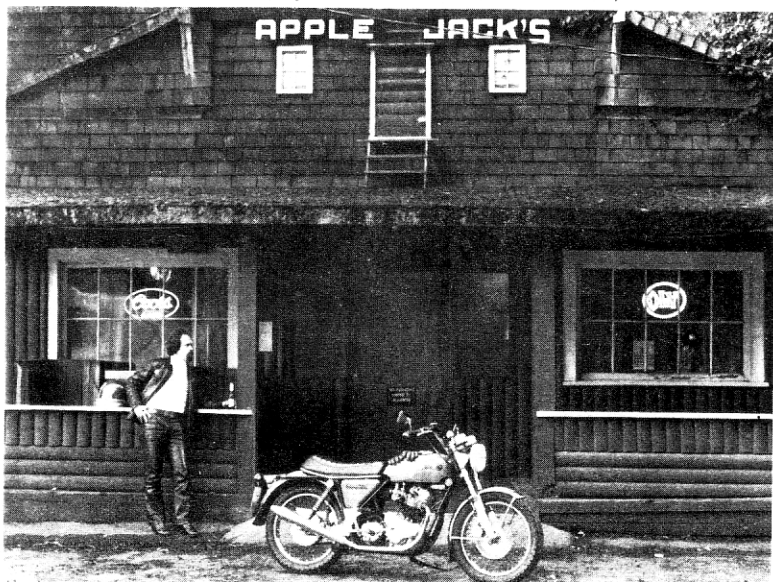


"Some people might think the renovation fund should be used for renovating the church."

Well, if you've actually read this issue, I do admire your patience and stamina. It is a long one, admittedly, but I hope you found it interesting. Since this will be my last **NORTON NOTICE**, I wanted to say it all, and leave you with some thing I'd be proud of. I've really enjoyed editing the **NN** for the past two years, and hope that I've made a small contribution to not only our Club, but also the famous name of the marque, **NORTON**. May it continue to live on through the efforts of clubs such as ours, and especially the individual enthusiasts such as those I've come to know and call 'friends' during my term as Editor.



(A special thanks to Mike Graves for the photographic work he has done for the **NN**, including all the shots of me in this, my final issue. Thanks a lot Mike!)



I'd like to thank many of you for helping, each in your own way, to keep me going on this task. I shall refrain from mentioning any names of the members of the Club who have contributed, pushed, inspired and influenced. You all know who you are and I thank all of you for what you have done. I sometimes felt that I was doing this all alone, but I know that wasn't true. All of the various contributions you Norton Nuts have made were the impetus that really kept this thing alive. What I do want you to know is simply that whatever you do for the Club is appreciated, and important. If you will continue to support it, and help out the new **NORTON NOTICE** Editors (Michael Heth, Dick Swanson, and Brian Halton) in whatever forms you can, this will not die as I once feared. Tell them what you think, contribute whatever articles you might want to share with the rest of us, and give them some encouragement from time to time.

I HOPE TO SEE YOU OUT ON THE ROAD. KEEP ON NORT'N!

Steve

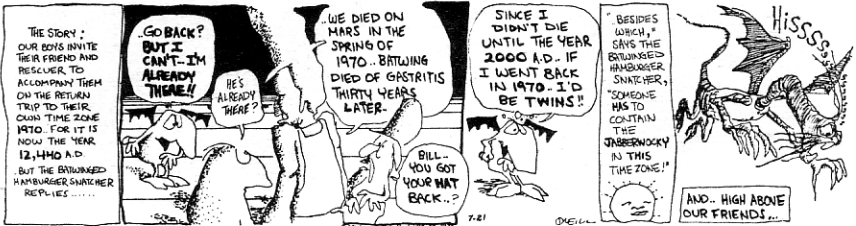
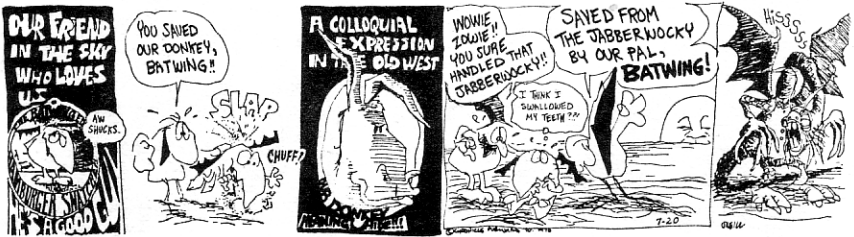
ODD BODKINS

(REPRINTED WITH THE PERMISSION OF DAN O'NEILL)

Once again, I want to thank Dan O'Neill and Glide Publications for letting us use these ODD BODKINS strips in the NORTON NOTICE.

In last month's issue, you'll recall, Fred, Hugh, and 5\$Bill O'Brady escaped from Hell on Big Norton, only to be attacked on the road home by the Greeching Jabberwocky! It looks like a tough situation for the boys.

But suddenly, just as the Jabberwocky was on top of them, Bill noticed another attacker, and a high scream was heard: "DOGGY DINER!!" It was the war cry of the Bat-winged Hamburger Snatcher, and he was attacking the Jabberwocky just in the nick of time. Another close call for our heroes, and to show their appreciation they invite him to join them for the trip back to their own time zone. Good thing too! Enjoy.



I hope that all of you who read the NORTON NOTICE have enjoyed these adventures as I have. Although they might seem somewhat insignificant in the grand stream of things, they do tend to take one's mind off of the heavier issues in life. And, if read very

closely, they usually have something fairly important to say. I highly recommend O'Neill's complete book, The Collective Unconscious of Odd Bodkins, to everyone who enjoys this sort of stuff. It was published by Glide Publications in 1973, and is available for \$4.95 plus 50¢ for postage from GLIDE, 330 ELLIS ST., S.F., CA 94102