

# Norton Notice

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APRIL 1979

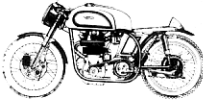


## Scenes from the '78 Norton Beer Column

- A - A Small Sampling of the Nortons and Norton Owners in the Cuesta Playbowl
- B - The NORTONS ONLY Sign on the Gate and a Kawasaki Parked Appropriately
- C - More Nortons, with Frank Ambrosi's Manx in the Foreground (I think)
- D - Gene and Pat Austin Trying to Start Gene's Beautiful 1928 CS-1
- E - A Slightly Later Model Norton - I'm not sure whose John Player this is

Published by the  
Northern California Branch





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:

|          | <u>1 issue</u> | <u>3 issues</u> | <u>6 issues</u> |
|----------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 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.

I really do appreciate all the input I've gotten so far, and hope you'll keep it up.

## Membership Info

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:

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

## Meetings and Rides

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

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



## April Meeting

The Northern California Branch meeting for the month of April will be held on Thursday the 12th at Edinburgh Castle. There will be many important matters to discuss at this meeting and it is hoped that all members who can will be there to share their views.

Agenda: CAMA Rally - Best Norton trophy  
Norton party plans  
Branch ride plans  
Beer Bust - Committee report  
Recruiting helpers  
More suggestions?  
USNOA, etc.- Colorado rally  
Membership drive  
More interaction?  
Club cards - Samples on display  
Final vote on which  
type to order

I know there're more items I've forgotten but they'll all be discussed on the 12th. Please try to come if you can.

DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 12  
TIME: 7:30 PM AS USUAL  
PLACE: EDINBURGH CASTLE  
950 GEARY BLVD.  
SAN FRANCISCO  
(415)885-4074

## April Ride - Vincents!

The ride this month will be down in the Santa Cruz mountains between San José and Monterey. Ed Brooks has kindly offered to let us meet at his Brooks Cyclery in San José, which will be much more enjoyable than our traditional south bay venue. He has also mentioned something about having a big pot of hot coffee for everyone who shows up in time, and I know he'll have all his prize antique motorcycles on the salesroom floor along with some very nice Commando models currently for sale. It's a nice place to shoot the breeze too, so feel free to get there a little early.

As a special added attraction, this ride is going to be joint outing with the local branch of the Vincent Owners Club. I have no idea how many Vincents will show up for the ride, but I am happy that we're doing this sort of thing at last. I hope to plan more such joint ventures with other fine clubs in the future. All suggestions are greatly appreciated and will be acted on.

DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 15  
TIME: 10:00 AM AS USUAL  
PLACE: BROOKS CYCLERY  
1615 ALMADEN ROAD  
SAN JOSÉ  
(408)295-4341

I doubt there will be any rain in April, or at least I hope there won't be any. If there should be precipitation on the ride day, please give me a call at (415)747-0326 or (408)295-4341 to check whether the ride is still on. If there is no rain actually falling in the San José area that morning, the ride will not be postponed.

STEVE

PAID ADVERTISEMENT



# cycle sports

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SEE COMMANDO 850 AD IN THE TRADING POST!

### NORTON NOTICE BACK ISSUES

I've got almost all of 'em, and will send you some for a 50 cent per issue contribution to the club coffer. Just let me know which issues you'd be interested in. Don't bother asking for pre-April, '78 either!!

SELBY MOTORS  
346 EL CAMINO  
REDWOOD CITY  
(415)369-4112

Selby Motors is still providing parts and service for Nortons, and is interested in your business. If you need a part to get the Nort back out on the road this spring why not call Selby's and ask for Jack? As a Norton owner himself, and a member of the club, Jack Morris is very eager to please. He'll try to have the part you need, or will know where to get it. He also has a large stock of accessories to dazzle your eyes next time you stop by.

In the Service Department at Selby Motors Alan Hook is the man to talk to when you need some work done on the beast. Alan, who is also a branch member, is a good Norton mechanic, and will make sure the job you ask for is done right.

While you're there, see if you can talk Jack and Alan into coming out for a club ride now and then. They're both pretty hot riders, I hear, but we never seem to see them on any club rides. If this shot doesn't get them, nothing will!

## March Meeting - Sec's Summary

The March branch meeting was held on Thursday, the 8th at BESS AND THE BEEFEATER in Palo Alto. Everyone present seemed to like the good old English atmosphere of the restaurant, and the large quantities of complimentary hors d'oeuvres were clearly enjoyed by everyone who came early enough to get some. Too bad for those of you who came a little late...the food was magnificent!

President Bob Bausch called the meeting to order at 8:40, at which time there were some twenty to twenty-five members present. Several came later.

The first item on the agenda was the CAMA rally, to be held in Reedley this year on April 28-29. It was decided by unanimous vote that we should sponsor a trophy for BEST NORTON at the rally. It was not clear to anyone present exactly how the "best Norton" would be selected, but we did decide that we would form a judging committee of three or four branch members present in Reedley on April 28th. It would be the duty of that almighty committee to pick one machine from all the Nortons entered in the Concours d'Elegance to be the recipient of the trophy. The owner of that Norton needn't be a member, but if not, we will surely encourage him to join the club. All Norton owners at the CAMA rally will get copies of the May NORTON NOTICE, and membership forms, and will be invited to join the club. Branch secretary Steve Coburn will take care of this chore in Reedley, but will gladly accept help from other branch members who plan to be there. He will also get the trophy made during March, and bring it to the April branch meeting in San Francisco. His report to the group at the March meeting stated that a wall plaque trophy with the Norton Owners Club badge (lapel pin) at the top and an engraved plate with the appropriate information could be purchased for \$10 to \$15. Although several other award possibilities were suggested, such as a case of motor oil or a big piston mounted on a pedestal, the majority was in favor of the plaque trophy. One new member, Jeff Pierce, who just joined the club at the meeting, offered to make a plaque containing a photograph of the winning machine and owner. It was agreed that this should be done, but in addition to the trophy, rather than in place of it. Jeff also volunteered to handle developing and some photographic work for the NORTON NOTICE in the months to come. For this generous offer I want to thank him, and hope others will as well. You can expect to see some fine photographs of Nortons at the CAMA rally in the June newsletter.

The second item of business on the agenda was the THIRD ANNUAL NORTON BEER BUST, and the Beer Bust Committee (Gene Austin and Mark Gribble) gave the planning report. The tentative date for the Bust is Sunday, June 10th which would be the date of our branch ride that month. The location will be the same as last year's, the Playbowl in La Honda if available. Steve said he would make the necessary arrangements during March. The Beer Buyer, Mark Gribble, asked whether we should plan on getting more beer than last year, since it ran out fairly early, and it was decided unanimously that we should. Mark made clear to those asking about the brand of beer to be purchased, that he would get beer that he likes. Anyone having good connections with beer suppliers should give Mark a call at (415)573-1699. If we can save some \$\$ on the beer kegs it would be very helpful.

Still on the subject of the Beer Bust, secretary Steve Coburn brought up the issue of whether or not to allow people to bring motorcycles other than Nortons into the playbowl. He suggested that we should welcome all who come to the Beer Bust, and encourage those who arrive on other marques to come in and look at all the "real Motorcycles" and enjoy the good Norton camaraderie. He stressed that we should insist that all motorcycles other than Nortons be parked outside the gate, and everyone present seemed to agree. A sign saying "NORTONS ONLY" will be there on the Playbowl entrance gate, as it was last year, and only Nortons and their owners and friends will be allowed in. All help from other club members will be greatly appreciated on the day of the Beer Bust because there will no doubt be some individuals who won't want to park their machines outside. Let's try to be friendly and understanding, but at the same time reasonably persuasive when we ask those individuals to park outside the gate. Let's avoid any confrontations. Gene Austin asked that anyone who has access to a suitable quantity of plastic or paper cups please let him know. If we can save some money there it would help. It was also suggested that we all bring our favorite beer mug from home. Flyers will be printed up with all the Beer Bust information, and distributed to motorcycle dealers, members, etc. as was done in 1978. In addition, some more direction signs to keep flatlanders from getting lost in La Honda will be made up in time for the Bust. The third item on the agenda was the issue of whether or not we should get some new business cards printed with the new branch logo (i.e. the one on our new T-shirts), or stick with the kind we've ordered in the past, with just the NOC logo. It was the consensus opinion that the greater cost of the two-color printing job would not be worth it, and that we should have the new cards printed in just one color. However, your forgetful secretary remembered after the vote had been taken, that the printer offered to run a sample for us at no cost, after which we could decide if we'd like to have a full batch made. This seemed like an acceptable compromise to all present, and so the sample will be at the April meeting for all to see, and we'll take a final vote at that time. I would add that Bob Bausch spent a great deal of time on the necessary art work, and did a very beautiful job indeed according to all the printers I've shown it to. If we can get a large batch of cards printed up with the new logo, and perhaps only the first 1000 or so with the names and phone numbers of the current officers, it really would not cost much more than the other type.

There was then a discussion of whether or not the branch's recent growth warrants an additional officer, and everyone seemed to agree that having a Treasurer to handle not only the branch funds but also the sending of NOC dues to England, would be helpful. Carollyn Scott volunteered, and was elected. Steve and Carollyn will both work on this.

## A Message from the President

While time didn't allow me to make the entire run, the March club ride was certainly a well-attended affair, with what seemed like about ten Nortons, a Vincent Rapide (nice!), and a Moto Guzzi. Had he been able to make it, our stalwart secretary, Steve Coburn, would have enjoyed it, and I believe we all sympathize with Steve for being forced down on the way. (Thanks for the sentiments, Bob. I had a flat tire shortly after leaving Alice's Restaurant that morning, and regret missing the ride. Got it out on the road again a few days later, after pulling a humongous nail out of the rear tire and replacing the tube, and proceeded to make the ride from San Francisco up to Inverness and back with a rookie passenger for company. She seemed to like the ride well enough, and the weather was superb, but I do wish I'd had all those Nortons riding along too!)

Brian Cunningham ably assumed the duties of ride master through the beautiful countryside of Marin, and I trust the ride in its entirety was a success.

April promises to be a banner month for the club, especially with our participation (now that we all ride classics!) in the annual CAMA rally, to take place this year in Reedley on the last weekend in April. As discussed at the last meeting, we will sponsor a trophy for the BEST NORTON, and we will have a club ride to the event. More details on all this at the April meeting. I strongly urge all of you to make an effort to attend this important rally, as I feel a good showing by our club will enhance our reputation and also that of the marque. It may also gain us some new members.

On that subject, I might add that we are now much stronger than ever, with over 100 members in the Northern California Branch. Not that our strength is only in numbers, for it is one of enthusiasm as well, something I know from seeing it in others, and also feeling it within myself. There have been some lean years, and we can thank Gene and Pat Austin for holding it together during those times. We have been helped in recent years by an intensifying of interest in Norton after they ceased the production of real motorcycles. And for our rapid growth in the past year, I really feel we must congratulate Steve Coburn and the strenuous effort he has made to see the club prosper. Well done, Steve! (Aw shucks Bob, thanks)

Having had trouble at times keeping track of some 25 members, I can appreciate the work Steve has been doing, and I was happy to see at the March meeting that he will be getting some help from Carollyn Scott, who has generously offered to be our new Treasurer, and was unanimously elected by the members present. Thank you, Carollyn!

Well, that's it for now. Let's all get our bikes ready for the run to Reedley. See you there!

Safe riding to all,

*Pat Branch*

## And a Comment from Carollyn

I'm very happy to accept my new position and the duties as your club Treasurer. At this time all membership fees will still be sent to Steve.

I thank you all for your support.

Sincerely,  
Carollyn

LARRY RANDALL

English Specialist

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With many years of experience on British motorcycles, Larry will be able to help you with yours. He's definitely the man to see if you have one of those impossible fix-it nightmares. Check with him first.

Jan Barton, Larry's right-hand man at West Bay, is a particularly good person to know if you're into older machines. A member of our branch, he has a '38 Brooklands and a '48 Manx of his own, and a wealth of knowledge about antique motorcycles.

## Good Idea Dept.

Thanks to Gene Austin for this month's good idea. He suggests that everyone save those fancy brown envelopes the NORTON NOTICE comes in, and return 'em to Steve at branch meetings and rides. GREAT IDEA Gene! Will people do it?

## PALO ALTO YAMAHA

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## Trading Post

### FOR SALE

1966 Atlas 750 - excellent condition and completely original. 44,000 miles. Stored in garage most of the time. Moving back to Virginia and can't take it with me. So I must sell it soon. Asking \$1000.  
SANDY SOMMERS: (408)294-1184 Before 3PM.

1969 Atlas 750 - all stock and in excellent condition. Completely original. \$900 firm.  
TOM SHAFER: (415)564-5573 After 6PM.

1971 Commando 750 - all Dunstall equipment including seat, tank, brakes, etc. Mikuni carbs, Tomasellic clip-ons, and extra parts (transmission, clutch) included. 10,000 miles on two year old engine, with new valve job (TT Motors). Asking \$1200.  
PAUL MILECK: (415) 848-3355.

1050 Sterling Ave., Berkeley

1977 Commando 850 - motor blown, but bike is basically otherwise in good condition. Will sell as is or in parts. Also selling Dunstall fairing and rear sets, and other Norton parts.  
HAROLD RUSSELL: (415)494-6777 Days.

1974 Commando 850 - mint condition. Mikuni carbs, new K-81's, oil cooler, Mulholland shocks, fuel filters, luggage rack, early Roadster silencers, choice of Roadster seat and tank or Interstate seat and tank. Comes with Cycle Sports warranty. \$1750.  
CYCLESPTS: (408)247-1313 Days.  
2355 El Camino, Santa Clara

ES-2 body parts: oil tank, tool box, etc. 500T engine and misc. parts. Many Norton gears. 10% discount to club members.  
WEST BAY CYCLE DISMANTLERS: (415)494-8033  
750 San Antonio Rd., Palo Alto

Commando 750 Roadster heders and mufflers. Commando 850 MkIII Roadster mufflers.  
COREY LEVENSON: (415)681-2619 Evenings.

1974 Commando 850 Roadster - fiberglass tank, drilled disc, alloy wheels with stainless spokes, 'S' high pipes, Quaife racing 5-speed transmission. Interstate tank, seat and side covers included. Also Dunstall half fairing with smoked screen, and a helmet. First offer of \$1750.  
JOHN STAUSS: (408)354-5164.

### "Broeder's Bone Yard":

1974 Commando 850 - runs, but not in great shape. Tank and sidecovers dented. \$800?

### New parts:

ES-2 rings std. .010, .020, .040; cams in and ex.; rocker arms, rocker box and alpha big end(?). Britax crash bars for Commando. Commando headlamp support ring, battery and oil tank support tray. Fastback oil tank and battery side case (fiberglass).

### Used Commando parts:

Rods, cranks, timing covers, primary covers; gearbox main, inner and outer covers. Seely 6 gal. gas tank, 4 qt. racing alloy oil tank.  
GARY BROEDER: (408)253-2665 Evenings.

### WANTED

P-11 upswept pipes in restorable condition.  
MARK STOCKSLAGER: SRA Box 44, Anchorage, AK

Dunstall Norton - must be the real thing!  
COREY LEVENSON: (415)681-2619 Evenings.

### PAID ADVERTISEMENTS

## T. T. Motors

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

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OWNER

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- \* 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.

## History of Norton

The following is another episode in a series extracted from Dennis Howard's excellent book entitled NORTON, which was published in 1972 by Ballantine. I thank Mr. Howard and Ballantine for letting me use this material here. This installment continues the second chapter of the book, the 'Road to Success', which is primarily concerned with the development of the Norton motorcycles during the early 20's.

Whereas the modern 'Grand Prix' type of racing motorcycle bears little resemblance to the 'as ridden on the road' machine, in the early years of the motorcycle industry it was quite possible to purchase a model that possessed all the necessary refinements for road racing, in fact a correct policy if the Tourist Trophy races were to be taken seriously, and indeed one to which James Norton strongly adhered. Nearly all his machines raced in the 1922 races were virtually standard catalogue models with only a slight exterior difference: they had a separate oil tank affixed to the saddle tube.

Several of the new overhead-valve models were entered alongside the older side-valve jobs, but only one actually started in the race, and rather ironically showed little or no superiority over the latter; in fact it retired on the sixth lap. Regardless of this failure, not due to any major fault in the design, serious production went ahead, and thus came into being the now famous Model 18. A handsome machine finished in the traditional Norton black and silver with all the usual bright parts nickel-plated. The petrol tank was a beautiful example of the craftsman's art: from sheet steel, the top, bottom and sides were formed as separate pieces and then soldered into place, the scalloped bottom edge not only serving to give pleasure to the eye, but fulfilling the more practical purpose of preventing splitting. As a woman's hair is her crowning glory, so the proud Norton owner would regard his petrol tank; in fact, many went to the extent of sporting an all-nickel-plated affair.

Before 1922 was out the new overhead-valve Norton had raised the world's flying kilometre (500cc Class) to 89.22mph, and more than satisfied the demands of the high-speed sporting rider, and was undoubtedly the fleetest standard single-cylinder machine of its day. The Maudes Trophy, a special award made to the motorcycle manufacturers for some particularly testing feat, was introduced in 1923 and James Norton decided to compete for the award, for by winning 'the Maudes' Norton's prestige would be boosted to even greater heights, and the man in the street would know he was getting value for his money.

A machine was assembled from a selection of standard parts under the ever vigilant eye of an ACU observer. Without any specialized preparation the Norton, ridden by a team consisting of O'Donovan, Denly and Nigel Spring (later to be associated with the racing Velocettes), promptly proceeded to smash no fewer than 18 world records at Brooklands. 'Enough' cried the ACU, and the trophy was Norton's.

For 1923 all the works-entered Nortons in the TT were fitted with now tried and proved overhead valve engines, and with the recent introduction of a 600cc Sidecar class, certain models had their stroke increased by a further 20mm thus giving a capacity of 588cc. Graham Black finished second in the Senior race to Manxman Tom Sheard's Douglas, with other Nortons filling fourth, fifth, seventh and fourteenth places. Additionally, the late and sadly missed Graham Walker with passenger Tommy Mahon took second place in the Sidecar event, the famous TT Hughes sidecar being named as 'Willy Stikkit'. (Long passage about Graham Walker omitted)

It should not be imagined that the utility rider was at all neglected during these formative years, for in strict accordance with Norton policy all refinements and any constructional changes made on the competition models were usually listed, where appropriate, in the catalogue for the following year's machines. Thus an intended purchaser of a Norton, who visited the Motor Cycle Show at Olympia in 1923, would enjoy the benefit of the year's racing and consequential development in his '24 mount.

Already the side-valve models 16H and 'Big Four' were giving yeoman service for the heavy work, particularly when a side-car was attached. Now in addition to the overhead-valve Model 18 came the 19 with its 588cc engine, in fact an enlarged version of the former. The enthusiastic motorcyclist may be described as a very ingenious bird, and one such example must surely be Peter Waring, former driver of the Grand Prix Lago Talbot cars, who is always ready to wax eloquent over his experiences in the '20s with various Nortons. Waring tells of the dodge by which one could raise the compression ratio of a Model 19 by fitting a piston from the smaller model. Being of the same bore dimensions the pistons from either machine were interchangeable; the 19 however had a concave crown piston of the lower compression type (for hard slogging), and Waring required real performance at the top end of the scale. Thus a Model 18 piston with its slightly domed crown was fitted, and according to Waring this raised the compression ratio of the larger machine by one to one and a half. On the low-octane fuels of the period, his Norton was a real flyer nevertheless, as a result of this little piece of surgery.

It is understood that Pa Norton was not a particularly demonstrative man, but by now he must have enjoyed a quiet satisfaction in the knowledge that his motorcycles were reaping their just rewards. On the Continent H.W.Hassall and J.W.Hollowell had gained second and third places in the French Grand Prix, then the most important event after the TT races, while Bert Denly crossed the finishing line as victor of the 200 mile solo race at Brooklands on his 500cc Norton, and made many successful attacks on the half-litre hour record, and by raising it to 82.67 mph in June 1923 made it the first occasion on which the record had exceeded 80mph. And in Ireland, the immortal Joe Craig won the 600cc class of the Ulster Grand Prix.

NEXT MONTH: More TT victories for Norton in '24.

## CAMA Rally – Reedley, CA – April 28, 29

Frank Conley, the guy who puts it all together for the annual CAMA Rally, asked me to send him a suitable announcement of the Norton Trophy so he can print it in the CAMA magazine. Well, what you see is what he got. It was thrown together on rather short notice, and for that reason ended up being pretty crude. Perhaps next year your Secretary will plan ahead and send him something a little more consistent with the class of the Northern California Branch. We might even send him a good photograph of this year's winner with its proud and happy owner astride the beautiful beast. I hope all photographers at the CAMA Rally will remember to submit a favorite photograph or two (preferably black and white) for the cause.

# Norton

**The NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH  
of the NORTON OWNERS CLUB is very  
pleased to sponsor the trophy for the  
"BEST NORTON" entered in the 1979  
CAMA Rally Concours d'Elegance.**



The actual trophy, an engraved wall plaque with the Norton Owners Club lapel badge at the top, will be on display at the April meeting in San Francisco. If you're thinking of maybe taking your favorite Norton down to Reedley to enter it in the Concours d'Elegance, or if you've decided not to for some reason and could use a little something to get the good old elbow grease flowing again, you really should come see the trophy. It isn't clear yet how the award committee, to be selected from those branch members on hand, will determine which Norton at the rally deserves the trophy, but I'm sure they'll manage somehow. Let's just there are enough Nortons entered in the judging to make their task difficult.

I still have entry forms for the CAMA rally for anyone who has not yet entered and would like to. Also included on the form is a reservation for the CAMA dinner (roast beef!), to be held on Saturday night at Reedley College. The dinner is \$8 for singles and \$15 for two. After dinner they will be presenting the trophies and showing slides and movies as in the old days of CAMA. It should be a lot of fun, so let's hope we'll have a healthy contingent of branch members there. Those of you who want to go, but haven't made a reservation yet, should call me immediately. I'll send you one of the entry forms, and you'll just have time to get it off to CAMA before the April 10th deadline. I think they do need to have exact numbers for the catering company two weeks before the dinner, otherwise I'm sure Frank'd let people pay at the dinner. That may be possible, but I wouldn't plan on it. Send the \$.

Again, in case there's anyone out there who doesn't know it already, the Northern California Branch ride to the rally will depart on Friday, April 27th from Brooks Cyclery in San José. We plan to get together there in the morning, about 10AM or so as decided at the meeting in March. The ride down to Reedley will be beautiful, weather permitting, and the more members we have the merrier. The group I rode down with last year took the route through Hollister and Coalinga before heading east to Visalia. It was one of the most enjoyable rides I've ever been on, through some very beautiful country. This time of year that area is green and very colorful with lots of spring wildflowers. The road is quite good too, except for a few miles which were being repaved. Hopefully they've finished. The group that shows up at Brooks for the ride will vote on a route to Reedley at that time. Hope to see you there.

Steve



## A Letter from Simon Francis

I recently received an extremely apologetic and illuminating letter from the distributor of the ROADHOLDER, Simon Francis. He wanted to explain the problems they've been having in England and asked that I pass on this information to branch members who've been wondering why the magazine hasn't been seen for so long. Here's what Simon had to say on the subject:

Thanks for the NORTON NOTICE and the justifiably peeved letter. I see you were due to have a meeting concerning (among other matters) the non-arrival of ROADHOLDER, last Thursday; it's now Monday so I've missed any opportunity to get information at that meeting to your members, but I hope you'll be able to pass this on somehow. All personal comments are of course my own and not registered committee views.

When I took on the job of distributor of the mag, I didn't realize quite how bad the old printer, Naish, was. The quality was good, if you like that crisp, rather dead design, but trying to get a firm date for delivery was like trying to catch a fish which keeps darting ahead. For months there had been rumbles but not enough committee people I think felt both design and delivery bad. Naish also quoted a good price even if they got wrong quantities. At my first committee meeting I said I reckoned litho better than letterpress for ROADHOLDER and suggested members get some estimates from their local printers. For some - to me unfathomable - reason Chris Goulthorpe accepted an estimate £100 more than the one I got, with the same delivery turnaround. At the next meeting this was discussed and most of the committee accepted that a magazine on time was at that point important; change printers next issue on. Chris was slower than he should have been getting it to the printer, who had promised a production time of ten days, but even so it was at the print-shop by 11th Dec. I phoned a few days later to ask about delivery. Shit and Buggeration if the bloke doesn't tell me he can't do it before 17th January!!! There was nothing I could do. Once again we'd got a bum printer. (Sure sounds like it - Ed.)

Just before the next meeting Chris resigned, and Al Osborn again stepped in to save a seizure. I said "Look, I'm fed up with wasting phone calls on slug-brained far-off printers. Let's go to my lot who are near enough for me to go to see if there's any trouble." I also took on the design job since we were changing print-process, and determined to make it slightly more lively.

The magazines were delivered eventually in bunches over three days. The ones to your branch were held up by the strike 'til late February. Last week a postman brought round here all the magazines they had saved from a Post Office savaging session, and my brother re-packed them, minus two, and sent them again. So that issue, re-named the November/December/January number, is actually only now on its way. (I received it on March 9th - Ed.) A publisher I once worked for, Clive Bingley, used to pack a parcel for new posting staff and hurl it against a wall. "If it'll survive that it'll get through the post" he said. Unfortunately mine failed. Next time will be stronger.

But back to the printing front. Al, to get us straight, rushed through an issue for February. The type-setters were on time. I posted it up to the printer and they also came through with the goods in the promised time. Your magazines were posted in three working days. (Bravo! - Ed.)

So with luck, this will be how it continues. The saga of Riddler (printer who did Nov/Dec/Jan issue) is not over. He had the brass face to charge us £800, nearly twice his estimate, and of course we've sent him our idea, a much lower figure... Even so, club finances are feeling the pinch and I've cut out extravagances such as twin color cover, making up for this with, I hope, more interesting design.

Obviously I'm running out of space, but since it's much more within my influence now, I'll make sure I carry out the assurances of my first letter. Regards to all.

SIMON

P.S. Next issue should be out mid-April. P.P.S. Please let me know when your parcels arrive what is missing.

Well there you have it folks, in its entirety. I think Simon sounds like a very sincere and understanding fellow, and I have therefore written him a reply to the above letter on behalf of the branch. I thanked him for all his efforts on our behalf, and told him we would all be looking forward to that next issue. If they do indeed get it out in the middle of April, I should probably get it by the time of the May mailing, and will send it out with the NORTON NOTICE at that time. If any members would like to write to Simon directly, for whatever reason, his address is: 254 ASHMORE ROAD, LONDON W.9, ENGLAND. I plan to keep in touch with him on a regular basis, and will gladly pass on any and all comments I receive. Please write them down for me or I'll inevitably forget.

## NOC Committee Minutes

Since we're on the subject anyway, I thought I might share with you this excerpt from the minutes of the NOC Committee Meeting held on February 25th. I find it rather amusing - Ed.

### OTHER BUSINESS

The bill for ROADHOLDER 82 had just been received from Messers Ridler. It was £828 instead of the circa £600 we had been expecting, in itself far more than we usually pay, but we decided to pay over the odds on this one occasion in return for his 'Emphatic ten day turn round'. This would have put the magazine back on schedule. This promise had not been fulfilled; it was nearer forty days when delivery to us was completed. His two letters of quotation were very closely examined by Alan Osborn to see how this total was arrived at. Several glaring errors were found, all of which weighted into his direction... The working out of this excessive figure is so crudely inept one is not sure if it is just grossly incompetent mathematics or an attempt to wring as much money as possible from us.

It goes on, but you get the gist of it - Ed.

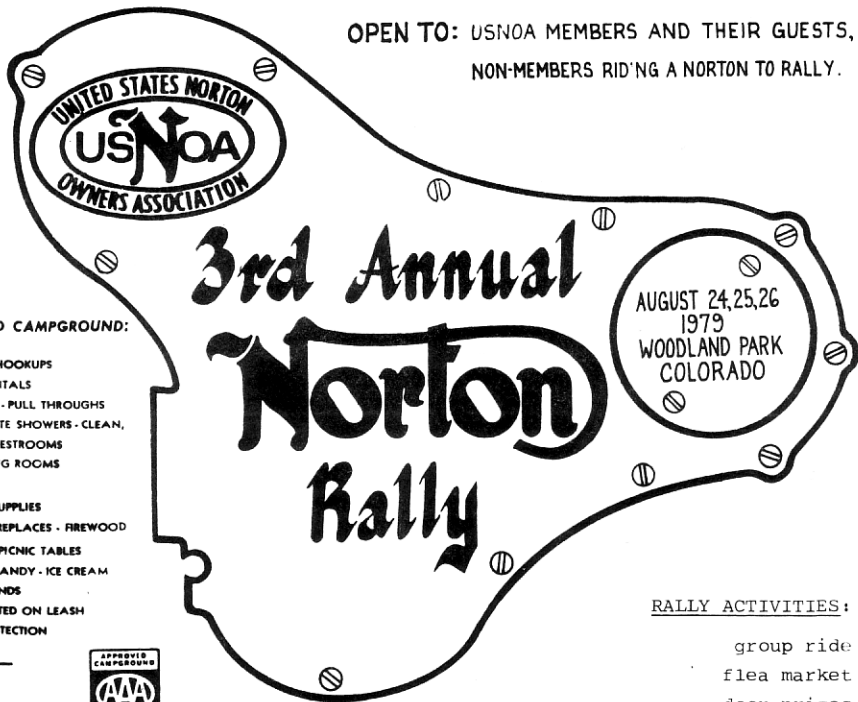
## USNOA Rally - Woodland Park, CO - August 24, 25, 26

I am planning to ride my new touring Interstate (Carl Castle's bike, for those of you who may remember it) to this rally in Colorado at the end of August. My exact plans are not yet final and probably won't be until July sometime. I'd be interested in hearing from anyone, member of the USNOA or not, who would like to go to the rally. Please get in touch with me A.S.A.P. if you're interested in going. It'll be great!

Pete Kogut (Editor of Norton News) and Cliff McGillivray (President of USNOA) have invited any of us interested in their association to come to the rally this summer. They (and I as well) hope that more Northern California Branch members will join the USNOA and increase the association between the two groups.

STEVE

OPEN TO: USNOA MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS,  
NON-MEMBERS RID'NG A NORTON TO RALLY.



### DIAMOND CAMPGROUND:

COMPLETE HOOKUPS  
ON-SITE RENTALS  
LEVEL SITES - PULL THROUGHS  
HOT, PRIVATE SHOWERS - CLEAN,  
HEATED RESTROOMS  
& DRESSING ROOMS  
LAUNDRY  
CAMPING SUPPLIES  
GRILLS & FIREPLACES - FIREWOOD  
PLENTY OF PICNIC TABLES  
ICE - POP - CANDY - ICE CREAM  
PLAYGROUNDS  
PETS ACCEPTED ON LEASH  
POLICE PROTECTION

### NEARBY —

CHURCHES  
LARGE SUPER MARKET  
FISHING  
RIDING STABLES  
BOWLING  
SWIMMING  
GOLF - SIGHTSEEING

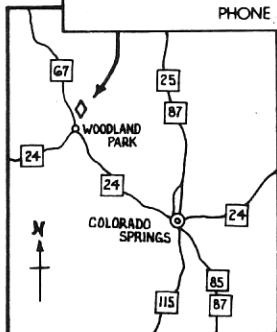


Altitude 8500 feet — sunny days and cool nights.

### RALLY ACTIVITIES:

group ride  
flea market  
door prizes  
field events  
self-guided tours  
long dist. & category awards  
tech. session with Brian Slark  
chuckwagon dinner/Flying W Ranch

Diamond Campground is located on Highway 67,  
1/2 mile north of Woodland Park, Colorado.  
PHONE (303) 687-9684



### RALLY FEE:

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

Pull throughs & hook-ups are an additional cost.

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

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

(307) 265-1419

## May Meeting and Ride

I'm starting something new this month for the benefit of those members who like to plan all activities a month in advance. I'll announce a date, time and venue for the meeting and the ride of the following month. Occasionally we may have to change the location for one reason or another, but the dates and times should be dependable. If I get no significant negative feedback, I'll plan to continue doing this in the future.

The May meeting will be on Thursday, May 10th starting at 7:30PM. The tentative location for the meeting will be the Redwood Inn, located on Redwood Road up in the Oakland hills.

The May ride will be on Mothers Day, Sunday May 13th. We will plan to meet up at Alice's Restaurant in Skyland. That's at the Hwy.35 and Hwy.84 intersection west of Woodside. For all you unfortunates who've never been there. The standard meeting time is 10AM, and if you hope to get any breakfast before we leave, I suggest you plan to get there around 9AM. We will probably leave around 10:30 and ride to the Playbol in La Honda to check out the 3rd Annual Norton Beer Bust site. After that, we will probably head out to the coast, if the weather is decent, and ride down to Davenport, up into Bonny Doon, and perhaps pay a visit to Frank Ambrosi, if he isn't already with us. He might like to lead the ride up there in his home territory.

## PAID ADVERTISEMENT

MOTORCYCLES UNLIMITED  
5776 PARADISE DRIVE  
CORTE MADERA  
(415)924-0327

Alex McLean still has a large stock of Dunstall equipment, including fairings, seats, and tanks in all colors. He also has a good stock of Norton parts, and I suspect he probably has just what you've been looking for. Go check out his big shop just off of Hwy.101 in Corte Madera and let him know you're a member. He is too, and he'll probably want to see your bike and show some of the beautiful old Nortons he has, including a couple of Manx racers on display up on the second floor. They're worth the ride up there.

I stopped by at Motorcycles Unlimited on a Saturday afternoon in March, and found out from Alex that he doesn't seem to be getting new business as a result of his ads in the NORTON NOTICE. So if you do go up to his shop, be sure to let him know that you're a reader of this rag.

That's

MOTORCYCLES UNLIMITED  
5776 PARADISE DRIVE  
CORTE MADERA  
(415)924-0327

## USNOA

Cliff McGillivray and Pete Kogut of the USNOA have given their permission for me to reprint articles of general interest from the USNOA newsletter NORTON NEWS. I'd like to thank 'em both for this kindness, and I hope that other members will express their appreciation by looking into the USNOA. They're a large bunch with over 600 members all over the country, and the bimonthly rag Pete puts out is quite good. For only \$5 a year, a membership in the USNOA is well worth it. You may well hear from Cliff in the near future anyway. He has asked me if he could contact all of our members.

## TECHNICAL TIPS - WE NEED INPUT!

You have probably noticed that Len Allen does not have his regular column in here this issue. I suspect he'd probably like to see other members get involved too. I know there are quite a few good mechanics among our steadily increasing membership, and I really do hope some of you will do your part for the club and contribute a few words of wisdom to the Technical Tips column. Don't worry about your grammar or spelling; I'll polish up whatever you can send in and it'll look great in print. So come on you guys, let's have some input!

This cartoon appeared in the December 1977 issue of NORTON NEWS. The artist, Linda Snow, is a new member of our branch. I am hoping that she'll contribute some of her cartoons to the NORTON NOTICE, and am therefore giving you her address and plea for ideas, as in the NORTON NEWS. Let's try to send her some good suggestions, so we can see them in the newsletter. **"IDEAS WANTED...if you have any particularly good ideas for a cartoon for our newsletter, please send it to me. This is a "volunteer basis" just like my artwork, but your name will be on the cartoon credit also. We'll all appreciate it."**

Linda Snow-Kogut  
RD.2, Box 343-E  
Morrisonville, N.Y.  
12962

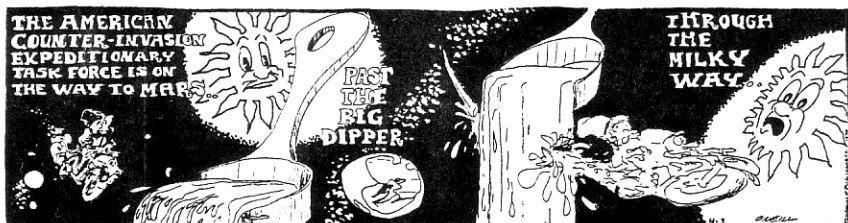
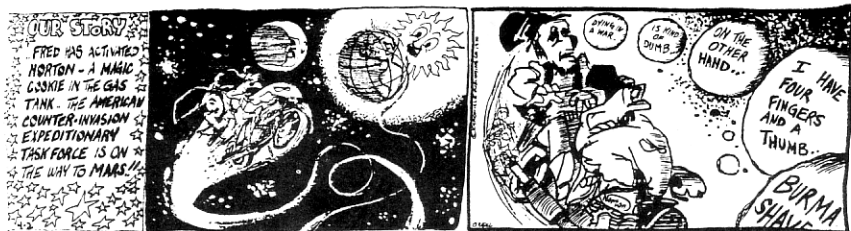
## GRIZZLY DISCOVERY



## Odd Bodkins

(Reprinted with the permission of Dan O'Neill)

Well....as you can see, Fred has launched BIG NORTON with a magic cookie in the gas tank, and his passengers, Hugh and \$Bill O'Brady, are holding on for dear life. Some of their perils en route to Mars are really out of this world, so to speak! Hope you enjoy it.



NEXT MONTH: Will our heroes be able to escape from Billie, the GIANT SPACE BUNNY? And will BIG NORTON survive a crash landing on Mars? The future looks very dim folks, but you'll just have to wait 'til next month to find out what will happen.