

# Norton

## Empire Rally



Brookside Campground  
Catskill New York  
July 18-23, 2011



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Starring Norton Motorcycles and Their  
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Number 162

Price: \$2.00 US (members only)



# Norton

*News*

**The Magazine of the International Norton Owners Association**





Top to bottom: A Norton International at the Barber Museum; incredible stacked display of bikes that surround the central elevator area at the museum; a Manxman on display. (Photos by B. Armitage.)

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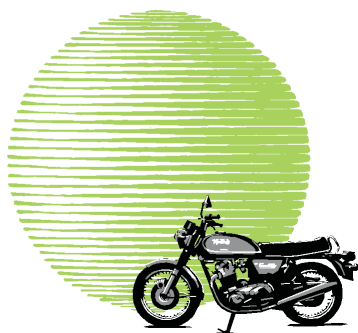
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Commercial Ad Rates: Full Page Jacket Cover - \$150; Full Page - \$100 per issue; Half Page -\$60 per issue; Quarter Page - \$30 per issue; Eighth Page - \$15 per issue. The advertising deadline for issue #163 is January 30, 2011.

*Cover: In the pits at the Barber Vintage Festival. Left to right: renowned GP race tuner Nobby Clark (who prepped bikes for Mike Hailwood and Jim Redmond, to name a few); Maria Costello, current woman lap record holder at Isle of Man; Kenny Cummings, 2010 AHRMA BEARS champ; Alex McClean, Manx racer for Bob McKeever. (Photo by B. Armitage.)*



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This Fall has been incredible in Michigan. Writing this on November 9, I still plan to go for a few more rides this coming week as the temp is due back in the low 60s! Blackie Norton and I had a great ride today through my area which has some pretty decent roads. He still points happily towards the door knowing he has at least one more spree. Unlike my buddy Jack who put his RC51 in the living room last week, and sent me a photo of the bike watching TV, which I asked if it was the weather channel.

Blackie's tires are worn out, and my gas tank did bubble before the sealant was put in to preserve the fiberglass tank, so I am looking at an overhaul of the bike before the big 2011 Rally in New York state. A group of us are already

talking about riding and friend Martin in Germany is planning to come again. Many of you met him in Colorado. I helped him purchase a Norton this summer, which is sitting in my barn waiting for Martin to arrive in July.

I have already had one person contact me about coming from overseas to the Rally. Bennie in the Netherlands is now the Dutch liaison. Visit the INOA Web site events page at <http://inoanorton.com/events/> and click on either "sign up" link under the 2011 Rally blurb

# Rearview Mirror View



Photo by Bertrand Haeggi

**Suzi Greenway  
INOA President**

if you would like to be a host or help someone from overseas. Bennie is working on a container for the Netherlands group but if that is not possible or individually shipping does not work, he may be looking to buy a Norton here.

Most of all it is the fact that people are talking, working out logistics and enquiring about possibilities. Rally Chairman Chuck and his Tri-State Norton Riders have been meeting and getting committees fired up and will keep us updated. This rally is a unique opportunity for the ultimate Norton Rally.

Recently I reconfigured my storage of the old Norton News into numbered boxes where I can hopefully find back issues for members. Of course, I had to look through them, and so many memories flooded


back. So many faces and names that figured in the early and ongoing times of the USNOA/CNOA eventually now the INOA.



So on that note, I invite you to come to this rally and see and be seen again. After all, the first registered camper is our founder, Frank Del Monte! ■

### Pete Gallo

In Passing... "Long Distance Norton rider and all around great guy, Pete Gallo, lost his battle with cancer on Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 2010. Pete will always be remembered for traveling light, and lighting up the room or campfire with his stories and adventures. Our condolences go out to his wife Beth and family. Ride Forever, Pete."

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# 2011 International INOA / NOC Rally Update

It's great to hear the buzz building around the 2011 Rally. We've got so many things to schedule in the few days we are together for the Rally that I've decided to make this a FIVE day Rally, July 18th – July 23rd (Monday through Friday), with departure Saturday morning. We have a few extra things planned that should add to the fun. In addition to the usual field events, concours, night in town, group rides, large and small, self guided rides, tech sessions, and socializing.

- We are working with a charter of bus company to arrange for a "Day Trip" to New York City for those who would like to take in some of the sights the city has to offer.
- The "Olde Rhinebeck Aerodrome" may be willing to put on a special mid-week Air Show for us. The Aerodrome has a collection of old motorcycles also. Cost and scheduling for both the bus trip and Air show are TBD, as of today, but will be reasonable.

The rally fee will remain at \$75.00 per person. Since we are renting the campground for another night the camping fees will increase accordingly. Tent camping will be \$50.00. Cabin rental, and RV sites fees will be determined soon. As soon as I get these figures we will make pre-registration form available through the INOA website and *Norton News*.

Pre-registration is key us being able to negotiate these extras.

We are working on establishing good advance "public relations" with the various police departments that will be watching the motorcyclists playing in their backyard. Please help by playing by the rules:

New York State requires:

- Helmets for both rider and passengers
- Headlight and tail lights on during the day
- One mirror (on left)
- Eye protection
- Mufflers/silencers
- Handle bar/grips can not be higher than the operators shoulders
- Turn signals/indicators are NOT required for bikes manufactured before 1985
- You are required to carry insurance
- You are required to have your license, registration (photocopy of registration is acceptable), and insurance ID card with you while riding.
- Riding two bikes abreast is allowed.
- Lane splitting is illegal.

See you in the Catskill Mountains.

Chuck Contrino  
 Rally Chairman 2011  
 chucktri@aol.com ■

## Rally Hosting Program

Our Webmaster Bill Dudley has finished setting up an on-line site for the INOA 2011 Rally Hosting Program. Here's his introduction to how the program works:

The Rally Hosting program is designed to allow INOA members living "near" the 2011 Rally in New York to host a guest coming to the rally from "far away". The system tries to maintain anonymity and privacy as much as possible, so that only the guest you have communicated with will know your full name, address, and email address.

Hosts: When you volunteer to host, you enter your address, phone, email address, and answer a few questions about the accommodations you are offering, plus the approximate distance to the rally (as gleaned from maps.google.com or equivalent). The system will create an anonymous email address for

you that will forward email to your real email address.

Guests searching for a host will only be shown your first name, a secure email link, and the distance and accommodations questions, plus what state you live in. They can then email you and start a conversation about possibly staying with you around the time of the rally. Once you reply to them via email, your anonymity will be compromised, but only to that one potential guest.

Once you have arranged to host somebody, you can email me and I'll change your status to "booked" so that you won't appear in host searches any longer. If your situation changes so you can't host, you also ask me to remove you from the list.

Look for a link to the hosting program on our Web site [www.inoanorton.com](http://www.inoanorton.com). ■



## Updated PSM

We have plans for an updated version of the the INOA's *PSM* (Parts/Service/Membership) directory to be mailed prior to the 2011 International Rally. Members need to be sure they have the correct zip code and phone number listed (if you wish to share your phone number). You may wish to email Membership Secretary Tari Norum at [tari.norum@verizon.net](mailto:tari.norum@verizon.net) to update your information. The *PSM* is a "must-have" for members making cross-country trips. We have stories at each rally of individuals who have been helped in one way or another by a fellow member when they have problems on the road. I get two or three issues returned each mailing as "undeliverable—no forwarding address" and it is disheartening that we have lost track of another member.

## Long Way Around



**Barry Armitage**  
Norton News Editor

and was overwhelmed by the range and quality of the bikes on display.

A related change in the works moves the annual Turn Six event from Daytona's Bike Week to the Vintage Motorcycle Festival, since vintage racing will no longer be featured at Daytona. Turn Six, for those who have not attended, has been a meeting spot at for INOA members and their friends for years. Maggie Elmore and Barney Goodson are the hosts, with some help from attending members and friends. Turn Six is a great place to park your bike, sit down in the shade, and enjoy a cool drink. While Turn Six is being moved to Birmingham, Nortona will still be held during Bike Week. You can see an ad for Nortona in this issue. ■

## Barber Vintage Festival/ Turn Six Changes

I finally made it down to the Vintage Motorcycle Festival in Birmingham, Alabama, back in October, and it was worth the trip. This is an impressive event, and seems poised to compete with Vintage Motorcycle Days here in Ohio as a top-notch destination for vintage enthusiasts. The festival is held annually in October and includes vintage competition in virtually all AHRMA categories, a large swap meet and concours. Adjacent to the Barber Motorsports facility is the Barber Museum. This must rank among the best anywhere in the world. The restorations there are overseen by our own Brian Slark (INOA Tech Advisor). The Barber track and museum have been featured in all the major magazines and on TV. I spent several hours in the museum



Turn Six: Gene & Trina Cameron (TX), Maggie Elmore & Barn Goodson (FL), Keith Bennett (GA), Sharon & John Hannah (NC), Gary Damm (GA), Gary Seebon (OH), Brian Fink (CAN). Maggie credits Gary Damm with turning Turn Six from a "picnic" into a "destination event." (Photo by M. Elmore.)

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The final part of the Engine section of the *Tech Digest*

has a lot of useful information about the lubrication system. But quite a bit of it is out of date, and some is just plain wrong in my experience. For example, the discussion of oil pressure starts by claiming that normal hot pressure is 45 psi at 3-4000 rpm and 20 psi at idle. I've owned and maintained five Commandos, and have typically seen just 8-12 psi at idle. A later paragraph suggests that an oil pressure gauge is a good idea, and also mentions the hazards presented by the plumbing required: "you might want to carry

along whatever is necessary ... to disconnect and plug the gauge plumbing". I did have one fail years ago, and the front of the bike was drenched in hot oil before I noticed. So I now use a nice bright red oil warning light and a generic NAPA oil pressure switch. It comes on at around 10 psi and usually flickers a bit at idle with the bike and oil fully warmed up. There's no risk of leaks and I'm much more likely to notice it if there is an oil pressure problem.

Next, the section about the 750 breather isn't clear enough. I think the breather oiling problem the book refers to involves the tap from the crankcase breather that feeds into the air cleaner. These parts usually get clogged anyway and don't work with the K&N air filter many people use. So I recommend removing the T-piece and running the breather hose directly to the oil tank.

Speaking of the crankcase breather, the oil tightness of '72 and later engines can be greatly improved by installing an effective one-way valve in the large breather hose. This creates a partial vacuum in the crankcase, at least at lower rpm. I've used the Motormite 80190 plastic valve (\$6) for many years on all

## Alan's Wrench



**Alan Goldwater**  
Accessory Info & Evaluations

my Commandos, with very good results up to around 4500 rpm. They seem to hold up well and none of mine have needed replacement yet. I have heard a few reports of gradual deterioration, and even one of lost oil return although that seems very unlikely to be caused by a breather valve. VW part #191-611-933 can also be used, at about double the cost. For sustained high-rpm running, there are even better valves available, including a Yamaha XS650 reed valve, part #15-0677. There's also a very nice part made for CNW by Jim Comstock. It uses a dual reed valve and bolts

in place of the sump pickup body on the bottom of '72 motors. Other years will need the cases machined to fit.

Next there's a detailed instruction in the book on how to install an anti-wet sump valve inside the timing cover. This requires the skills of a machinist, and has seemed too tricky for me to try at home, though several shops have offered it as a service in the past, including AMR in Tucson. There are several external valves available, designed specifically for owner installation in the supply oil line. I like the one from Miles Classic Brake, sold through CNW, BBC and several other parts suppliers. It has a clear area in the body so you can see if the oil is still there. I've used one for a couple of years and it works fine.

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There are others types that have been reported not to work, and the consequences are serious, so make sure whatever you use is a good one.

The MkIII motor has an anti-wet sump plunger valve in the timing cover and it works – sometimes. After a while it seems to get stuck in the open position from gum deposits. Then the motor wet sumps just like the pre-'75 Commandos. Mine is freshly cleaned and

working and I don't have an external valve on that bike. When I recently did a top end rebuild on it, I measured just 0.0015 inch cylinder wear after 50k miles. So I put in new rings on the original pistons, and new valves and seals. I saw no wear at all on the original cam, not even the usual polish marks from the lifters. How is this possible? Well, I promised I wouldn't get into which oil is best, so I'll just say this motor has run on Redline for the last 40k miles. Draw your own conclusions. ■

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Well, it's definitely autumn now, the leaves are off the trees and I've been thinking a lot of Remembrance Day coming up. I've been burying myself in websites to do with places like Passchendaele, Vimy, Arras, Courcellette, Beaumont Hamel and other small villages on the First World War western front with bloody and tragic pasts. It makes for grim reading indeed, but this is the time of year when I try to, maybe just for a moment, put myself in the shoes of those brave lads who did the very best they could under the most trying circumstances. Rest easy brave boys in that quiet earth...

What has this to do with motorcycles? Well, not much to be honest but I thought I'd share that with you all. We do have though, here in Victoria, a genuine WW1 military motorcycle, a 1916 Indian with Lewis Gun carriage, complete with Lewis gun itself! What an astonishing find indeed, one of these days I'll try to get some pics for you all to look at.

I haven't been doing too much with regard to my own projects of late, but I have been assisting some friends with their own toils... One friend has masochistically decided that he wants to acquire most of the locally remaining Royal Enfield twins here in Victoria, so I've been over his place assisting this quest. We brought in a 1961 Super Meteor the other day to add to his three Interceptors (all MkIIs) and one Bullet... Poor thing, he has

## Nortons Under the Maple Leaf



Gary Parker  
CNOA Rep


this strange idea that they are as good as Nortons. Ah well, we will indulge his fantasy... Interesting engineering though, wish I had a Norton whereby one might be able to remove the camshafts without splitting the crankcases...hmmmm. They do come with Roadholders, those last MkII Interceptors, so it's slightly related to the topic at hand...

Other ongoing projects in this neck of the woods include my friend Mike's wrecked '73 Commando, turned into one morning by an idiot doing a U-turn in the middle of the high

street....This is a good and funny story though in some ways, the guy who cut Mike off confessed to my friend that he was actually a drug pedlar doing errands and would he mind very much if the cops weren't called, as after all he thought the "Biker" wouldn't want cops involved either...would he?? that caused some hilarity when Mike shared the tale. Needless to say, the cops were called... The bike, after taking some serious damage, is on the mend and it's going to be a stunner to be sure. So many parts required though and things aren't getting any cheaper...

Mike also has a '39 Panther 600 sloper which we hope to have firing by spring, we are struggling with parts over here but the project is slowly moving forward. (Anyone with prewar Panther bits they can spare is urged to get in touch!!!!) I am also working on a mid fifties AJS bitza right now, '54 engine, '51 frame, '55+ forks, numbered on the cases as a model 16M 350 but the barrel and piston are 500! well, it would appear that the bike was put together to sell, one of THOSE... It's going to make a fine special but getting things to match is out of the question at the moment. Yes, the garage is full up and it's going to hopefully be a productive winter in there. My apologies for all the non Norton chatter, but if all the bikes were Nortons we'd be in heaven wouldn't we?

I have been riding a fair bit because although it's been cold, the weather has been

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clear and dry on many days. The bike has developed an annoying chirping whistly sound that comes and goes, my first thoughts were related to head gasket leakage but since I have installed a primary belt on my Atlas my mind is moving towards that area. A quick check under the covers revealed nothing unusual, but Royal Enfield Frank also runs a belt and claims it can get pretty chirpy while underway. There may be something in this as the rubber bung over the clutch in the chaincase cover went for a walkabout a few weeks ago and it is possible that sounds that were previously muffled are becoming apparent with the lack of rubber... Certainly the bike has bags of compression and plenty of power, so I am thinking the head gasket is fine, careful examination with a flashlight between the fins shows no evidence of gases escaping the combustion chamber. I will be ordering a new bung and we'll see if the sound diminishes. There wasn't a hint of it on the way back from Lumby.

I have just received a kind email from David Pritchard of the Manitoba Norton Owners Club who sent me a gorgeous picture of a fine bevy of Commandos from the cold prairie, and promises to follow it up with pics of his singles. It's so nice to hear from folks who are doing such fine work with these old girls elsewhere in Canada. He's looking for various bits for a featherbed 650 project, so if you know of someone with bits, or you have some surplus to requirements, please let me know or contact him through the links page on the INOA site.

I don't have lot more to thrill you all with at the moment, but I am hoping that your workshops and garages are humming this winter with projects and plans to bring something to life for the coming spring. There's plenty of time to get that old single running, or refresh that old fastback or Dommie for the road. And who knows, depending where you are in this vast land, there might be some dry days with a clear sky and sunshine, where all one has to do is wrap up as warmly as possible and head out for a winter blast! Or have I been spoiled too long out here in lotusland with its mild climate for too long. New Years Day ride anyone?

Cheers to all, and if I don't type much before Christmas, have the merriest possible! ■

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## Seven Thousand Miles on a CNW Norton

“The trick is what one emphasizes. We either make ourselves miserable, or we make ourselves happy. The amount of work is the same.” – *Carlos Castaneda*

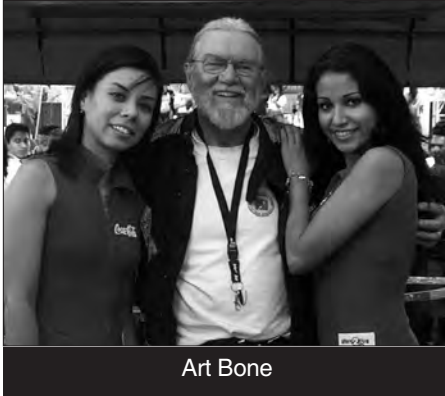
Dave Brock and I drove from Atlanta out to Delores, Colorado, and picked up my Colorado Norton Works #27 Norton in 2002. Since then I had only ridden it about 2000 miles, partly because for much of that time I was busy moving to Mexico as I described in my last article and, after I got here, I discovered the bike was almost unrideable on the cobblestone streets down here. Then as I was in the planning stages for the Lumby, British Columbia rally, Doug MaCadam came over from Baja for a visit and we got to talking about the bike. Doug was a principal in CNW when the bike was built and he explained that the bike had one inch shorter shocks on the back. That combined with the Progressive Springs on the front made the bike too low for conditions down here. The good news was that both things were easily fixed.

While I was doing all this I decided to change the rear wheel back to a 19- inch rim and change both tires to Dunlop K 81s. The difference was amazing. Suddenly the bike was very usable and visions of riding it to Lumby began to float through my head.

“Most adventure can be avoided by good planning.”

*\*Disclaimer: I have never taken the drug peyote nor do I advocate its use. I'm making a literary reference to Carlos Castaneda who wrote, "Nothing in this world is a gift. Whatever must be learned must be learned the hard way." — Art Bone*

## Peyote\* Dreams



Art Bone

*“Poor Mexico, so far from God,  
so close to the United States.” –*

*Porifiro Diaz*

Yellow Norton Fastback with a '75 e-start engine. I've got new, black, Cortech luggage, tank bag, and roll pack. I'm wearing my Hein Gericke Street Pilot leathers with a Norton patch on the back and a black Nolan flip-front helmet with Isle of Man decals on the side.

I'd be lying to you if I said I didn't look good.

Peter was riding my DL 1000 V Strom and we made good time up to San Luis Potosi where we stopped for a late lunch. A light rain started falling so, after we finished eating; we put on the raingear and started out again.

I don't name motorcycles and I don't refer to them as “he” or “she.” They're not pets or humans. I find this affectation precious and annoying but I almost named the Norton the first few times I rode it. It seemed every time I got over five miles from the garage it would start raining. Georgia was in one of the longest droughts in history and it would start raining. I almost named it “The Rain Maker.” It was looking like it still had its magic.

The rain abated after about 15 minutes but, a hundred miles later as we approached Matahula, dark clouds were building up

I don't know who said that but it probably explains why I've led such an adventurous life. I hate planning. That's not really true. I hate to get locked into a bunch of reservations and meet-ups that people are expecting me to do, then not being able to do them. I like to let the trip flow and go with the flow.

My friend Peter Woods wanted to ride with me part of the way to the border. I told him to be over at my house at 9:30 AM. Of course, we finally threw a leg over the bikes about two hours late.

Here's the picture.  
I'm riding a Corvette



This is Mike Pumphrey's bike. Mike lives in Mexico City but he and his wife Loretta bought a house right up the street from me last year. When his real estate agent sent me an email that he had sold a house to a guy with a Norton I thought, "What are the chances of that?" Turns out it was true. (Photo by A. Bone.)



Mike's Fastback e-start. (Photo by A. Bone.)

ahead of us. I could see the big sign for Las Palmas hotel and knew there was nothing past there until we got to Saltillo, 200 miles farther. I also knew Los Palmas has clean, comfortable rooms with shelters to park the bikes under, a nice restaurant, and really, really good margaritas. It was time to stop for the night.

The sun was bright and the temperature was cool the next morning when we started out. I called a stop at the first Pemex gas station and asked Peter if he wanted to ride the Norton a bit. I had seen pictures of him on a Dominator back in New Zealand in his younger days so I figured he would have no problem "switching feet" to the Norton's right foot, one up - three down shift pattern. Sure enough, he had no problem at all and soon I was basking in the sounds that wafted from the pea-shooter exhausts as the Norton hit its sweet spot a little under 70 MPH.

The early morning sun was behind us as we motored across the high desert valley; Yucca forests as far as we could see marched up the sides of mountain ranges miles away on each side. The sky was so blue it faded to purple near the horizon. Three or four weeks ahead with nothing to do but ride a cool old motorcycle, visit with friends old and new, and search for great roads with beautiful scenery. Does it get any better?

I had a great sense of well-being, peace, and contentment as I felt myself settling into the ride. Those feelings would be dashed be-

fore the day was out but they were *my agradable* while they lasted.

*"The adventure starts when the bike stops."*  
 - Ted Simon

Peter and I parted company at a Pemex just below Saltillo and I headed up into the dreaded border region of Mexico where, if you listen to the US news media, there are grisly murders and beheadings every day.

There had been a hurricane the week before that left some of the roads to the east washed out but I thought I was far enough west to avoid all that. Turns out I was wrong. As I crested a hill I saw a small river flowing over the road ahead. At least a quarter mile of water was between me and where I wanted to go. I watched a few cars and trucks cross and it didn't look very deep so I decided to chance it.

Turns out I was wrong again. I got about half way across and suddenly my boots filled up with water and the engine stopped. I pushed the Norton the rest of the way across and tried to restart it. No joy. About the third try the battery started going down. I tried a few kicks and only wore myself out. Then I decided to take the point cover off and dry out

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the Boyer, only to discover that I hadn't brought the proper allen wrench.

I sat down on the shady side of the Norton to contemplate my situation. There were no trees, no houses, no nothing for as far as I could see except an occasional cactus; just the road and the river running across it. It wasn't quite the middle of nowhere but, if you stood on tip-toes, you could see the middle in the near distance.

As I sat there wondering what my next move was, a car stopped and backed up. Two young men got out and the driver said, in excellent English, "What's your problem?"

I explained the drowning out and the almost flat battery.

He said, "Well, what do you want to do?"

I said, "Hell, I don't know. What would you suggest?"

He said, "Do you want to go to the next town?"

I said, "Sure, but we need a truck. We can't haul the bike in your car."

He said, "I'll get us a truck."

With that he turned around and flagged down the next truck that came by. It was a four-door Ford F 150 and the four guys inside picked up the bike, put it in the bed, and away we went. When we got to the little town of Sabinas we tried pushing the bike and it started and ran a bit but quit and we couldn't get it to start again. Finally after all six of them

screwing around for two or three hours, they found me a hotel room near an AutoZone and we gave up for the night.

When I offered them money they wouldn't take anything. I had wasted at least three hours of their time and they wouldn't take a cent. I couldn't believe it.

The next morning I bought and installed a new battery and the bike cranked but didn't run very well, so I went back to AutoZone and bought a set of Allen wrenches and pulled the point cover. I didn't detect any moisture but the bike instantly started running perfect again.

I had the easiest border crossing I ever had that afternoon. Because of the floods and the bridges out there was almost no traffic in either direction. The officer asked me where I was from and where I was going and waved me through. I slept the sleep of the innocent in Del Rio, Texas that night.

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I love the desolation of west Texas and southern New Mexico. Every time I go through there I think of the movie "Lonesome Dove" and what it must have been like 200 years ago. At one point I stopped in a little settlement to take a break and smelled gas. When I looked down, gas was gushing out of a broken fuel line. I did a roadside repair and stopped at the next AutoZone and replumbed the fuel system in their parking lot.

I was about 100 miles from Albuquerque when I noticed the red alternator light. It was dim at first but got brighter the farther I went. I turned off the headlight and soldiered on to a hotel north of town, where I spent the night anxiously wondering what the next day would bring. I stopped at the AutoZone and bought a small battery charger. Buying AutoZone stock was beginning to look like a sound financial move. The rest of the day I would stop for gas and find a place to plug in the charger and charge the battery. I limped into Cortez, Colo. and collapsed into bed.

The next morning at Colorado Norton Works, Matt and Gary installed a Sparx three-phase alternator and a new triplex chain and there was joy in the world again. David Brock showed up from Atlanta; the next morning we set out for Lumby.

The next few days are sort of a blur now. We left Cortez and took a beautiful road through red rock canyons to Grand Junction, then cut across the north-east corner of Utah and rode through Flaming Gorge National Park, passed through Jackson Hole and rode the length of Yellowstone Park, rode over Beartooth Pass in company with hundreds of Harleys attending a rally in Red Lodge. It was great fun passing long lines of them.

I had some problems with the tags and insurance on the Norton so I called Rob Snow in Missoula Montana, whom I didn't know until I picked his name out of the PSM a few weeks before I left for the rally, and he graciously allowed me to have some documents sent to his house. We stopped by and looked at all his projects and had a great Mexican meal. This is further confirmation of my theory that Norton people are not just the best motorcycle people in the world but also the best people in the world.

We crossed into Canada with no problems and made the big push to get to the rally in the early afternoon. We called Tom and Peter Hill, coming up by a slightly different route. We thought if we hurried we could catch them and ride in together.

It was not to be. We were about two miles out of a small village when the Norton began running rough. I pulled over and it stalled. No headlight, no horn, no starter. The battery was absolutely flat. After two hours of screwing around we got a battery from the auto parts store in the little village and I rode the rest of the way to Lumby in a very reflective mood.

I had reservations in the Lumby Hotel which Suzi and everyone else said didn't exist. Everyone thought it was like the Bates Motel from Psycho, or the Roach Motel ("They check in but they never check out.") Dave and I christened it the Better Than Jail Motel and actually it wasn't bad. Well, unless you want hot water and air conditioning. It had a bar and a good breakfast restaurant downstairs and that goes a long way towards mitigating its other shortcomings. Also, it cost \$35 a night. "Sumptuous" doesn't quite describe it but I think "Quiet Elegance" comes close.

The next day I checked the charging system with my VOM meter and everything checked out. Then I went down to the auto parts store (sadly, not an AutoZone) and bought a volt meter and rigged it up above the oil pressure gauge where I could see it. I took the bike out for a ride and after a few minutes it began charging at over 18 volts. That explained what had happened to the battery the day before. It got fried.

Luckily, I had saved the Zener diode from the previous stock setup so I reinstalled that

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and saved myself another roadside repair and another battery.

I'll spare you my account of the rally since I spent more time planning on the 3500 mile trip home than going on group rides.

Dave and I decided to take Mike Porcarelli's kind offer of a bed for the night because I wanted to do the Road to the Sun in Glacier National Park, which was snowed-in the last time I was through that part of the country. About 30 miles from Mike's house the bike started running rough. By this time I know the sound of a Boyer pick-up plate going bad. I pulled the point cover off and it started running fine again. Mike offered to sell me his spare and we installed it next morning and the ignition was perfect the rest of the trip.

Many times on this trip I had people walk all the way across a gas-station parking lot to comment on my bike. Once in New Mexico a man and his wife stopped and backed up a quarter mile to look at it. But in the whole trip, only once did another biker even mention it. Outside of Provo Utah, Dave and I were huddled under a gas-station overhang, waiting for the rain to stop when a guy rode up on a BMW 1200 GS with his 12 year old daughter on back. He came over and was really impressed that anyone would be out touring on a 40 year old bike. While we were there he asked his daughter if she was up for riding all the way home from there which was about 1000 miles and she said "Sure." She was a trouper.

I wonder if the reason no one notices it is that it still looks sort of modern, with the Fast-back tailpiece, plus I had throw over bags and a tank bag so you couldn't really see the tank and tailpiece so much. Maybe it just looks like a small modern motorcycle to most people.

Dave and I parted company in Green River UT, he headed east back to Atlanta and I drove down to CNW where they installed a new regulator and my problems seem solved. The rest of the trip was just riding (nothing wrong with that!).

Since I've been back I've been pondering "What does it all mean," or "What would I have done differently?" Well, first and most importantly, I wouldn't have crossed that river flowing across the road. Nortons don't like water, especially water up over the logo in the ignition side cover. I'm going to seal the

points case so no water can get in there. If, as the manual says, the hole is there to let oil from the cam seal leak out, what about replacing the seal? I'm positive that almost all my problems stemmed from that soaking and I won't ever do that again, if it means I have to go 300 miles out of the way.

The second thing is that you can't cover as much ground on an old bike as a new one. I do a lot of long trips on a big 1000 CC dual sport and regularly do 500 or 600 mile days. I can't do that on a Norton. About 250 is a good day. It's not that the bike can't do it. I can't do it. The good part of that is take your time, visit places you've read about, stop by and see friends old and new and just enjoy the trip. That's what touring on an old bike should be.

Another thing I found is that I really like the way the bike looks and handles with 19 inch K81s front and rear. It feels much "crisper" on turn-in and I just think it looks right.

The final thought I have about the suitability of the bike for such a long trip is this:

Think of all the things that could have gone wrong and didn't. Nothing fell off the bike, the exhaust clamps stayed tight, the mufflers are still on it, it never smoked, it cranked every time (when the battery had juice,) ethanol didn't eat through the Fiberglas tank, and it cruised at 70 and got 50 miles per gallon. But the main thing to me was that I was smiling every morning when it was time to mount up. It was a blast to ride, especially on the twisty parts.

All this was just a "test ride" to make sure the bike would make it through La Carrera Panamericana. This is a 60-year-old race (or rally) for old cars from the '50s and '60s. They've recently added a "non-racing" class for motorcycles. Don't believe that part about "non-racing." You can ride as fast as you like on closed roads with cops blocking the side roads and waving you on.

The race is seven days long and starts near the Guatemalan border and finishes in Zacatecas, about 400 miles northwest of San Miguel. The day stages are usually about 250 miles of really beautiful roads through some of the most spectacular scenery Mexico has to offer.

I'll tell you about that next time. ■

# Canadian Rep Election

All Canadian members of the INOA are urged to review the following submittals and respond to Judy Fortier by email (auntjude@hotmail.com) or regular mail (POB Lavigne, ON Canada, or before January 15 regarding his or her preference for the new CNOA Rep. All responses must include the member's name and membership number. The CNOA Rep is responsible for communication among the Canadian chapters of the INOA and serves as the liaison between those chapter (and individual members) and the INOA.

## Nick Jordan

My name is Nick Jordan, and I have been riding for 38 years (starting in England) and consider myself to be an addicted motorcyclist. My interest is in all aspects of the sport of motorcycling, and of late, specifically in older machines. As a driver and motorcycle rider road test examiner I am fortunate to be able to 'enjoy' motorcycling whilst at work; well, in the summer, anyway! I used to be a riding instructor and ran my own rider training school, In Pursuit Motorcycle Rider Training.

I consider myself an expert on motorcycling in general, as a result of my life experience as a rider. I have been passionate about Norton motorcycles since I started riding, but circumstances precluded me from owning one until 2005. I now own a 1971 Commando Roadster which has been undergoing an 'upgrade' over the past few years. Fettleing is one of my favorite pastimes, so in an attempt to improve its usability. I have totally re-wired it, including installing turn signals, replaced many bodged and battered fasteners with stainless, upgraded to the later vernier adjustment Isolastics, installed an aftermarket head steady and a pair of Bruce Chessell's excellent easy-fill stainless fork caps, and a Pazon electronic ignition. It is my hope to ride to the national rally in New York next summer.

As far as being involved in hobby, club, or work related activities: I was President of a local running club and actively involved in the organization of the club and its activities, including contributing regular columns in the club newsletter. I was Chair of the British Columbia Paraoptometric Association with all of the responsibilities attached to the position.

The annual 'Motogiro BC' classic bike ride/rally is my 'baby'. This is a non-brand-specific event for all older machines, with points being awarded incrementally for age (the older the machine,

## Colin Kelly

My name is Colin Kelly. I was born in Wolverhampton, UK in 1955, I have been a Canadian citizen since 1994. These days I reside in Courtenay, Vancouver island, British Columbia, with my partner, Penny Leslie.

I could be the right guy to carry on from Gary Parker as the Canadian Rep. Gary will also be my reference for the position. Penny is very keen to help me; she is very computer literate.

We had a great time at Nortorious Rally which was Penny's introduction to the Norton rally scene. What a great ride and great people as always. My first INOA rally was at Lake Tahoe in 1991.

I owned my first Commando new in 1974 when I was 19, which is when I also first joined the NOC. Nortons have played a large part in my life ever since. I'm sure I can amuse you all with my exploits at rallies and many years on the road, as well as the current Canadian scene. I saw a lot of the Commandos we ride, lined up at the Norton Villiers factory at Marston road, Wolverhampton and knew many people that worked there. I have learned the mechanics of Norton twins over the years and what I know is based on personal experience. I should also tell you that I'm not a know-it-all, or a collector. I am just a genuine, down-to-earth Norton motorcyclist and have a distaste for club politics and people who seem obsessed on changing everything. I like the INOA just as it is, great bikes and real people. My aim would be to keep it that way, because I believe that's the type of people we are. If anything I say strikes a chord with you, please consider me for the position of Canadian Rep

*Yours sincerely,*

*Colin Kelly* ■

the more points) and engine size (the smaller the engine capacity, the more points). This year marked the fourth Motogiro BC, which was actually held in Calgary, Alberta. Long story!

I have excellent interpersonal skills and am comfortable with the use of communications media: computer, fax, telephone.

Why am I interested in the CNOA Representative position? The above brief overview of my motorcycling background shows, I hope, that this is more than a passing fad for me. I enjoy giving back to the motorcycle riding community, and this position would help

me to do so whilst being actively involved with my favourite motorcycle brand. I am always interested in meeting and communicating with new people and having Norton motorcycles thrown into the mix makes it all the more exciting.

*Respectfully submitted.*

*Nick Jordan ■*



### *INOA Notorious Rally Regalia Sale*

Note: Due to an incredible response to our logo wear at the rally, special orders for ball caps, T-shirts and fleece jackets will be accepted until September 15<sup>th</sup>. The following prices are the same as at the rally but will include a \$10.00 surcharge to cover packaging and shipping:

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*Email: [bill\\_sarjeant@telus.net](mailto:bill_sarjeant@telus.net)*



## A NORTON MOMENT

There was definitely some strange ju-ju going on as Peggy and I packed up to leave the Legend of the Motorcycle concours a couple of weekends ago. After the Sunday-morning ride to Alice's Restaurant (nice après-concours touch by the organizers), I'd pulled my high-pipe Dreer Commando into the front courtyard of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. "Cool Norton," said one of the valets, "Park it right there, sir, next to the Mercedes." But of course...

As purchased: The Commando 850 after I bought it and before it went off to Kenny Dreer's Vintage Rebuilds to be transformed into a VR880 Sport Scrambler.

The plan was to complete check-out, have the valets pull around the big white CW van, and while the bellman loaded up our bags, I'd roll the Norton into the back of the Chevy right there in the courtyard, in front of the Sunday brunchers arriving in their luxu-cages. Might as well have some fun for my \$40 a night (!) parking fee.

Loading ramp strapped in place, I fired up the Norton (one of Dreer's upgrades is fitment of a Harley electric-start motor) and guided it into the back of the van. About

three-quarters of the way in, though, the motor stalled.

From behind me came a, "Need some help, buddy?" Pretty familiar for a valet, I thought, but the added assistance was appreciated and the Norton slotted into its wheel chock without further incident. I pivoted around to thank the nice young man with a few dollar tip, but it turned out to be actor and motorcycle nut Perry King, also checking-out after attending the concours. We'd never met, but we had a connection—and it sitting right there in the van.

And as beefcake prop: Perry King, circa 1994, strikes a pose on the Commando in a photo lifted from a fan website, which lifted it from a magazine spread.

"Hi, Perry, I'm David Edwards from *Cycle World*," I said, offering my hand. "Sure. Very nice to meet you," he replied. "Hey, you bought my old Norton some years back, right?" I confirmed that in 1996 I had indeed purchased a 40,000-mile 1974 Commando Interstate that once belonged to him.

King continued, "Yeah, I bought it from a guy who couldn't kickstart it, and when I couldn't kickstart it I sold it to (mutual friend) Joe Columbero, who couldn't kickstart it..." I picked up the thread, "...who sold it to me,

*From the Cycle World Staff Blog, 5/22/2006*





Perry King (above), former owner of Dave's Commando; (upper right) the MkIII as Dave received it, and in its current state (right) as a Dreer VR 880. (Photos courtesy of D. Edwards.)



who added an electric starter, and there it is," I said pointing to the bike.

"That's my old bike?! No! It's beautiful!"

I'm not sure what kind of weird planetary alignment occurred that placed the Norton's former owner in the same hotel at the exact moment that I needed help loading it, but I'm not going to argue with kismet. After some small talk, Perry climbed into his car and hit the road. I'm happy to report it was not a

Mercedes, but rather a mud-encrusted Jeep with a well-used Suzuki DR on the bumper rack.

—David Edwards ■

## Norton SS880 Sport Scrambler

If you've ridden just about every motorcycle ever built, you're going to be pretty selective when it comes to your own ride. In the case of former *Cycle World* editor David Edwards, that motorcycle is a custom Norton built by Kenny Dreer.

Edwards recently got his Norton back after some fettling. "After ten years of use, it needed some detail tidying up," he says. "It's a unique bike in that it was one of the first VR880s that Dreer worked on, and also one of the last." Work started in 1999 after *Cycle World* did a story on Dreer, who was turning out ultra-clean hot-rodded Commandos from his Portland, Oregon, workshop. (According to Edwards, said workshop was "actually half of a drafty barn shared with goats and an old mare.") Rather than commission one of Dreer's preferred café jobs, Edwards commissioned what he calls an SS880 Sport Scrambler. "This followed what some Nortonians call an 'Interback' formula," Ed-

wards explains, "with an Interstate gas tank and Fastback seat section, but adding the zoomy up-pipes from the S model."

All went well for a few years until a blown base gasket (the 880 pumps out about 50% more power than a stocker) forced a return to Dreer's shop. There it got all the mod-cons that have become available since the original build: an electric starter, Marzocchi forks, a box-section swingarm and Auto Meter instruments.

Dreer's profile has been on the rise again with the introduction of the 'new' Commando in the U.K., which Edwards describes as "basically a productionized version of Dreer's 961. Who knows how far that project will go? Me, I wonder what might have happened if Kenny had stuck to perfecting the VR880 instead of designing a whole new Norton."

(from *bikeexif.com*) ■

## Sump Wrenches

A water heater wrench for electric heater elements works well as a sump wrench. It has the same 1-1/2" size, 6 point configuration. They typically have a small bar about 4" long that goes through the socket for turning. Light weight and small enough for traveling.

*John Taylor*

## Norton Keys

It took me a while of messing around on the MySecurityPro.com website to find the blank numbers for Norton keys. Norton ignition key blank is 62FS. The fork lock key blank is R62DM. These are not "Made in England" but the work.

*Joe Schuman*

## Rust Prevention

Picklex-20 is good for preventing rust. Painters use this stuff to coat sanded bare metal auto body parts that might lay around a while before being primed. It really works. Check out Picklex20.com or call (256) 650-0088. They're based in Huntsville, Alabama.

## Origin of the "Commando" Namesake

The first Commando was a post-WWII Famous James powered by a Villiers two-stroke. Brother to the James Captain. I think it was 98 cc of brute engine capacity and the latter was a 125.... but I could have that backwards. Both were capable of carrying an office worker to and from the station or to work — or a daring housewife to the shops — but were not known for high performance, even within their class.

*Charles Lipton*

## Commando Exhaust

To get more out of the stock Commando is not just an exhaust issue. My experience with over-sized ID exhaust systems (on a race bike) was mixed at best. Not knowing the overall condition of your engine, your riding habits, style, etc. it is difficult to suggest where to start.

# Tech Tips

First I would look at your (the engine's) head. make sure the intake flow from carburetor and manifold flange to head is even and without any rough or uneven transi-

tions. I used machinist's dye and a dental probe to scratch in the areas to be removed with a Dremel tool, file or rasp. Don't try to polish the intake, it is a waste of time and you can go backwards doing that.

Generally speaking I got the best results from a 2 into 1 system. If memory serves me well, the best off the shelf (performance) street set up came from MAC. The best race application was shop built with the assistance of an USAF engineer. If you want a stock system, I'd suggest a "S" type (high and exiting on the left side) set up. I tried an over sized "SS" system and lost top end. Not what you want on a race bike..

You may also pick up some HP gain by having your new system's interior treated with a high quality ceramic coating like the one "Jet Hot" provides. A friend's Bonneville had his new stainless steel pipes treated this way and is very happy with the outcome. They will not treat used pipes as I've been told. Keep in mind that flow is everything. The exhaust valves are smaller by design. As the exhaust pipes are to the intake valves and manifolds.

Also a word from Lord Kelvin will apply to your endeavor: "Large increases in cost with questionable increases in performance can be tolerated only for race horses and fancy women."

*Breed*

The science of exhaust systems is quite complex; remember that the exhaust is a TUNED component of your engine, Just like tuned headers on performance cars.

Small diameter pipes help scavenge the combustion chamber and in some cases produce MORE power as it helps draw in new fuel and air.

Bigger pipes are for higher RPM apps and when you need to flow volume, such as a Race bike that spends its time at 7,000 rpm.

Smaller diameter produces more torque in the lower rpm ranges (Where most bikes on the street need it) There is considerable discussion and theories about port velocity and flow where you step down the pipe diameter after the head and then open it back up in a megaphone, there's a lot of discussion about length of the pipe for optimum tuning, and after all,, what kind of cam you have in there.

Typically,, most Nortons came with very restrictive mufflers,, that was politics not performance, US federal noise restrictions and emissions in the future.

Then we could discuss the cross over tube some are fitted with...they are not that attractive on bikes but they DO work, they help scavenge as well, and produce more torque down low I fitted some to my hot rod Chevy many years ago after some articles in Car craft, and they were right, I could physically FEEL the difference, dyno tests prove that fact, Motorcycles don't see as big of a gain, but it IS there. Ironically, most accounts show that the crossovers were employed to dampen exhaust notes for noise control as the principle reasons the factories used them (BSA, Norton Triumph) but they do boost low end a bit.

Norton had a variety of pipe styles, consult your factory parts book, Roadster, Hi-Rider, Interstate, Police, S type, etc. the Roadster pipes are the easiest to source.




The problem is two-fold, quality, price and availability, and then, final fitment.

Norvil, RGM, Armour's and others offer pretty decent quality, In my experience the BEST quality pipes I ever fitted were the Viking pipes from that fellow in New Zealand? Old Brits supplied them at the time, and both times the owners didn't care about the price, (but they are not cheap) but they were swept back style, and the quality was excellent, chrome, pipe material, and fitment was well above average.

Price and very limited production volume are the 2 cons with Viking EMGO is now making "Economy" priced pipes, and they are very affordable, I wouldn't count on long term chrome quality, but the prices are very attractive.

Price quality availability, Pick ANY 2 but you are unlikely to get all 3, and by the way, we overcharge every 3rd customer to pass the savings onto you! Fitting is a topic in itself, I'll say the rule of British bike rebuilding is that you should EXPECT the parts won't fit

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right, need rework, take longer to source than expected and cost more than you would like to admit, But Nortons present their own issues..

The Norton Heads are very inconsistent. the castings varied widely, I've sampled 7 heads here at my shop and everyone was different, I've worked factory production in Aerospace castings, all parts have to hit certain targets for standards, I'd say Nortons were some pretty loose standards as there's so many variables its crazy. But you will find that pipes can be a REAL challenge to fit and make look good, they rarely hang the same as viewed from the rear (typically one higher than the other) they hit stuff on the frame, pegs, swingarms etc, and almost ALL of them seem to foul the kicker, Kick start banging is very common and people really struggle fitting them where they don't hit, I used to have a heavy work bench at our old shop and in the 6 inch thick counter tops I made dowel holes, and would setup posts and pipes to "Tweak" pipes to fit, it's a slow tedious process to tweak them without marring the finish or crimp or kink a tube, long cheater bars and lots of grunting and groaning.

Also check out original early factory pipes, fanatical rivet counters covet these. If you look, the part that fits into the exhaust port is welded onto the pipe where it then necks down to a smaller OD/ID. If you look carefully, they look crooked and sloppy—repop pipes don't have that, But restoration types will search for original pipes and rechrome them to preserve this visual defect...lastly, mufflers redux, the reverse cones the factory used on most 750s is the most common and there are several manufacturers of them, but they also used the large ungainly black caps mostly on later 850s, some people like them but to me IMHO they are the worst muffler ever plus (massively restrictive), There are very cheaply priced replica Dunstall mufflers, I use them a lot, they come in shorts and longs, they also typically feature re-

movable baffles, which is cool, you can pack them with stainless steel for damping or remove them altogether for a roaring jaunt.

*Doug McGuire*

A review of *Scientific Design of Exhaust & Intake Systems* by Smith & Morrison (ISBN 0-8376-0309-9) will be illuminating.

Briefly described, a pipe will affect a given engine in several ways: Tuned length is applied to the theory that the open end of a pipe will 'reflect' a positive pressure wave back to the exhaust valve that, with use of a cam having a large timing overlap will stuff a bit of fresh mixture back into the cylinder before the exhaust valve closes, thereby improving performance. Open, reverse cone megaphones seem to enhance this backward stuffing. Back pressure is a factor that works both for and against the engine depending on RPM. A larger pipe produces greater back pressure than a smaller. A longer pipe offers greater back pressure than a shorter. A possibly workable theory is that when the exhaust valve opens, an initial slug of hot gas is sent into the pipe, and the inertia generated by this slug will assist in cylinder evacuation including the incoming charge.

It's generally considered that the use of a muffler will negate all of the above to greater or smaller degree, but a muffler that you can look through is better than one that you cannot (A baffled muffler will KILL a Commando). A large diameter pipe will be noisier on a given engine than will be a smaller pipe. OEM Commandos can usually be run on the street sans muffler. Surprisingly quiet with

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OEM pipes. The Dunstall type mufflers were sold with a perforated screen spotwelded across the airflow at about 6" in from the front end, a very good thing to remove.

Dunstall's answer was to bring both 1-5/8" (?) pipes together about 10-12 inches below the flange nuts into a 1 3/4" pipe run centrally under the power unit, then splitting that one into two 1 3/4" pipes feeding two mufflers in the OEM Roadster location. A local back road burner consistently much quicker than I uses this exhaust.

A mechanical factor worth mentioning is that Commandos give the threads in the head a very bad time due to the extreme leverage applied by the long pipes and heavy mufflers. The 850s used a crossover pipe in order to improve the stability of the head to pipe juncture as well as to partially split the noise between the two mufflers, but that design created cracking of the welds, and perhaps lower performance. My own theory is that the use of smaller diameter pipes allowed more flex, thereby reducing the strain on the threads in the head.

A thing to be aware of is that some aftermarket pipes will have the lower bend too far forward, leading to touch down in the slower turns. Don't Ask Me How I Know.....

*Frank Forster*

**Tire Confusion**

A tube that's too large can give you problems. When installed, it will have overlapping creases which will abrade the tube due to casing flex. When abraded enough, a hole will develop. I've never had a "too small" tube fail due to stretch, but I've seen to it that an under-

sized tube used by me was not too undersized. For me, it's always been an "eyeball" fit. Tubes matched by size from the same manufacturer as the casing can be relied upon, but tubes made by various manufacturers vary widely size for size.

**Spindle Removal**

Once the spindle has been accessed it may be difficult to remove. The shop manual suggest the front motor mount pass through stud could be used as an aid in removing the spindle because it would fit into the spindle's treaded opening. Removing the engine mount center stud seemed a bit more than I wanted to do, so I looked around the shop and found that the clutch hub tool center bolt also fit into the swing arm spindle. I also found that this bolt would pass through the square opening in a 1/2 inch drive socket. I matched up a 1/2 inch drive socket with the outside of the swingarm. This is where the shoulder of the bronze bushing can be seen. In my case a 1-1/8" socket worked. I added spacers one at a time. A flat washer first and then the nuts that accompany the clutch tool were added. A drop of oil against the spacers and the socket insured that there would be no unnecessary drag. It is important to start with one spacer. This will ensure that the bolt seats well into the spindle and not strip out. I turned the bolt with a box wrench and found that the spindle began to come out. Spacers were added, you must remove the bolt from the spindle to add spacers, until the spindle was free enough to be removed by hand. Also, it is important that the socket used rest upon the swing arm frame

and not the face of the bronze bushing. Sintered bronze bushings remain one of our best friends, however, they are, as I'm certain you know, easily cracked or crushed.

Again, Thank You for all your help and efforts.

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*Jim May*

### Visors

You can use Lemon Pledge Wipes, a portable version of Lemon Pledge, to clean your visor on the road. The pre-moistened towelettes fit in a pocket. They come 18 to a bag, but you can put just a few in a resealable bag.

*Richard Florence (from the "Norton Colorado" newsletter)*

### Powdercoating Frames

Powdercoat is in essence, "plastic" particles released from an electrostatic gun that "float" to the grounded article being coated, and "stick" long enough to be transferred to the baking oven where temperatures are raised enough to melt and fuse the particles into a continuous "plastic" film. Unless certain very high temp products are used, there is little actual adhesion or bonding to the underlying metal. Any chip will admit moisture which will sweat its way well under the powdercoat and cause rusting. For this reason, it is very important to precoat with a rust inhibiting primer or base coat. I would be strongly investigating using a zinc enriched primer of some sort that is compatible with the powder coat and the high temperatures involved.

Having said all of that, I think my next frame job might be done with POR product,

which sticks like you know what, is quite chip resistant, is easily touched up (either by spray or a touchup brush) and is rust inhibiting. Has a good gloss finish too.

*Jay in NZ*

### Painting a Commando Frame

I have used PPG 2-part with clear coat. PPG has their primer for their two-part paint product as well. The product was easy to spray and looks good

*John*

### Oil pump Rebuild

I always use a gasket from the pump to the engine case. It slows down wetsumping a little. A little Locktight on the nuts would be good, too. You don't need to stake them.

If the pump is that stiff you took off too much but that is not a problem. Just get some extra fine lapping compound and put a bit on the gears and work it around until it frees up. I have used Comet and done it in the sink with some water to wet the Comet and wash it away as you turn it.

*Jim Comstock*

### Ammeter Wiring

For a bike without an ammeter, there will be two wires to the negative post on the battery (or a junction in the negative battery wire). One would be the negative charging



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wire (black) from the Tympanium and the other would be the feed to the ignition switch. The negative wire from the Tympanium and the feed wire to the switch need to stay connected together. From the junction of these two wires a wire will need to go to one post of the ammeter. The other post of the ammeter will go directly to the negative post of the battery preferably through a fuse.

*Jim Comstock*

### Red Rubber Grease Substitute

I have found that P-80 Lubricant Emulsion (Size: 10 ml Small Plastic Tube) is good for preserving/installing rubber parts. A little bit goes a long way, and I keep it around all the time. They have the standard thin stuff or the thicker stuff that hangs around a little longer. You can actually push Isolastics in by hand with either one. They're original use was for tires. I have used it on dirt bike tires and found you could put them on without a tire iron on some rims. They also have some stuff that leaves an adhesive when it dries, just right for handgrips and peg rubbers. Got to <http://www.ipcol.com> for more information, or call 609-386-8770 for find where it can be ordered or purchased locally.

*Jim Comstock*

I used to use a lot of "Kent" brand products that work extremely well. A product called Air Gap Sealer, a black, alcohol soluble, goop in a tube works wonders for primary cover O ring oil leaks, etc. Doesn't harden, stays soft and sticky, light smear on gasket surfaces would stop most all oil seepage, easily removable, but messy.

Ford Motor has a good line of odd lubricants, sealers, adhesives, etc. Priced decently. Especially like "Ford Dielectric Grease" for Lucas bullet style connectors. Tube lasts forever.

*Doug Kowalske*

### Tubes

The "brand name" tubes may offer a bit more security due to more precise manufacturing controls, but I really can't offer any evidence of this.

When I had a retail shop in the '70s, we always recommended new tubes with every tire change for liability reasons, preferring the then popular Michelin "Airstop" brand, and I kept the old tubes, which are now what I use personally.

I often use tubes that I recognize as being made in the '60s or '70s. I overinflate them before installation to show up flaws such as rot caused by sun exposure or creases from long term uninflated storage. I consistently find old tubes stored under the house to be just fine if not rotted, and now store them slightly inflated. If stored inflated for a time, I'm assured of their integrity.

*Frank Forster* ■

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## New from Bracebridge Street Depot

Bracebridge Street Depot now has a stock of DVDs containing the scanned pages of the Norton News from issue #1 through #155. This DVD replaces the older CD-ROM that contained scanned copies of the Norton News issues #1 - #44.

This product is offered as a companion to the Tech Digest, which refers readers on some topics to specific articles in the Norton News. It also contains a wealth of information about club activities in years past as well as informative articles not tied to the Tech Digest.

The new DVD is designed to play on most modern computers but will not play on most home entertainment DVD players; check the capabilities of your equipment before ordering. "Norton News #1 - 155" is available for \$40, which includes all shipping, etc.

Bracebridge Street Depot also has a supply of 2011 Norton calendars as produced by the NOC in England. These are the same size as in previous years (about 17" x 11"); wall mount style with 12 classic Nortons. Price is \$23 each which includes shipping, etc.

Print an order form at the Bracebridge web site [www.bracebridge-street.com](http://www.bracebridge-street.com) or link to it through the main INOA site [www.inoanorton.com](http://www.inoanorton.com). Send your order to: Bracebridge Street Depot c/o Jim Evans 304 May Ave Glen Ellyn IL 60137 Cash, check or money order only - payable to "USNOA". No credit cards or other electronic payment available. These DVD's are advertised on the website and this offer is for shipment to North America only.

## Norton in Talks with Inmotec Over MotoGP Engine Supply

According to on-line reports, the rule changes coming for the 2012 MotoGP season are generating a lot of interest from new manufacturers interested in entering the series.

Current Moto2 chassis builders FTR, Kalex and Suter are all believed to be working on chassis for use in the so-called CRT bikes, machines based around production engines, while BMW and Aprilia are also rumored to

# Notes

be looking at entering the class once the capacity returns to 1000cc.

Shortly after the Brno round of MotoGP, news emerged that Stuart Garner, the man behind the resurrected Norton brand, had obtained two grid slots for the 2012 MotoGP championship.

The company's plans, it was believed, revolved around taking the 1000cc four-cylinder engine which will form the basis of a high-performance sports bike to be introduced in either 2011 or 2012, and race it as part of a plan to promote Norton as a performance brand. The engines were to be built by Menard Competition Technologies, but rumors emanating from the UK's F1 corridor - an area of the central UK stretching from Aylesbury in the southwest to Leicester in the Midlands - suggest that Norton was having doubts about the rate at which engines could be produced at, and that Norton was exploring other options.

Those options, it appears, have led to the Spanish engineering firm Inmotec, the company behind the Inmotec MotoGP project. Inmotec has been building a V4 MotoGP bike for the past three years, but the project has been plagued by a chronic lack of funds. Norton, on the other hand, has sufficient funds to invest in a project, but lacks the engineering expertise required to build a high-performance 1000cc four-cylinder engine.

A link-up between the two would provide Inmotec with the funds it requires to keep functioning, and Norton with the expertise to produce engines in the numbers required.

MotoMatters.com's attempts to elicit a response from Stuart Garner at Norton have so far not met with any success, but through our

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contacts with the Spanish magazine Motociclismo, we did manage to reach Inmotec.

Inmotec Managing Director Oscar Gorria confirmed to our contacts at Motociclismo that Norton is in talks to buy the company. No further details were released, but this option could provide the engineering capacity Norton seeks.

It is unknown whether Norton's MotoGP effort will be based around Inmotec's current V4 engine. The Inmotec machine has had several planned public tests postponed, with appearances at both Barcelona and Valencia canceled. Reports from testing suggest that the engine has a chronic lack of reliability, with engines blowing up after just a few laps in private tests at the brand new Navarra motorsports facility.

Those reliability problems are precisely the sort of problem that Inmotec will be hoping that Norton's funds could help to fix.

### Norton Motorcycle Posters

There are some nice posters at <http://www.classicbikes.biz/pages/norton-motorcycle-posters.htm>.

### CNW Article

Congrats to Colorado Norton Works (CNW) on the nice write-up in a recent *Tomorrow's Technician* magazine. This publication is geared towards automotive students. The article was proclaiming the career rewards of vintage bike updating and engine building, along with a little Norton history thanks to the interview with Matt Rambow. Some beautiful bike and motor pictures, too. "Zen Master Builder: Colorado Norton Works" can be found at the following site: [www.tomorrowstechnicians.com](http://www.tomorrowstechnicians.com) by clicking on "Magazine & Current Issue".

This kind of publicity goes a long way towards igniting Norton flames in the hearts of the next generation of bike builders. Well done CNW!!!

John T.  
Delhi, NY



### Radford Honored

Phil Radford was the recipient of the annual INOA "Special Contribution Award". Phil has provided more than 25 years of supplying high-quality parts and service, and excellent free advice to US Norton owners. Photo by Donna Morrison at the NCNOC AGM ride and picnic earlier this year.

*Editor's Note: Phil was a key figure in getting me involved with Nortons. I wrote to him back in the early '80s to obtain his assessment of the different Commando models. He responded with a three-page handwritten letter that I still have. Thanks, Phil!*

### AHRMA Announces 2011 Road Race Changes

The American Historic Racing Motorcycle Association (AHRMA), working closely with Daytona International Speedway (DIS) and Champion Cup Series (CCS) announces a move for their 2011 DIS event from Bike Week to the DIS Fall Cycle Scene. AHRMA extends warm thanks to the staff of (DIS) for their support during our past Bike Week

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events and acknowledges their cooperation and working these changes for 2011.

To conclude the 2011 Road Race season, AHRMA will team up with CCS to conduct a 3-day National Road Race event (October 14th, 15th and 16th, 2011) at DIS during the Fall Cycle Scene as part of Biketoberfest. This event will closely follow the 7th Barber Vintage Festival (BVF) weekend (October 7th & 8th, 2011), providing AHRMA road racers an opportunity to close out the 2011 racing season at two of our country's most famous facilities, back to back.

"Although this date change completely modifies the traditional AHRMA Road Race schedule, this unprecedented double header is sure to get the adrenaline pumping in both our Vintage and Modern road racers" said, Dave Lamberth, AHRMA Executive Director. "We are excited about this change in schedule, especially with the potential of increased numbers of national and international participants for both events" said Lamberth.

AHRMA is currently exploring alternative options for their 2011 opening Road Race events.

This change in the Road Race schedule will not affect 2011 Off Road Bike Week events.

For more information and schedule announcements visit [www.AHRMA.org](http://www.AHRMA.org).

### Hogslayer Documentary

It is my pleasure to formally announce the

documentary *Hogslayer - The Unapproachable Legend* to the INOA. This is the story of TC Christenson and John Gregory of Sunset Motors from Kenosha, Wisconsin, and their world champion dual-engine Norton dragster, known as the Hogslayer. Sunset Motors Racing became the most successful drag racing championship team in motorcycle

history during the 1970s. This remarkable achievement was accomplished through their unrivaled innovation in the engineering of the Hogslayer and unbridled courage as they commanded the world drag strips. The Hogslayer, won the hearts of thousands and introduced the impressive performance capabilities of the Norton motorcycle to America.

The documentary offers Norton enthusiasts' worldwide an opportunity to celebrate one of the most successful accomplishments in Norton's rich racing legacy an accomplishment originated right here in America. As producer of this very worthwhile endeavor, I am searching for additional documentary materials (photographs, promotional items, publications, film, and video) representing the Hogslayer story to enhance the documentary. Full documentary credit will be offered for contributions.

Additionally, sponsorship packages are being offered to assist in the production costs of the documentary. This is a great promotional opportunity for businesses and organizations.

For more information on how you can be a part of this exciting documentary, please contact The Edge through the email address provided below.

A Hogslayer promotional trailer is now available through a You Tube link at [nortonhogslayer.com](http://nortonhogslayer.com). Or, just search Hogslayer on You Tube. Please take the time

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to enjoy this short video. The full-length documentary will be released in spring of 2011.

*James Cutting*  
*Independent Producer*  
**THE EDGE LTD.**  
 edgeld@charter.net

**Peter Williams' Book**

Peter's Williams autobiography, *Designed to Race*, is currently available through Mike Partridge at Walridge. Mike is interested to see if any members would like a personalized, signed copy of the book. If the response is strong enough, a special order of signed copies will be placed. Contact Mike at [marp@walridge.com](mailto:marp@walridge.com) for more information.



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**BMC of New Orleans' 2011 Annual British Car Day.**

21th Annual British Car Day – Join the British Motoring Club –New Orleans at Delgado - City Park Campus in New Orleans, Louisiana. All British cars and bikes are welcome. Registration is 9am to noon, with popular choice judging from noon till 3pm, awards at 4pm. Host hotel TBA. There will be a reception on Friday, March 18th at the host hotel. For more information contact: Rick Huber (225) 926-6946, Karen Murray (504) 236-7509, or Cathy Greensfelder: [cgreensf@cox.net](mailto:cgreensf@cox.net), or visit the club web site at <http://www.bmcno.org> Chad C. Wicker British Motoring Club New Orleans and South Louisiana.

**Sealing Steel Tanks**

For sealing steel tanks, check out [www.PrecisionMotorcyclePainting.com](http://www.PrecisionMotorcyclePainting.com). They advertise in *Norton News* and can do all the work you require. I've sealed a couple of tanks successfully with Caswell's sealer (had to strip one of failed Kreem sealer first). It can get tricky. I then had Precision clean, Caswell epoxy seal, and paint another tank after seeing the job they did on a friend's Interstate and Roadster. Their work is stunning! Even the sealer is like glass, right up to the top of the neck. They also do repair work.

*John T.*  
 Delhi, NY ■

5th Annual Dania Beach  
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 Held at Frost Park  
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 Saturday, January 29th, 2011 at 10 AM  
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## Norton Motorcycles USA

It gives me pleasure to reach out to all of you with this first communication from Norton Motorcycles USA. I want to update you to our current activities, and some future plans.

We are at the very early stages of forming Norton Motorcycles USA, which is a direct subsidiary of Norton Motorcycles Ltd UK. As you can imagine, there is much to do. Soon we will begin the process of setting-up a dealer network around the country, putting the support systems in place (spares, technical training, warehousing, etc.) and of course getting U.S. approved Norton Motorcycles here. We expect to begin deliveries of the 961 Commando starting in May of 2011.

Norton Clubs and Norton owners are a fundamental part of our plans for the USA, and worldwide. Today, you folks are the face and spirit of Norton, and we will do our best to make you a proud and supportive of the part of the new Norton. The history and heritage of Norton has always been one of beauty, unique character and spectacular road manners. We strongly embrace the heritage of Norton, so our new bikes reflect that unique Norton character, but they have been developed and engineered in a completely modern way. It is worth noting that the new Commandos are completely engineered in the UK and built almost entirely of British parts, with the exception of the suspension and brakes which are the very best Europe has to offer.

To add a little vintage credibility to myself personally, my first job at 16 years old was working in a British motorcycle shop, and I still own and ride the 66' Triumph Bonneville that I owned in high school. I have been in the motorcycle industry for many years, I am a passionate rider and one of the reasons that I joined the Norton team is that they are almost all serious motorcyclists. You may have noticed that our owner, Stuart Garner, just set a land speed record at Bonneville on a Norton.

It will take a bit of time, but we will be setting-up direct communication lines for clubs to Norton USA, as well as supporting and participating in Norton Club events nationwide. If schedule allows, I will plan to ride to the National meet in 2011. Give us a little time

# Letters

and support. We welcome you to our family, and we hope you will welcome us to yours.

All the best, and see you on the road,

*Dan Van Epps*  
Norton Motorcycles USA

Stewart Garner's roots are in motorcycle racing and I thought his stated intention when he first released details of his hopes for Norton was that he wanted to see them racing competitively again. Today's version of the old successful Norton Rotary is considerably more refined and modernized with some leading technology in the variable intake tract setup. I'm not sure of true horsepower comparisons other than what's been published so far...but of course you never let your competitors know where you are at, do you. Garner must have done considerable lobbying at the top as to the legality of a rotary before making any announcement. I personally think keeping the series open to innovation is a good thing providing safety is not compromised by ridiculous power and speed. The way the Formula One Car series is going with innovation and inventiveness totally stopped is a death knell for the sport long term. You soon lose interest in 25 cars racing with identical engines and little individuality.

I have no idea of Garner's worth or if he has financial backers, but to have done what he has so far in a short time is astonishing...and worth supporting in my view.

*Jay in NZ*

### New vs. Old

Yes, my Norton doesn't handle as well as modern machines, and yes, it has idiosyncrasies with the electrics, but did you ever wonder why people would put up with it? It is the difference between going to Wally World and paying \$35 for a Christmas tree someone else cut down and actually cutting one down yourself. I am not stopping anyone from spending their money their way, as long as some don't mind me buying an underpowered (?) poor handling (?) piece of art as opposed to what has become so mass produced that everyone has one.

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# Chapters

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Carroll, OH 43112  
Gmchief@sbcglobal.net

## Michigan Norton Owners

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5611 Firwood Drive  
Troy, MI 48098  
248-641-8410  
GODervish@aol.com

## Norton Owners of Arizona

LeRoy Peterson  
PO Box 385 Aguila, AZ  
85320.  
928-685-4187  
eroydgal15p@yahoo.com.

## SCNOC

Bill Bibbiani  
1168 N. Hill Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91104  
626-791-0259  
bibbiani@socalnorton.com

## Greater Atlanta

**Norton Owners**  
Nathan Kimble  
649 Braeburn Court  
Lawrenceville, GA 30044  
678-344-8509

## Norton Colorado

Eric Bergman  
1900 19th St.  
Golden, CO 80401  
303-278-7445  
onenorton@gmail.com  
www.nortoncolorado.org

## British Motorcycle Owners Association of Houston, Texas

Mike McGill  
25418 Old Carriage Lane  
Spring, TX 77373-6015  
281-288-7236

## New England Norton Owners

Dave Comeau  
11 Poplar St.  
Ipswich, MA 01938  
dynodave@gis.net

## Northern Ohio Norton Owners

Ed Britt  
9127 CR 35  
Millersburg, OH 44654

## Adirondack Norton Owners Club

Box 262  
Keene, NY 12942  
518-576-4419  
whiteipinenorton@verizon.net

## Western Pennsylvania Norton Owners

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thumpintrumpet1@aol.com

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Meyersville, NJ 07933  
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505-235-2302 (cell)  
halsal@swcp.com

## Wisconsin

Anthony Albano  
c/o 757 Euclid Ave.  
Beloit, WI 53511-6004  
262-828-7185

## Indiana

Bob Goodpaster  
403 N. Wisconsin St.  
Hobart, IN 46342  
219-942-2401

## Nation's Capitol

Don Raulin  
411 Beach Drive  
Edgewater, MD 21037  
410-798-1522  
750cecil@verizon.net

## Roanoke British Iron

Dave Youngblood  
3201 Pasley Ave. S.W.  
Roanoke, VA 24015  
davephoto@aol.com  
540-342-7027

## North Florida Norton Owners

John Corbin  
1842 Holly Oaks  
Lake Rd. W.  
Jacksonville, FL 32225  
904-398-4390

## Ottawa Norton Owners Group

Fred Mohlmann  
Box 583  
Wakefield, Quebec  
J0X 3G0, Canada  
819-459-3103  
mohlmann@istar.ca

## Chicago Norton Owners' Club

Jonathan Ravilla  
info@cncoc.org  
www.cncoc.org

## Delaware Valley Norton Riders

Bob Norum  
276 Butterworth Lane  
Langhorne, PA 19047  
215-431-8735 (cell)  
robert.norum@verizon.net  
www.dvnr.org

## Gateway Chapter (St. Louis)

Joe Jump  
435 W. Argonne Dr.  
St. Louis, MO 63122  
314-232-3617

## Tri-State Norton Riders

Chuck Contrino  
115 East 9th St.  
New York, NY 10003  
212-674-3230  
chucktri@aol.com

## Louisiana Norton Riders

Contact TBA

## Northern California Norton Owners Club

Harry Bunting (President)  
408-615-1234  
HarryB2378@aol.com

## BMOC

Ian Bardsley, Secretary  
c/o 1615 Greenmount Ave.  
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## BMOC Okanagan Chapter

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## North Texas NOA

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clay@ntnoa.org

## Norton United Touring Society (NUTS)

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950 Bets Rd.  
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cainco@copper.net

## Northwest NOC

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20135 186th Place NE  
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(425) 788-3410  
hill@foxinternet.net

## Ontario Norton Owners

Derek Wilson  
www.ontariोनorton  
owners.org

## Utah

Tom Kullen  
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## Twin Cities NOC

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## Manitoba Norton Owners

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Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M6  
Canada  
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204-797-6698 (cell)  
david@bardal.ca

## British Motorcycle Owners of Kentucky

Steve Parsch  
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Prospect, KY 40059  
502-228-3918  
home.insightbb.com/~bmok2/

## Norton Owners of Arizona

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51410 W. Iver Rd.  
Aguila, AZ 85320  
928-685-4187  
Leroydgal15p@yahoo.com

## Tennessee Norton Owners Association

Michael Harrod  
2069 Garner Rd.  
Mount Pleasant, TN  
38474-2818  
931-285-0036  
mikes\_n15cs@yahoo.com

## Norton Owners Club of Nevada

c/o Bill Wellbaum  
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Home 415 152-2067  
Cell 044415-102-6596

## Oregon Norton Owners

Sam Justice  
4020 N.E. 33rd Avenue  
Portland, OR 97212  
(503)307-9085  
justice6587@qwest.net ■

## Upcoming Events

When	What	Where	Contact
July 18-23, 2011	Norton Empire International Rally	Brookside Campground, Catskill, NY	<a href="http://inoanorton.com">http://inoanorton.com</a> (Also, see front cover)
March 25-27	Lone Star Classic	Cresson, TX	<a href="http://thelonestarclass.com">thelonestarclass.com</a>
July, 2012	Thunder in the Green Mountains National Rally	Vermont	Lee Patterson 71norton@comcast.net (New England Norton Owners)

I can afford a brand new Harley and family members encourage me to do so. I refuse, as I know every inch, leak and vibration and am happy doing therapy an hour at a time tinkering with it my Norton, as opposed to crying about the warranty and who to call when it doesn't work. Robert M. Pirsig's Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance comes to mind. We all have our reasons for being here, as long as we don't step on the methods of others—from our first bike to the last ride.

I once bought a Corvette. A 1968 Stingray. It was a 427 4-speed. I signed to pay \$5500 for it but Uncle Sam had "better" ideas for me —

2-1/2 years in a place I hardly heard of — Vietnam. The car was ordered but I told the dealer I couldn't take possession since this "government worker" had a payday of \$77/month. It wasn't until 1985 when I had a chance to buy another but it was a '75 for \$6500. I still have it but... a new one will never be in my price range. My '75 was plenty fast enough and not bad looking either. I tinker with it as well.

The point is, there are many who will drop \$50,000 to own a new Norton. I would if I could, but sometimes it is nostalgia that is the draw and not the state-of-the-art hardware.

## SKIP'S BRIT BIKES PLUS

Skip's Brit Bikes Plus is a small-town motorcycle shop that is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of British Motorcycles, specializing in the Norton Commando.

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# Classified Ads

*Classified ads are free to INOA members for noncommercial, motorcycle-related items. Unless requested otherwise, ads will be run for one issue only. INOA does not screen advertisers and therefore cannot vouch for the seller's intentions or the quality/condition of the merchandise.*

*Submit ads to Barry Armitage via mail or e-mail (see contact information on page 1); ad deadlines are also listed on that page. Buyers should know that sellers of items in the Internet section are unaware of the Norton News listing.*

WANTED: I am looking for a clean 850 Commando. If you know of anything for sale please let me know. Rick, 317-407-9485.

### From the Internet

1966 Norton \$2,000, 712-579-2123. ■



Famed racer John Surtees was honored at the Barber event. (Photo by Corey Levenson.)

Buy what you want, but learn to enjoy what you buy.

Wayne S.

### Barber Vintage Festival

I was busy organizing the swap meet, auction, Wall of Death, AMCA and VJMC also greeting friends and visitors this year at the Barber Vintage Festival. A lot of work but rewarding. I got on my bike the following weekend and rode 620 miles, which was wonderful.

This was our 6th Festival and the largest yet. Close to 45,000 visitors. We don't want to be the biggest, but the best.

Brian Slark ■



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Top to bottom: A G50 Matchless in the Barber Museum; Bob Goodpaster's son, Wesley, who won the AHMRA 2010 Classic 60's on his Atlas; one of two printine shop areas on the bottom floor of the Barber Museum. (Photos by B. Armitage.)

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# NORTON MOTORCYCLE POSTERS

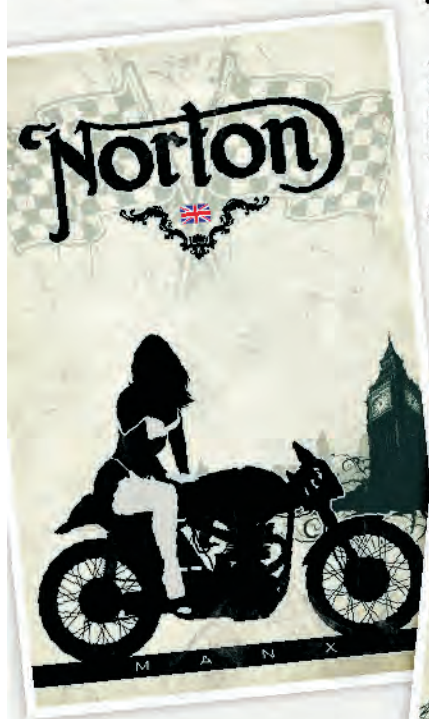
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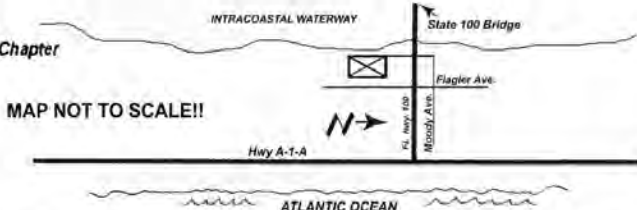
# Norton

Steele

# 2011

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**Send to:**

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Langhorne, PA 19047

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