WE'RE ALL HERE BECAUSE WE'RE NOT ALL THERE

Norton Colorado Newsletter

www.nortoncolorado.org

December 2018

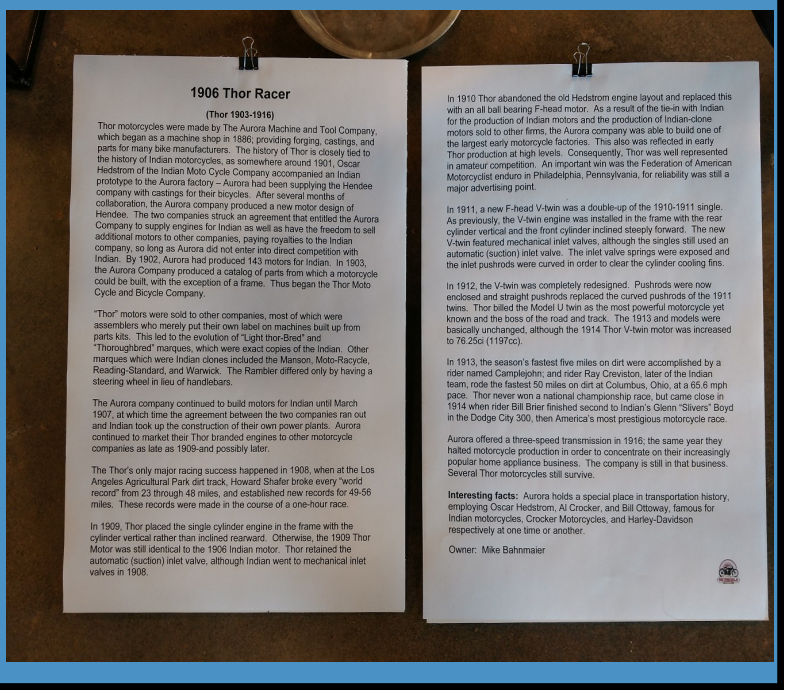
Upcoming Events

See page 8 for the entire official 2018 events schedule.

12/2 (Sunday): Pub Meeting

January 2019
1/1 (Tuesday): New Year's Day Ride
1/13 (Sunday): Pub Meeting

Look for club emails for more details about these gatherings.



1906 Thor Racer

(Thor 1903-1916)

Thor motorcycles were made by The Aurora Machine and Tool Company, which began as a machine shop in 1886; providing forging, castings, and parts for many bike manufacturers. The history of Thor is closely tied to the history of Indian motorcycles, as somewhere around 1901, Oscar Hedstrom of the Indian Moto Cycle Company accompanied an Indian prototype to the Aurora factory – Aurora had been supplying the Hendee company with castings for their bicycles. After several months of collaboration, the Aurora company produced a new motor design of Hendee. The two companies struck an agreement that entitled the Aurora Company to supply engines for Indian as well as have the freedom to sell additional motors to other companies, paying royalties to the Indian company, so long as Aurora did not enter into direct competition with Indian. By 1902, Aurora had produced 143 motors for Indian. In 1903, the Aurora Company produced a catalog of parts from which a motorcycle could be built, with the exception of a frame. Thus began the Thor Moto Cycle and Bicycle Company.

"Thor" motors were sold to other companies, most of which were assemblers who merely put their own label on machines built up from parts kits. This led to the evolution of "Light thor-Bred" and "Thoroughbred" marques, which were exact copies of the Indian. Other marques which were Indian clones included the Manson, Moto-Racycle, Reading-Standard, and Warwick. The Rambler differed only by having a steering wheel in lieu of handlebars.

The Aurora company continued to build motors for Indian until March 1907, at which time the agreement between the two companies ran out and Indian took up the construction of their own power plants. Aurora continued to market their Thor branded engines to other motorcycle companies as late as 1909-and possibly later.

The Thor's only major racing success happened in 1908, when at the Los Angeles Agricultural Park dirt track, Howard Shafer broke every "world record" from 23 through 48 miles, and established new records for 49-56 miles. These records were made in the course of a one-hour race.

In 1909, Thor placed the single cylinder engine in the frame with the cylinder vertical rather than inclined rearward. Otherwise, the 1909 Thor Motor was still identical to the 1906 Indian motor. Thor retained the automatic (suction) inlet valve, although Indian went to mechanical inlet valves in 1908.

In 1910 Thor abandoned the old Hedstrom engine layout and replaced this with an all ball bearing F-head motor. As a result of the tie-in with Indian for the production of Indian motors and the production of Indian-clone motors sold to other firms, the Aurora company was able to build one of the largest early motorcycle factories. This also was reflected in early Thor production at high levels. Consequently, Thor was well represented in amateur competition. An important win was the Federation of American Motorcyclist enduro in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for reliability was still a major advertising point.

In 1911, a new F-head V-twin was a double-up of the 1910-1911 single. As previously, the V-twin engine was installed in the frame with the rear cylinder vertical and the front cylinder inclined steeply forward. The new V-twin featured mechanical inlet valves, although the singles still used an automatic (suction) inlet valve. The inlet valve springs were exposed and the inlet pushrods were curved in order to clear the cylinder cooling fins.

In 1912, the V-twin was completely redesigned. Pushrods were now enclosed and straight pushrods replaced the curved pushrods of the 1911 twins. Thor billed the Model U twin as the most powerful motorcycle yet known and the boss of the road and track. The 1913 and models were basically unchanged, although the 1914 Thor V-twin motor was increased to 76.25ci (1197cc).

In 1913, the season's fastest five miles on dirt were accomplished by a rider named Camplejohn; and rider Ray Creviston, later of the Indian team; rode the fastest 50 miles on dirt at Columbus, Ohio, at a 65.6 mph pace. Thor never won a national championship race, but came close in 1914 when rider Bill Brier finished second to Indian's Glenn "Slivers" Boyd in the Dodge City 300, then America's most prestigious motorcycle race.

Aurora offered a three-speed transmission in 1916; the same year they halted motorcycle production in order to concentrate on their increasingly popular home appliance business. The company is still in that business. Several Thor motorcycles still survive.

Interesting facts: Aurora holds a special place in transportation history, employing Oscar Hedstrom, Al Crocker, and Bill Ottoway, famous for Indian motorcycles, Crocker Motorcycles, and Harley-Davidson respectively at one time or another.

Owner: Mike Bahnmaier

Open Garage *hosted by Ric and Joy Landeira*

I just got back from Ric and Joy's Open Garage gathering. As usual a very nice time was had by all.

When I left my house it was 41^{0}F. I picked up Jack and Peggy and off we went. Jack wanted a chance to try out his new super warm gloves, and now was the time. When we arrived, there were friends, hot coffee and good food to warm us up. We then toured Ric's very nice, well stocked garage. After, we went out and looked at our assorted motorcycles and swapped more stories. The ride home was about 10 degrees warmer so that was more pleasant than the ride north. I'm glad I made the ride on this very brisk day.

Rode a Norton:
Jack and Peggy Abeyta
Ben Deason
Mike Homs
Scott Robinson

Rode something lesser:
Dave Coxon -- HD
Peter Geise -- Triumph

Got there:
Eric Bergman
Rick Black
Jamie and Michelle Jones

Norton Club goes to DU

November weather isn't always riding weather so we need some other way to entertain ourselves. Saturday night was hockey night. DU Pioneers took on the Minnesota Duluth Bulldogs in a wild game. For 2 periods it looked like DU would upset the National Champions, scoring 3 goals. Unfortunately, there are 3 periods in a hockey game and the Bulldogs showed us why they are the number one ranked team, scoring 3 unanswered goals and forcing overtime, when they scored the deciding goal. Not the outcome we were looking for, but it was a fun, fast game and very entertaining, even if it didn't involve motorcycles.

Motorcycle Stuff on the web:

Covers not only the casting, machining, and assembly, but fun footage of early riding/testing complete with auto's, bicyclists, sidecar outfits and more. There's a bit of street racing hooliganism . Fun time capsule
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6m8PmMQK76s

Arhitectural Record Magazine interviews our very own Susie Saarinen:
https://www.architecturalrecord.com/articles/13721-interview-with-susan-saarinen?id=13721-interview-with-susan-saarinen&ajs_uid=3015J2623690B0X&oly_enc_id=3015J2623690B0X&ajs_trait_oebid=3782E0258467B1M

Packard self parker:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMsRJrlbyMI

Interesting article about Harley Davidson:
https://www.msn.com/en-us/autos/motorcycles/how-harley-davidsons-all-in-bet-on-its-past-crippled-its-future/ar-BBPCNoW?li=BBnb7Kz

What's going on in your garage?

Now that winter is setting in many of us are spending more time in the garage. Here's two examples . If you are spending your time turning wrenches instead of turning a throttle please send me a picture and maybe even write a paragraph so while we aren't riding we can have something cool to read and look at.

Triple play! It runs, lives, and breaths.
Dave Webster

Peter Allen's winter project, Vincent engine in featherbed frame

Francis Bearts Norton garage

Pic taken by Sonny Angel while touring Europe on the Triumph in the foreground in 1951

Riding in the T.T. Races Maybe the first song ever recorded about the Isle Of Man! George Formby also owned a 1947 Norton International, and he has a statue on the T.T. course.
George Formby - Riding in the T.T. Races

From the film "No Limit" (1935) starring George Formby, Florence Desmond and Jack Hobbs. Composers: Harry Gifford & Fred E. Cliffe. This scene is set on a steam train as George travels to the port to catch a boat for the Isle Of Man. There, he does indeed ride in the TT (Tourist Trophy) Races.

Lyrics - If there's one thing that I like It's riding around on a motorbike I'm a speed king when I once begin I once won first prize two and six I know all the dirt track dirty tricks I'm a marvel when I'm out to win In a fifty mile race I am the best I ride five miles and skid the rest So come along and see me riding in the T.T. races Easier than hop scotch, beating all the top notch aces I've been riding all my life, I started quite small I've ridden fairy cycles, aye, and scooters and all Hear the people cheer me when they see me steering backwards Down the hill I go at break-neck speed See me coming down the street With the win-ning post on the pillion seat So come along and see me riding in the T.T. race Come along and see me riding in the T.T. races Easier than hop scotch, beating all the top notch aces Once my bike was hard to ride, but I didn't mind Un-til I found they'd hitched a charabanc on behind Every-body's scaring, I am such a daring rider My inside rattles when I go the pace My ribs begin to shake about There's all my spare parts sticking out So come along and see me riding in the T.T. race - uke solo -- With my gears in re-verse The other way round I'll finish first So come along and see me riding in the T.T. race

Girls, girls and more girls

Well, you guys are always asking for more girls. Since it's not exactly riding weather Peter Geise and Dennis Oberwetter took the time to scour the internet for pictures of girls and Nortons. Some of these you may have seen before, I didn't think you'd mind seeing them again. Enjoy!!! (A little plug here: If you want more girl pictures feel free to find them and send them to me, I'm always happy to put girl pics in the newsletter--Scott)

Schedule for 2018

Please check this out and feel free to contact Eric Bergman to suggest more ideas or to volunteer to host an event

February
2/3 (Saturday): Winter Banquet

March
3/3 (Saturday): Group Ride or Museum Visit, depending on weather
3/18 (Sunday): Pub Meeting: Streets of London

April
4/8 (Sunday): Tech Day @ Bob Martin's
4/21 (Saturday): Group Ride & Shop Visit: Jesse Caraway's

May
5/5 (Saturday): Group Ride
5/20 (Sunday): OBR 16

June
6/3 (Sunday): BBQ @ Eric & Susie's
6/14-17 (Thur-Sun): Four Corners Rendezvous

July
7/8 (Sunday): Mt Evans Ride & Brunch @ David Sheesley's
7/28 (Saturday): Group Ride

August
8/4-5 (Saturday-Sunday): Wimpy Campout @ Jamie & Michelle Jones'
8/19 (Sunday): Group Ride

September
9/7-9 (Friday-Sunday): Campout
9/16 (Sunday): English Conclave

October
10/7 (Sunday): Plains Ride (Scott & Julie Robinson)
10/21 (Sunday): Tech Day

November
11/4 (Sunday): Open Garage Ric and Joy Landeira
11/17 (Saturday): DU Hockey Night (contact Scott for more info)

December
12/2 (Sunday): Pub Meeting

January 2019
1/1 (Tuesday): New Year's Day Ride
1/13 (Sunday): Pub Meeting

Membership

Membership in Norton Colorado is open to anyone, regardless of whether they own a Norton, or any motorcycle whatsoever.

Dues are $20/ year individual, $22 for a couple or family unit, payable to "Norton Colorado" and sent to the Treasurer, whose contact information is listed on the last page of this newsletter.

The official club membership list is posted on the club website. Please let Eric know if there is an error.

The membership year begins with the Winter Banquet in February. New members who join after August 1 are credited with membership for the following year.

Club Events

Many events have been scheduled for the 2018 season, usually about 2 per month. Participation in these events will be counted for the President's Award. Events may be added, dropped, or re-scheduled through the year. The schedule can be found in this newsletter or check the schedule on the club website:

http://www.nortoncolorado.org/meetings.html

Prez Points Standings Top 10 (2018):

	points	events	solo rides
Jack Abeyta	68	11	21
Peggy Abeyta	47	8	15
Scott Robinson	42	9	4
David Sheesley	40	7	7
Mike Fields	38	9	2
Arnie Beckman	35	8	0
Debby Johnson	28	5	16
Eric Bergman	28	13	0
Dennis Horgan	26	8	0
Bob Martin	24	11	0

Beginner's Commando

Presidents points race??

Jack set the goal of winning back the coveted President's Trophy this year. Sure looks like he might do it. Let's get those Norton's out and make Jack work for it.

Current Occupants

Officers

President
Arnie Beckman (303) 733-4239
arniebeckmanp11@gmail.com

Secretary
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Treasurer
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Newsletter Editor
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Secretary of Commerce
(My new job title reflects my role in the Parts Depot as well as Swag slut)
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Webmaster
David Sheesley (720) 277-6563
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Technical Advisor
Jim Comstock (719)646-2610
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Credits: Thanks to Peter Allen, Jim Colt, Peter Geise, Dennis Horgan, Dennis Oberwetter, Al Slarks and Dave Webster for their contributions to this newsletter. I also want to say thanks to others who sent me things I will use in future editions.

Norton Colorado

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