



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



Norton Colorado

www.nortoncolorado.org

Newsletter

January 2021



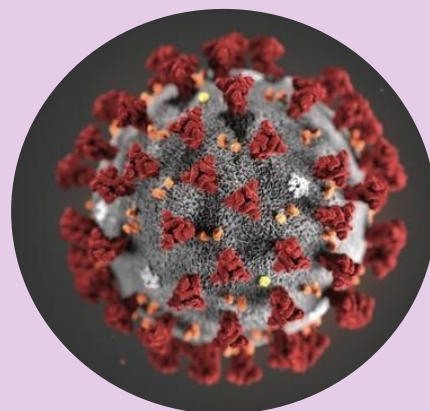
One of the fine motorcycles on display at the St Francis, Kansas motorcycle museum

Upcoming Events

All events are cancelled/postponed until the world gets healthy again.

Crazy to think that this little guy here, the Coronavirus, has taken down the entire world and is interfering with our motorcycle riding. See you soon, stay healthy

Look for club emails for more details about these gatherings.



Norton Colorado: Plan for the rest of this year, please read

Hi Folks,

The officers of the club (Arnie Beckman, Charley Gremmels and me) have agreed on the following plan for the event schedule for the rest of this season. As you may recall, our "season" runs through January of next year and the new season begins with the Winter Banquet in early February.

- 1) For the rest of this season, i.e., up to the Winter Banquet next year, Norton Colorado will have no official gatherings.
- 2) We will announce the possibility to join other members for rides and even informal social gatherings.
- 3) President's points will only be awarded on a solo ride basis. That is, the only way to earn President's Points is to ride a Norton. You can do it by yourself, any day you want. But you have to let me know in a timely manner.
- 4) We will handle dues as usual next year, but if anyone is especially hard-pressed financially due to un- or under-employment or any other reason associated with the pandemic, we will extend membership in 2021 for free.

Any of you can offer to host a ride or an event, for example a Bob Martin Ride, David Sheesley's breakfast, or the Plains Ride just give me a couple days lead-time if possible to make a broadcast.

This was a hard decision to make. The social aspects of the club are the main thing that has kept the club vigorous for so many years, Hopefully that vigor will carry us through these challenging times.

Cheers, Eric



Not Nortons, did you even notice? Do you care?



Greetings to Norton Colorado from the Leadership Team!

Arnie Beckman (el Presidente)
Eric Bergman (The Secretariat)
Charley Gremmels (The Bursar)

After most of our 2020 activities were cancelled we felt it would be appropriate to open the new year with some explanation of how we intend to approach 2021.

Unfortunately, the state of the pandemic is still such that we cannot say with any confidence when the club may be able to sponsor gatherings of any sort. In particular there will be no Winter Banquet in early February. This means there will not be an opportunity to vote on new officers in person. As the defense of democratic and electoral norms is currently a subject of wide interest, there will be an opportunity for you to throw us bums out:

- 1) The current leadership team is willing to continue serving if they are not, singly or collectively, replaced. They will not be at all sad to be replaced, either!
- 2) Until January 20, 2021, a date we can all easily remember. I will accept any application from a club member (paid up for 2020) for any of the club offices (President, Secretary, Treasurer).
- 3) On January 21, 2021, I will broadcast the information about any competitive races for you to vote one.
- 4) Between then and February 6, 2021, which would have been the date of the Winter Banquet, you can send your vote to a neutral party who has not yet been appointed, by any means you like, including verbally.

We will continue to monitor the covid situation and as soon as it seems safe to do so in 2021, we will begin announcing events. The hiatus we have endured does provide a nice opportunity to refresh our approach to club events, so if you have any thoughts on this matter please send them along.

I'd like to finish with a personal note to you all from Charley Gremmels:

Hi there and Happy Holidays.

I agree the Winter Banquet needs to become the later in the year, see what happens Banquet. Sad but safe! It was a lousy year for a lot of things in a lot of areas, we did what we could and didn't do what they told us not to. I am trying to end this year with hope for the vaccine and hope for a new better normal. And the bad memories will be replaced by new good ones. And my quarantine fifteen will melt away! If anyone has a problem with the 2021 dues let me know, it can be fixed, with a flick of the pen! I can fix it or I'll pay it.

The only other thing I would add is, as everyone sends me dues I hope I see all the familiar names and some new ones too!

From Scott Robinson:

If anyone has been waiting for the chance to take over as newsletter editor now is your chance. While I am happy to continue in this capacity, I have more than honored my 5 year commitment to this role.

Any questions, please email me mister.r@comcast.net.

Repairing Norton Fiberglass Tanks by Frank Puckett

Some Commandos have fiberglass tanks that usually can be switched out for a steel tank. I am restoring a Dunstall Atlas and a Dunstall Commando with original Dunstall fiberglass tanks, seats, and fairing. So I was definitely going to use the original tanks. But the Atlas tank was a leaker around the flip-top cap and the threads in the petcock bung were bad. The Commando tank had been in a wreck and the side was cracked. Also the bung for the flip-top cap came loose. So I approached these tanks with some trepidation, but I found that the repairs were certainly possible and not that hard.

First step was to get the old gas cap out of the Atlas tank. It was rusty and certainly leak prone. I also was able to cut out the old petcock bung.



Frank Puckett

I cleaned the recess on the tank and could see where a crack could be leaking and I slotted it. I was able to source a new oval rim and gas cap, but it did not have any way to glass it in so lathed an aluminum bung for it.

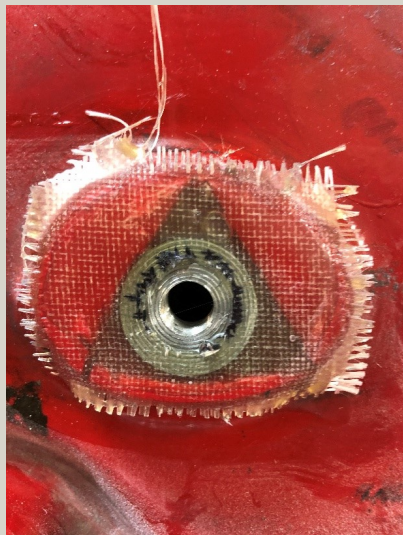


I reinforced the recess for the gas cap with fiberglass cloth and resin, then glassed in the aluminum insert.



Clean up on the glassing and then on to putting in a new petcock bung. The original bung was aluminum and the threads were bad, so I made a new one out of steel and glassed it in the bottom of the tank.

The blue Commando tank had a better gas cap with a built-in extension, so it was easy to reglass it back in the tank.



Now on to fixing the crack in the Commando tank. I layered cloth and resin in the crack and then smoothed out with a Bondo for fiberglass. When cleaning the inside of the tank with acetone, I found the seam at the bottom of the tank leaked big time, so the Caswell tank sealer I was getting ready to put in was definitely a good idea. I am a believer in the stuff. I will also not put any ethanol gas in these tanks.



How I spent my COVID isolation by Bob Herman

Recently, a number of superfluous small motorcycles have passed through my hands (be careful when listing a bike for sale with the clause "may consider trades"). After adopting and resurrecting a couple of 100cc Bridgestone smokers, I put them both up for sale at silly prices to see if there was interest.

Like most of us in Norton Colorado, I'm accustomed to interacting with other geezers who have been messing with bikes for a half century or more, and we tend to be a jaded bunch. But wave a cheap, small motorcycle out there and sometimes a starry-eyed young lad (or ladess) will pop up.



I got the better (more complete) Bridgestone running, rode it around the neighborhood enough to ascertain that it shifted through all gears, that sort of thing, and listed it for sale. Before long I was contacted by a young guy looking for his first motorcycle, and he arranged a ride to come up from Albuquerque to see and buy the bike.

While awaiting his arrival, I pulled the little tiddler out of the shed, ran a rag over it and started to worry that it did not look as good in person as it appeared in my online photos. The thing obviously had seen a lot of southwestern sun, the seat cover dried out and the crusty foam visible through a gaping gash. Cables were original, their plastic covers cracked in places. All the scars and warts consistent with fifty years of neglect and disrespect. I did what I could to clean it up for maximum curb appeal (not much) and prepared to drop my asking price to a reasonable level in light of the buyer's dashed expectations.

I should not have worried. When the lad arrived with his mom and step-dad, it was love at first sight. No cluck of disappointment and disillusionment, no hemming and hawing, no attempt to bargain down the price. It was obvious at the get-go that the kid was here to buy his first bike, that this was the bike, that he was blind to its haggard looks and oblivious of any mechanical shortcomings that might be hidden beneath the skin.

In that light, I spent about fifteen minutes "interviewing" him, describing the various chores he should address to get to know the machine, etc. and pointing out that anyone intending to make an aged motorbike reliable and roadworthy must have the skills and tools needed, be prepared to attain them or pay a shop crazy money to keep it running.

Yeah yeah, can I go now? The young man happily thrust the cash into my hand - full price - and was anxious to get the thing into mom's pickup truck and race back to Albuquerque and start bonding with his First Motorcycle.

Buying, selling, trading old bikes is something that I and many of us just take in stride and have done for decades. Just this once it was great to be involved in helping a young would-be motorcyclist cut his teeth and, let's face it, learn some hard lessons in the process. I was reminded of my love affair - short-lived, but all-consuming - with my own first motorcycle back in 1966. Call me an enabler - I've been called worse - but the thought of this young man's nascent life as a motorcyclist gave me a warm feeling that lingered for some time.

The Bridgestone:



And my own first motorcycle, a Honda S90, c. 1966:



Decided to take a break from working on the '29 HD today & slipped up the Rist Canyon on the trusty Commando... it got a bit dicey on slick melt off & ice so about face & back down. Stopped at the 100 year old Holcim cement plant in the country out by me on the way home. One more to go in Dec. and the Commando will have been out every month of 2020! It felt great though... hope y'all got out for the excellent sun & safe distancing ! -- James Lafler



Merry Post Christmas !

Brit bike riders from up north made it up to Pinedale Reservoir west of Berthoud and Kris Kringle was smiling back at them ! As of that day, one dark green Norton of the bunch had made it out for a rip in each and every month of 2020...

Season's Greetings !

James Lafler

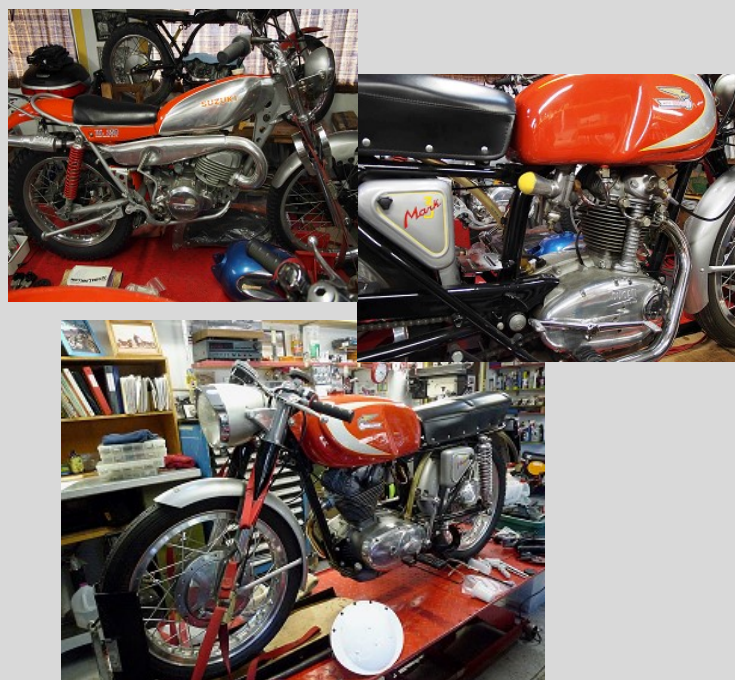


Christmas came early. Just as I was knee deep in my RD350 cafe project, these two little gems came down the chimney, along with several others and all kinds of extras. Ho Ho Ho

Bob Herman

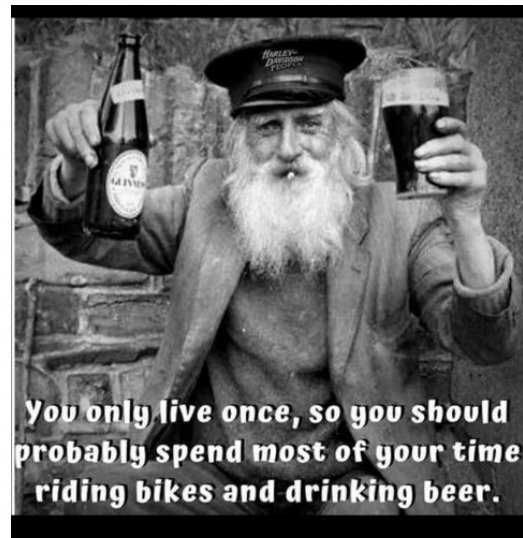
Just got back from a high speed ride on 750

Jerry Doe



A few hours early, but our friends in the southern hemisphere start before the rest of us. It was not penned by me, but always brings a smile to my face.

'Twas the night before Christmas at the motorcycle store.
The sales clerks were gone; they'd locked up the door.
Back in service, the tools were hung with great care,
The floors had been swept, the workbenches bare.
Sales had been brisk, filling staff with elation
As they headed down south for their winter vacation.
The new shiny sportbikes had all been sold out,
And all that was left was an Indian Scout,
A Norton Commando, a Rudge Multi too,
And a black BMW R32,
A Vincent, a Matchless, and Velocette,
And a drippy old Brough that wouldn't start on a bet.
"This stinks," said the Norton. "We're just as fine
As those Japanese bikes the kids buy all the time."
"You're right," said the Vincent as he grew agitated.
"All I need is to get my back tire inflated,
Then I could compete with the best of 'em yet."
"Me, too! I'm still fast," cried the old Velocette.
"If someone was handy, somebody smart,
They'd know how to fix us and get us to start."
And so while they grumbled and whined and complained,
They didn't notice a visitor came.
He was dressed all in leather, black head to toe,
And his helmet had reflective stickers that brightly glowed.
His beard was snow-white. It reached to his chest.
How he got in the door was anyone's guess.
He looked them all over. "Merry Christmas!" he said.
"Are you fellows available to pull my big sled?"
"Who, us?" laughed the Matchless. "We're rusty and old.
Nobody wants us, that's why we're not sold.
Kids want electric, not our old kickstarts.
These young punks think we're just bikes for old farts."
"My Lucas headlight hasn't worked well in years,"
Said the Rudge. "And my gearbox is missing some gears.
I'd be much obliged if you'd look at my choke.
And the earthing brush in my magneto is broke."
"My mix is too rich, I think," said the Beemer.
"Does anyone know how to set the carb leaner?"
Then Santa said, "Hey, stop the whining, you guys.
You're legends and history in many men's eyes.
So what if you're rusty and don't look brand new?
Hypermotards and 'Busas wouldn't be here without you."
Then the vintage bikes lights started glowing with pride.
And the Norton Commando said, "Let's take a ride!"
"I'm ready, let's go, come on!" said the Brough.
"Let's get it in gear and show 'em our stuff."
They took to the road, their pipes roared like thunder.
And Santa sat back in his sled, filled with wonder.
And he said as he watched them race into the night,
"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a safe ride."



Now that Peter Allen has retired, he's formulated his retirement plan. Not shaving leaves him more time for both riding and drinking.



Motorcycle Stuff on the web:

Pete Williams Obituary | Cycle World

<https://www.cycleworld.com/story/motorcycle-racing/rider-engineer-peter-williams-dies-81/>

Old Soviet motorcycle full Restoration - YouTube

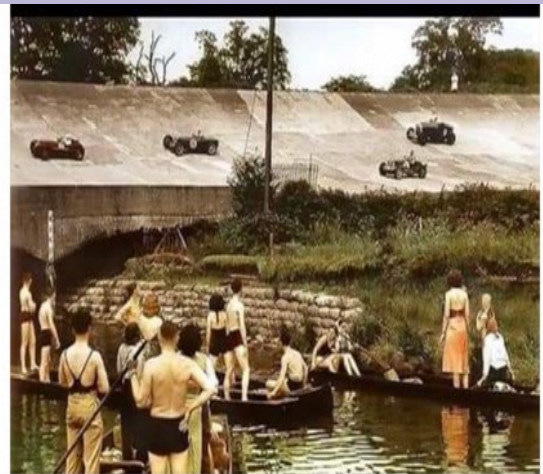
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8HEZ-x4-w&t=236s>



hate to be the last man in this bunch



Am I a motorcycle, am I a boat, I'm so confused!



Historic Racing News.com November 28 at 6:28 AM · 📷

Now here's an interesting fact. These spectators at Brooklands in the 1930s have managed to take their boats (or 'punts') under the bridge on the River Wey to view the circuit action. By doing it this way, they avoided paying to get in and were known as 'the punters', the origin of the expression!

Norton Colorado 2020 Event Schedule

February

2/1 (Saturday): Winter Banquet

March

3/1 (Sunday, 10am): Open Garage @ Ric and Joy Landeira (tire mounting demo by Rick Black)

3/15 (Sunday, noon): Pub Meeting: Streets of London

April

4/5 (Sunday): Tech Day/Open Garage @ Bob Martin

4/19 (Sunday, 9am): Group Ride

May

5/2 (Saturday): Open Garage @ Al & Barb Slarks

5/17 (Sunday): OBR 18

June

6/27-28 (Sat-Sun): Riverside Run

July

7/5 (Sunday): Mt Evans Ride & Brunch @ David Sheesley

August

8/1-2 (Saturday-Sunday): Wimpy Campout @ Jamie & Michelle Jones

8/16 (Sunday): Open Garage @ Dennis Horgan

September

9/11-13 (Friday-Sunday): Cotopaxi overnighter

9/20 (Sunday): English Conclave

October

10/3 (Saturday): Group Ride or Open Garage

10/18 (Sunday): Plains Ride (Scott & Julie Robinson)

November

11/1 (Sunday): Tech Day at MotoWorks Denver

TBA (Saturday): DU Hockey Night

December

12/6 (Sunday): Pub Meeting at Pints Pub

January 2021

1/1 (Friday): New Year's Day Ride

1/17 (Sunday): Pub Meeting at Lincoln's Roadhouse



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

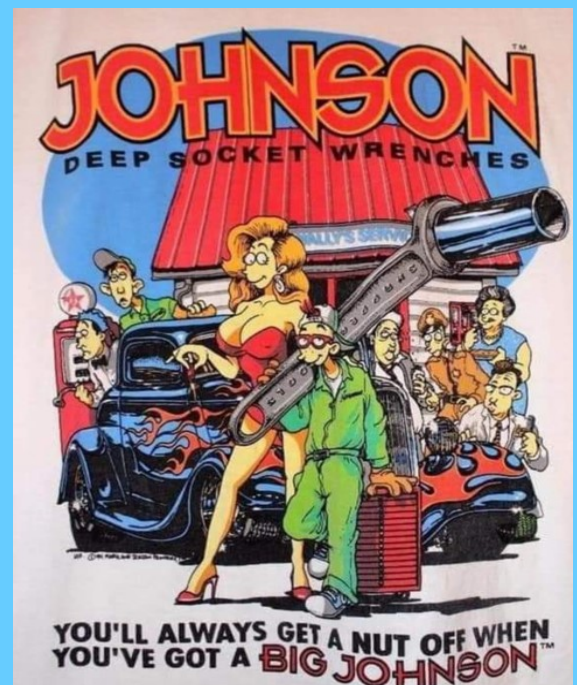
Many events have been scheduled for the 2020 season, usually about 2 per month. Participation in these events will be counted for the President's Award. Events may be added, dropped, or re-scheduled through the year. The schedule can be found in this newsletter or check the schedule on the club website:

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

Prez Points Standings Top 10 (2019):

points, events, solo rides

Scott Robinson	77	15	10
David Sheesley	59	13	10
Ron Weaver	59	13	0
Jack Abeyta	50	14	0
Mike Fields	39	9	4
Eric Bergman	34	19	0
Jamie Jones	33	9	0
Jerry Doe	29	8	1
James Lafler	27	5	13
Peggy Abeyta	26	10	0



Current Occupants

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Credits: Thanks to Peter Allen, John Dahl, Jerry Doe, Bob Herman, James Lafler, Dennis Oberwetter, Frank Puckett and Jerry Pokorny 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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