



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



Norton Colorado

www.nortoncolorado.org

Newsletter

May 2024



Upcoming Events *2024 Calendar See Page 9*

May 19, 2024 (Sunday, 10-1), Open Garage hosted by Ric and Joy Landeira.

June 2, 2024 (Sunday), Big Tent BBQ hosted by Eric Bergman & Susan Saarinen.

Look for club emails or check the website for more details about these gatherings.

From David Campbell in Japan.

Japan has an avid motorcycle culture running the gamut of genres. It exceeded anyplace I've lived in just randomly seeing ultra rare motorcycles passing my house, or out in the countryside. Many times I saw exotics go by but couldn't get a good pic, for example two of my all time favs; Ducati 70's Mike Hailwood Special, 900 Supersport (black/gold), and 80's 750 F1. Multiple Nortons and Moto Guzzi's on the road too.

But the funky chopper things are the weirdest sub cult ever.



Jerry Doe Gets His Tank Repaired by Eric Bergman

Last week Jerry Doe called me in a panic. He was just finishing assembly of his beautiful Mk3 Interstate for the riding season and noticed the tank was leaking fuel near one of the front mounting points. He assumed the tank was ruined and quickly order a new Indian-made one, which of course would have needed to be painted, striped, etc. But he wondered if I had any good ideas about a way to save the original tank. There actually is some goop designed to stop gas leaks from the outside for emergencies but that wasn't going to meet the need, so I fell back to my 100% fool-proof solution to every problem ever encountered on a Norton Commando:



I suggested that Jerry call Jim Comstock. Jerry immediately called Jim and after a little back and forth, they decided that Jerry could bring his tank to Jim's shop the next day. I went along to see what Jim would do and to catch up on what's been happening in Jim's world. It turns out that this kind of failure is fairly common with steel Interstate tanks, which because of their greater capacity put a considerable load on those two front mounting studs. The sloshing back and forth eventually weakens the braze that attaches the bung to the sheet metal and it leaks. It's a relatively rare problem with Roadster tanks and probably unheard of with Hi-Riders. The answer is to weld it. Jerry did his best to empty the



tank of fuel but we all know that's impossible in any reasonable length of time. He posted on AccessNorton about all this and was told by several people, "fill the tank with water" to avoid igniting the lingering fuel and vapors in the tank. Jim's approach is different; turn the tank upside down, cap off one petcock hole and inserted a line from the welding cart in the other to fill the tank with inert gas (CO2 and argon). This takes a little while so we left it to purge and

went to lunch. Afterward Jim used a rotary wire brush to scrape down to fresh metal around the bung and quickly welded it. There's no disturbance of the paint job on the outside, and a quick shot of black paint on the welded area finishes the job. Jim strongly recommends replacing the original studs in these tanks with Lord mounts, the rubber discs with studs poking out both sides that are used on the exhaust system mounts. They are less prone to causing failures of this type. I would suggest that it's probably a good idea to keep Interstate tanks only partially filled unless you're actually doing a long haul with one. I know several club members have been worried about Jim's ability to finish some long-standing machine work on their Norton engines due to health problems, including major back surgery, and the unforeseen need to move his entire shop across the street on short notice. The new shop is not 100% functional according to Jim, but to me and Jerry it looked pretty close. There were dozens of freshly-painted cyl-



inders staged near the boring machine, which was running on one as Jim worked on the tank. It's clear there is more of a backlog of work than anyone would wish, but I came away very encouraged that Jim is now able to start making major headway on that. And as a final tidbit, I will share Jim's comment to us about what makes a Norton engine REALLY RUN: big valves.



Scott Has A "New" Ride

(No, it's not a Norton.)

Those of you who have known me for a while might be thinking "That looks just like your old bike." Well, you'd be right, sort of. I first purchased this 2003 Harley Road King in 2003. There was about 10,000 miles on the clock. I rode the bike for 13 years, logging almost 160,000 miles. The bike was starting to feel worn out so I parked it and bought a used 2015 Road King. Seven years and 80,000 miles later I was thinking a new bike would be nice.



I checked out the new Road Kings and was disappointed. The starting price for a **stripped down** RK was \$28,000. By the time I paid taxes, fees etc. and added the parts I needed I was looking at almost \$40,000. Crazy!! I looked at used ones and was not impressed. Now what?

I got to thinking that my garage is full and I would have to part with a bike to buy a new one. I like my collection and don't really want to sell a bike. A new idea began to gel in my little brain. Why not rebuild my old Road King which I always loved? While pondering this one afternoon I was riding down St. Vrain Canyon in a thunderstorm and I saw about 20 new Harleys along the side of the road. I thought, "Why buy a new bike if you can't ride it in the rain?" My mind was made up.

Not wanting to spend two years in my garage, giving up hours of riding time I talked with Curtis at Thunderbird Motorcycles in Wheat Ridge and along with Zach, his mechanic, we formed a plan. First, I wanted more motor. S&S Cycle makes a T-111 (111 inches of power!!) specifically for tour bikes. Of course, I needed a new exhaust and tuner to go with my new motor. Might as well add a 6-speed overdrive transmission to the project. Zach checked out the bike and rebuilt or replaced everything. Our goal was to have a new bike when I rolled it out of the shop. And that's what I've got, a new customized, beautiful tour bike. Not sure I can really call it a Harley anymore.

It rides like a dream. It is a much more comfortable ride than my 2015 RK. I can feel the torque as I twist the throttle. Feels like it'll pull out a tree stump. The bike goes as fast as I **need** to go. After the break-in period I suspect it will go as fast as I **want** to go. I also bet it will have no problem running in the rain. Can't wait to take it out on the road again.



You let women vote, next thing you know, they are smoking and riding motorbikes!!



A little nostalgia...



John Surtees, 1954



M40 John Surtees



London bike show 1967



Ava Gardner and Bill Travers

Some British Air goes nearly half-way round the world.



Mr. Douglas Hill left London last March in an attempt to circle the world alone and in record time on a motor-cycle combination (H.R.D. with J.A.P. engine and Watsonian Sidecar). He crossed France and Spain to Vigo, shipped to Cuba, took steamer again to New Orleans, and thence across America to California. Though he encountered very bad going, and temperatures of 120° in the shade (but no shade) on the Texas, New Mexican, and Arizona deserts, he arrived at Long Beach, California, with the original British air in his front, sidecar, and two spare wheel tyres. He is using John Bull Tyres and Tubes, and his outfit weighs 745 lbs. plus petrol and 9 stone of rider.

This record might have been very much greater, but at Long Beach, Hill was laid up for seven weeks with flu and further delayed by a broken right hand. By September 7th he was well on his way again, having crossed Japan, which country he reached from Vancouver.

JOHN BULL TYRES

These Tyres stand up to Colonial Road conditions in a way that builds big business for all who handle them.

THE LEICESTER RUBBER CO. LTD. LEICESTER.

When you need Pure British Air please buy from Allen's pure air imports Think of the extra points that judges would give you if you had Pure British air in your tires We can of course order special location British Air for you ,such as Stevenage or more exotic places like Birmingham (filtered of course) this type of air will come at a premium cost. Of course this is all Bull. Peter

uncomplicated sophistication
the successful formula of the Norton Commando Superbike.



Just compare the Norton Commando with the other large capacity bikes, it looks as though you've won the prize.

Break a heritage of racing experience and development, plus a clear understanding of what a modern rider requires, to produce a machine with such a high degree of sophistication. Light in weight for one of the big bikes, the Norton Commando handles with a deftness rare in a production machine. In all conditions, at all speeds, the ease of engineering skill goes into all you want - and more besides.

With superb road-holding, an inimitable flexible power curve, reducing gear changing to a minimum, a torque reserve richly provided by the remarkably lightest construction and the easy maintenance offered by the big bike, it is no surprise that the Norton Commando has become the most widely distributed. For three years running the Norton Commando has been chosen by Britain's "Motor Cycle News" readers free of all as "Machine of the Year".

Norton Commando 750s
with 1000cc Superbike engine

Motorcycle Stuff on the web:

Check out the club websites new photo galleries:

<https://nortoncolorado.org/galleries/>

Here's the link to the discussions page on the website:

<https://nortoncolorado.org/discussions/>

Hundreds of bike photos and other stuff on this guys time lines open the headers

<https://motorcyclimeline.com/murrays-timelines/>

[The Decline of BSA \(youtube.com\)](#)

Norton Story

<https://www.motorcycleclassics.com/classic-british-motorcycles/classic-norton-motorcycles/saved-by-commando-zm0z24mizbro/?>

[utm_source=social&utm_medium=post&fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0BMQAQABHSmEpe1f14zZ9PGZ5fZpfVDG3rMsSfvRH7IETXcgsxGUA7y9vmqSHlijlw_aem_ATkWPH8icaBqYiXvofjcAq1EO3bAVGrQ1T_9XzKWKcdC5m8Tp11demERgkftjBQsles](https://www.motorcycleclassics.com/classic-british-motorcycles/classic-norton-motorcycles/saved-by-commando-zm0z24mizbro/?utm_source=social&utm_medium=post&fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0BMQAQABHSmEpe1f14zZ9PGZ5fZpfVDG3rMsSfvRH7IETXcgsxGUA7y9vmqSHlijlw_aem_ATkWPH8icaBqYiXvofjcAq1EO3bAVGrQ1T_9XzKWKcdC5m8Tp11demERgkftjBQsles)



"What do you mean you were having so much fun riding your new bike you lost track of time? You've been gone for over a year!"



LCW Post 1 Color Guard *Car and Motorcycle Show*

Saturday, June 15, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Car/Motorcycle parking starts at 9:00 a.m.

Food & Beverages, Prizes, Music

All in support of the Post 1 Color Guard

LCW Post 1 – 5400 East Yale Avenue, Denver, CO 80222

(303) 757-1919

Lcwpost1cg@gmail.com

Entry fee: \$20/Vehicle - \$15 Motorcycle

No admittance fee for viewing

Jesse Carraway mentioned that he recently acquired most of the used parts, and possibly a number of new ones, from Matt Rambow at Colorado Norton Works. Matt is no longer building complete bikes so he doesn't need that inventory. Jesse had previously purchased the inventory of the club's Parts Depot when we lost our storage site and he already had a large inventory of his own parts, so at this point I think it is safe to say Jesse has the largest inventory of Norton parts in Colorado. He is glad to help out fellow club members who are in need:

Jesse Carraway
(303) 980-6641

jesse@fastmail.fm

Bob Herman has some Norton parts to sell:

I have several Commando seats and a tailpiece that I don't need, and I'd like to offer them to club members before going to eBay or Craigslist with them I don't know what to charge but will take less from a Norton Colorado member than from an "outsider."

1 nice Mk3 seat with hinge

1 nice 750 seat

1 Fastback tailpiece - good shape except for a small crack (damaged in shipping, easily repaired)

I'm going to bring them up to Golden, they will be at Eric's house so a club member won't need to drive down here or pay a big shipping charge.

Bob Herman 719 256-4527; romomoto@gmail.com

Eric Bergman [<bergman@csd.net>](mailto:bergman@csd.net)



Fastback tailpiece

MK3 seat



Highrider seat base

Norton Colorado 2024 Event Schedule

February 4, 2024 (Sunday), 5pm, Winter Banquet, African Grill and Bar.

March 23, 2024 (Saturday), Rocky Mountain Motorcycle Museum, Colorado Springs.

April 21, 2024 (Sunday), Group Ride.

May 19, 2024 (Sunday, 10-1), Open Garage hosted by Ric and Joy Landeira.

June 2, 2024 (Sunday), Big Tent BBQ hosted by Eric Bergman & Susan Saarinen.

June 8, 2024 (Saturday), 8am to 2pm, Colorado Vintage Motorcycle Show, Erie United Methodist Church, 604 Holbrook St., Erie 80516, contact Bob Kelly (720) 837-9090, <SuperHawk65@gmail.com>.

June 13-16, 2024 (Thursday-Sunday), Four Corners Rendezvous hosted by Steve Harris and Charley Gremmels.

June 17-21, 2024 (Monday-Friday), INOA Rally, Woodstock, New Hampshire.

July 7, 2024 (Sunday), Mt. Evans Ride and Brunch hosted by David Sheesley.

July 21, 2024 (Sunday), BMAC Picnic hosted by Frank & Joanne Puckett.

August 3-4, 2024 (Saturday-Sunday), Wimpy Sleepover hosted by Jamie & Michelle Jones.

August 18, 2024 (Sunday), Open Garage.

September 8, 2024, Sunday, Old Bike Ride.

September 15, 2024 (Sunday), English Motoring Conclave.

October 6, 2024 (Sunday), Plains Ride, hosted by Scott and Julie Robinson.

October 27, 2024 (Sunday), Open Garage, hosted by Jonathan Chaikin and Tamara Hale.

November 9, 2024 (Saturday), Fall Tech Day.

December 8, 2024 (Sunday), Pints Pub.

January 1, 2025 (Wednesday), Clancy's Irish Pub.

January 12, 2025 (Sunday), Piper Inn.

February 1, 2025 (Saturday) Winter Banquet. (Ideas for a new venue? Contact Eric)



Membership

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

Dues are \$25 per 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 2024 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:

<https://nortoncolorado.org/events/>

**Good Men
Do Exist.
We're Just**

**Building Motorbikes, buying
Motorbikes, thinking about
buying Motorbikes, buying
parts to fix Motorbikes,
talking about Motorbikes,
racing Motorbikes..**



Current Occupants

Officers

President

Arnie Beckman (303) 733-4239
president@nortoncolorado.org

Secretary

Eric Bergman (720)400-7835 **NEW #**
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Credits: Thanks to Peter Allen, Eric Bergman, Bob Herman, Julian Kowalewski, Dennis Oberwetter and Al Slarks 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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