



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



Norton Colorado

www.nortoncolorado.org Newsletter

August 2026



Upcoming Events **2026** Calendar See Page 11

August 8, 2026 (Saturday), BBQ and open garage hosted Jamie & Michelle Jones.
August 16, 2026 (Sunday) Open Garage/Tech Day,
September 13, 2026, Sunday, Old Bike Ride.

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

Four Corners Rendezvous by Bob Herman

Photos by Bob, Charley Gremmels and Darrell Teeples



The Four Corners Rendezvous has been an annual event for decades. The scope, focus and demographics have evolved, as often happens. Initially passed around among the four states of the southwest, ultimately the rally settled in south-western Colorado. By the time I became involved the event was being held in Dolores. After a few years Steve and Charley brought the venue to a campground on the West Dolores River. A great venue - until a raging wildfire closed the national forest and, of course, the campgrounds. At that point Steve and Charley reluctantly cancelled the Rendezvous.

But wait - there's more! In the 11th hour, Sam Manganaro offered up his expansive rural property and saved the day. Since then the Rendezvous has been held at Sam's place. And the erstwhile broad base of participants from out of state has gradually narrowed down to a predictable core group from the western slope, with a smattering of local nonmembers and a few diehard front range Norton Colorado members.

While it's disappointing that the numbers have dwindled, that seems to be a ubiquitous trend as we all "mature" and attrition takes its toll. That said, the core group of dedicated attendees always have a great time, and this year's Rendezvous was no exception. The camaraderie, great day rides, stories shared around the fire ring - and the inevitable supervised tech sessions - made for a great event.

This year, Steve and Charley surprised the group by declaring that there would be no rally fee - they were gifting the event to us all. But the attendees reciprocated, showing their gratitude by anonymously filling a donation box with gestures of appreciation.

Saturday's dinner was generously sponsored by Karen Leavitt, who apparently had been bankrupting the Indian casino of late.

Tim Johnson, visiting from Iowa, won the traditional 50-50 raffle and showed his class by donating the proceeds back to the club. Door prizes were many and varied, largely from the archives of Sam Manganaro's many years in the vintage BritBike world.

The Four Corners Rendezvous is one of my "must" events annually. I encourage all Norton Colorado members to make the scene next year.





Time for a tech session

Steve Harris on his scary fast drag bike.

Bob H preparing to head out on the Ariel Red Hunter



Mount Blue Sky (Mt. Evans) Ride and Brunch

Hosted by Dave Sheesley and Matt And Mariah Norman

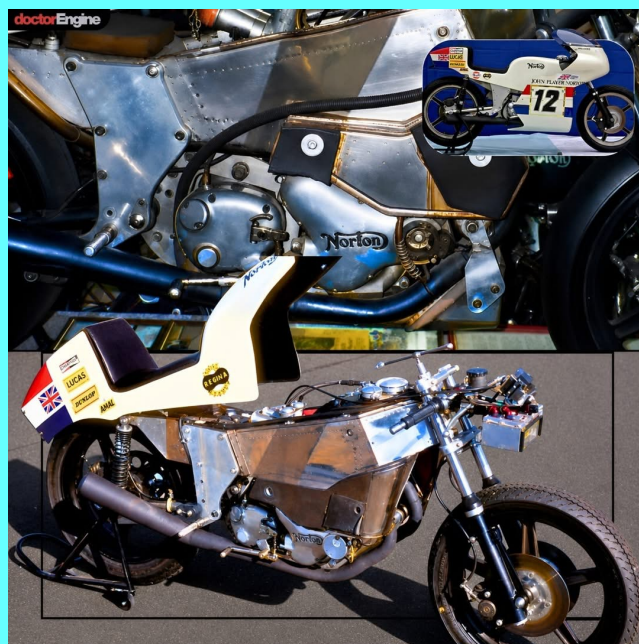
Pictures by Jack Abeyta



1973 John Player Norton Monocoque

The 1973 John Player Norton Monocoque was a motorcycle that won by thinking smarter, not simply by making more horsepower. Against the rising wave of powerful Japanese two-strokes, Norton still relied on an old-school pushrod twin—but Peter Williams surrounded it with one of the most advanced racing chassis ideas of the era.

At its heart was a 746cc air-cooled OHV parallel-twin, developed from the Norton Commando engine family. With a 73 mm x 89 mm bore and stroke, it kept the traditional long-stroke British character, giving strong torque and a hard mechanical drive rather than the screaming powerband of a two-stroke racer.



In racing tune, the engine produced around 76 horsepower at 7,200 rpm. That was respectable, but not enough to overpower the strongest opposition on pure speed alone. The Norton had to win through efficiency, aerodynamics, low weight, stability, and Peter Williams' ability to extract every bit of performance from the machine.

The engine remained a pushrod design, which made its success even more impressive. While rivals were chasing multi-cylinder layouts and high-output two-stroke technology, the JPN still used a fundamentally old British twin. But careful tuning, a strong crank setup, improved breathing, and race preparation allowed the motor to stay competitive.

The real revolution was the stainless steel monocoque chassis. Instead of using a normal tubular frame, the structure acted as the motorcycle's spine and helped carry fuel and oil low in the bike. That lowered the center of gravity, reduced frontal area, and turned the whole motorcycle into a smarter racing package.

Aerodynamics were just as important. The wind-tunnel-developed fairing wrapped the rider and machine into a cleaner shape, helping the Norton cut through the air more efficiently. In a class where the engine was down on raw power, reducing drag was like finding hidden horsepower.

Then came the legendary result: Peter Williams won the 1973 Isle of Man Formula 750 TT on the John Player Norton Monocoque. It was a victory for engineering intelligence, rider skill, and British stubbornness. The old pushrod twin should have been obsolete, but in the right chassis, with the right rider, it became a race winner.

The Norton JPS Monocoque engine story remains special because it proves that racing is not only about horsepower. With its 746cc Commando-based OHV twin, 76-horsepower output, stainless monocoque chassis, aerodynamic fairing, and Isle of Man TT victory, it became one of the most brilliant underdog machines in British racing history.



John Player Norton

The John Player Norton looked like a futuristic British racer, but underneath that dramatic white-and-black bodywork lived a very old-school heart. Its engine was based on Norton's famous 828cc air-cooled OHV parallel twin, the same basic family that powered the Commando 850, giving the JPS a blend of classic British torque, vibration, sound, and racing identity.

The engine used a 77 mm x 89 mm bore and stroke, making it long-stroke and full of low-to-midrange pull. Norton called it an "850," but the true displacement was around 828cc. Unlike high-revving multi-cylinder rivals from Japan, the Norton twin delivered its performance with heavy pulses, strong torque, and a muscular mechanical feel that belonged to the last great era of big British parallel twins.

In production trim, the engine used dual 32 mm Amal Concentric carburetors, a 4-speed gearbox, and produced around 60 bhp, depending on specification and tuning. Some catalog or detuned figures were lower, but the character was always the same: not a screaming engine, but a hard-pulling twin with real road presence and enough speed to wear the John Player Norton name with pride.

The key to making this engine livable was Norton's Isolastic frame system. A large parallel twin naturally creates serious vibration, especially with an engine this big and long-stroke. Norton mounted the engine in rubber isolation points, helping separate the rider from the harshest vibration while still allowing the bike to retain its classic twin-cylinder personality.

The racing story gave the JPS its magic. Factory race machines developed around the John Player Norton program, especially under the influence of Peter Williams, pushed the concept much further, with race versions reaching around 70 horsepower. Some machines also used 750cc short-stroke configurations to suit class rules, showing how flexible and competitive Norton's old twin could still be when properly developed.

The 1974 John Player Norton engine remains special because it stood at the crossroads of eras. It was not as modern as the new Japanese superbike engines, but it carried something deeply charismatic: an 828cc British OHV twin, Amal carburetion, Isolastic engineering, racing bodywork, and the spirit of Norton fighting to stay relevant. It was old technology dressed for the future—and somehow, that made it unforgettable.



Bob Herman turned me on to this wonderful motorcycle museum in Indiana. He said if I was ever in the neighborhood I should check it out. Being only about 120 miles from Julie's mother's place in Indianapolis I figured that was "in the neighborhood". Scott





WORLD OF MOTORCYCLES MUSEUM, INC.
1934 SCOTT
 MODEL: 500cc FLYING SQUIRREL
 LIQUID COOLED 2-STROKE
 BUILT IN: ENGLAND



WORLD OF MOTORCYCLES MUSEUM, INC.
CUSTOM BUILT
 POWERED BY: 1939 LINCOLN ENGINE
 Builder: Duke Olson
 This motorcycle was custom built and is powered with a 1939 Lincoln Zephyr car engine. Water cooled, flat head V-12, with 1-speed transmission and stock automotive clutch.

WORLD OF MOTORCYCLES MUSEUM, INC.
1924 DOUGLAS
 BUILT IN: COVENTRY, ENGLAND
 Original Price: Approx. (US Money) \$250



Rust & Ruin



motorworks

10650 Irma drive UNIT 22
Northglenn CO
720-232-9321
Rustandruinmotorworks.com

@rustandruinmotorworks/instagram

DIY space rental

Kustom Builds

Restorations

Paint

Oil Changes

tire mount and balance

Repairs/Maintenance

DIY space available

We work on all makes
and models of motorcycles

Here's the card of another shop that will work on British motorcycles. They offer do it yourself space as well.

This is the card of Bryan Flanagan, used to work at Vintage Twins. Started his own shop about 6 months ago. I've used him for vapor blasting, good guy. Also works on older Jap bikes. Harder and harder these days to find someone to work on classic stuff, spread the word to the club and bring him your business!

TROPHY CLASSIC CYCLES

175 Commerce St. Unit 3
Broomfield, CO 80020
720-432-2722

info@trophyclassiccycles.com
www.trophyclassiccycles.com

Colorado's British Motorcycle Specialists



www.morriesplacecycle.com
Since 1954

- New & Used Parts
- Vintage Bike Service
- Full Machine Shop
- We Ship Daily

5410 Austin Court
Ringwood, Illinois 60072
morriesplc@aol.com

Ed Zender
815.653.7000



Martin White, a long time Norton Club member, is starting a new business. He's offering a discount to club members. Contact him for more information.



INSTRUCTION TRANSPORTATION
CONSULTATION ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE
PRE-PURCHASE INSPECTION

martinpowersports303@gmail.com (303) 931-5623

Motorcycle Stuff on the web:

Check out the club websites new photo galleries:

[Norton Colorado Motorcycles - Photo Galleries](#)

Lads: A friend sent me the link to this great documentary BBC did of the Formula 750 TT in 1973. Lads: A friend sent me the link to this great documentary BBC did of the Formula 750 TT in 1973. Best quote: "The machine may not be reliable, but the rider is."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncKdYCyZugk>

Gilded Wheels of Extravagance: The Golden Motorbike Unveiled

In a blaze of opulence, the Gulf of Motorcycles' opening week in Dubai witnessed an awe-inspiring moment when Danish company Lauge Jensen unveiled their unrivaled masterpiece: the golden motorbike. A marvel of engineering and luxury, this gilded ride stunned onlookers with its breathtaking design and an exclusive price tag of \$850K.



Beyond its gleaming gold facade, the motorbike flaunted a lavish crocodile-skin upholstery, exuding sophistication fit for the elite. Adorned with 250 diamonds totaling seven carats, this two-wheeled treasure became a sparkling symbol of unparalleled wealth. The most expensive bike ever built, this golden sensation redefined the boundaries of extravagance, capturing the imaginations of luxury enthusiasts worldwide.

Jesse Carraway 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

Norton Colorado **2026** Event Schedule

Here is the first draft of the club's **2026** event schedule. I've taken the liberty (based on past performance) of listing you as a host for an event. Please have a look and let me know if you are still willing to host an event, or if the date needs to be changed. Also, if you would like to host an event of some sort, please contact Eric.

February 7, 2026 (Saturday),

March 28, 2026 (Saturday) Shop visit to Jesse Carraway's,

April 12, 2026 (Sunday), Group Ride, TBA

May 17, 2026 (Sunday), AMCA Swap Meet,

May 17, 2026 (Sunday) Distinguished Gentleman's Ride

June 7, 2026 (Sunday), Big Tent BBQ hosted by Eric Bergman & Susan Saarinen.

June 13, 2026 (Saturday), 8am to 2pm, Colorado Vintage Motorcycle Show, Erie

June 18-21, 2026 (Thursday-Sunday), Four Corners Rendezvous hosted by Steve Harris and Charley Gremmels

June 20-21, 2026 (Saturday-Sunday), Riverside Ride, hosted by Mike Powell

June 22-26, 2026 (Monday-Friday), INOA Rally, Buena Vista, Virginia.

July 12, 2026 (Sunday), Mt. Evans Ride and Brunch hosted by David Sheesley & Matt Norman.

July 19, 2026 (Sunday), BMAC Picnic hosted by Frank & Joanne Puckett.

August 8, 2026 (Saturday), BBQ and open garage hosted Jamie & Michelle Jones.

August 16, 2026 (Sunday) Open Garage/Tech Day,

September 13, 2026, Sunday, Old Bike Ride.

September 20, 2026 (Sunday), English Motoring Conclave.

October 11, 2026 (Sunday), Plains Ride, hosted by Scott and Julie Robinson.

October 25, 2026 (Sunday), Open Garage, hosted by Jonathan Chaikin and Tamara.

November 8, 2026 (Saturday) Open Garage/Tech Day TBA

December 6, 2026 (Sunday), Pub meeting.

January 1, 2026 (Friday), Clancy's Irish Pub.

January 17, 2026 (Sunday), Pub meeting.

February 6, 2027 (Saturday) Winter Banquet.



In case Jack wasn't already cool enough, he now has a Panhead Chopper. Lookin' good, Jack.



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/>



Current Occupants

Officers

President

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

Secretary

Eric Bergman (720)400-7835 **NEW #**
secretary@nortoncolorado.org

Treasurer

Charley Gremmels
1832 Forest Ave., Durango, CO 81301
970-946-1302
treasurer@nortoncolorado.org

Staff

Road Captain

Jack Abeyta (303) 426-0594
abeytaa@aol.com

Newsletter Editor

Scott Robinson (303) 287-6580
(303) 915-3064
newsletter@nortoncolorado.org

Webmaster

David Sheesley (720) 277-6563
webmaster@nortoncolorado.org

Technical Advisor

Jim Comstock (719) 646-2610
comnoz2@juno.com

Credits: Thanks to Jack Abeyta, Charley Gremmels, Bob Herman, Julian Kowalewski, Jerry Pokorny and Darrell Teeple 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
1900 19th Street
Golden, CO 80401

