



Dear Andover Norton Customer,

We hope you have a good summer with many opportunities to ride and enjoy your bikes.

The Team in Andover gradually sorts through our stores and still finds the odd part we did not know we had. Sometimes due to the many moves over the years with parts going from North Way/Andover, to Shenstone, back to Andover, then to Southampton, then Hungerford, then Brunel Gate/Andover and now, at long last, back in North Way again! Not surprisingly, the odd Norton rotary part is found that wasn't on the inventory list we had from Richard Negus, but sometimes parts turn up that have been hibernating, for decades without anybody noticing, let alone identifying them. Always a happy occasion when it happens, though these are getting rarer now. We are now very near the day when everything is identified and has been allocated a space in the stores. This also includes tooling, including moulds for glass fibre parts.

### **Family Holidays**

During our Seifert family holiday in August the next generation was introduced to motorcycles thanks to our team in Andover who built a miniature replica of our F1R race bike. I must admit we did not trust the grandchildren (nearly 2, 3 & 4 years old) with the full power yet so the parents assisted their first rides. But all enjoyed the experience!



*Thank you, Andover Norton Team, for their first taste of motorcycling!*

### **BSB Thruxton**

In Andover our team was at the BSB round in Thruxton and took our 1:1 scale F1R with them. They were delighted when Trevor Nation came along and sat on the bike. Unfortunately we could not offer him to ride it on the track but would have loved to!



*Clever Trevor on Nepomuk. No doubt the bike was honoured!*

A highlight video of the weekend can be found on our Youtube Channel.



### **The Rotary 1000 miles W.O.T endurance Test by Bob Rowley**

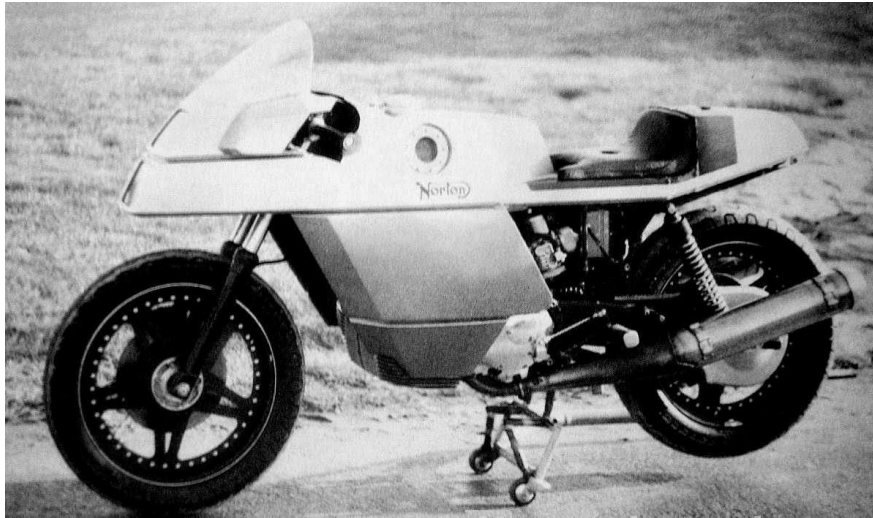
The Bike was built by John McLaren and Reg Painter (Andover Norton). Its looks have some of Tony Dennis's design lines.

On this bike I carried out a thousand miles WOT (Wide Open Throttle). This was in February 1982. I was lapping MIRA No.1 banked circuit at an average of 136 mph, Fred Swift was the Observer/Pit crew, still got Fred's lap times and notes in my Rowley Archives. My notes reflect the fact that the wheel manufacturer, Tony Dawson of Astralite, made me a wider rim overnight for the front, as the front end was feeling like it was washing out just entering the No.2 banking. This at the very top, the entry speed being in excess of 150 mph, the wider rim and bigger tyre showed that the lap times increased by 7 mph.

At the end of the test Norton drafted in Norman White to assist, but the bike setup was wholly unsuitable for Norman, him being 2/3rd's of my weight. He was getting shook around something terrible and we couldn't change the spec for him.

Besides in Fred's notes, he logged my remarks that I was bottoming out the exhausts at the top of the tunnel banking, which was the bumpiest part. We couldn't spare the track time to give Norman a chance to attempt to improve the bike to suit him as we had the

dedicated No.1 circuit booked for three or four days for joint use solely by Jaguar and Norton.



The Jaguar tester was to drive as fast as he could go. The Jag was cornering hard to highlight a flexing that was allowing the exhaust and prop shaft to touch on a left hand drive prototype V12 two seater. His limitations was the rear end noticeably drifting all the way around the banking what seemed like half a tyre width and if I was following close my visor was peppered with rubber. We quickly got into a routine as I could pass him down the straights, I knew that he had seen me approaching, I could see his head move looking in his mirror, or he would indicate one flash so we only very occasional got in anyone's way.

A frightening incident occurred near midday. A mini car that could only be described as a joy rider came onto the circuit and decided to whilst already in the turn to run up the No.2 Banking like a mini wall of death perhaps showing off to some passengers. I was already into No.2 banking, (just a note on the banking when you are entering you look straight ahead and get your entry just right, for me it was around the about 0.5 meter away from the railings and once into the banking as the g-forces built the bike settled down and then looked across as you can't look ahead), it was then that I noticed him playing around, and I shot past him just as he was going down, Fred Swift witnessed it and he confronted the well-shaken guy and his passengers at the control tower. I had to restrain Fred as I had come in just after to settle my nerves, I'm not sure what happened to him as the Circuit manager had got wind of it as his deputy Chris had seen it unfold.

We had a recurring routine, which was for Fred to flash the headlamp on the van as I could see it when approaching the tunnel banking, I seemed to have done a lot of laps one stint and as I suspected Fred had nodded off, I came off the No.1 circuit and rolled up to Fred, and I gently tapped the window, Fred rolled the window down and said: "Does this mean that I have to get out of this nice warm van?"

In the test we replaced 2 rear tyres and 1 front, not counting the abandoned smaller front tyre. Oh, and one set of underpants.

*A little memory from Joe: in my early days as a trade visitor to the Shenstone factory I remember seeing this bike half-hidden in a workshop in the left, smaller factory building. My question what it was was wrongly answered by some factory hand who said it was a "prototype of a civilian model" which at that time, the mid-1980s, did not yet exist.*



## **Demented World Record Attempt?**

Talking of records Karl told me there was talk of an attempt to get the 1990s “Norton V8 Dementis” into running condition in an attempt to push the sorry contraption to a speed record. Unfortunately I don’t currently have the time to delve into my files about this misled investment scheme, but I hope I can present the whole sorry story in a future “Source”.



The V8 “Dementis” sported basically two ZX7R top ends of the time on a common crankcase. “Developed” over many years by a self-proclaimed engine guru at great cost to naive and wealthy, mostly American, investors”.

Suffice to say “Terrible Terry” Snelling, then a journalist of MCN, admitted to me all action pictures were taken with non-running bikes rolling down a slope. No doubt not their own idea since the same was done with a Zundapp 350 twin prototype with a silver-painted wooden engine in Germany about 2 decades earlier. The wooden engine did not stop the “tester” of “Motorrad” magazine, the late “Klacks” Leverkus, to write a detailed road test!

## **Our Bikes**

### **Joe:**

### **Lydia, the 1992 F1 Sport**

After the carb overhaul I found the time just before my holidays to install the well-fettled carbs on Lydia. A major undertaking and Paul and I agreed to fit the choke cable was the greatest nightmare, never mind all the other hiccups I encountered. Starting the bike got it running over 3000rpm which puzzled me and led me to fiddle with the mixture screws to no avail. Looking more closely I saw the throttle cable had jumped out of its seat at the front of the engine. Yes, I should have noticed the cable had no free play! Then the choke cable connector played up and hours later everything was at last ready to go.

The first test ride was at 30°C in the shade. Not ideal conditions, and the water temperature crept towards the red but didn’t quite hit it. Possible reason was that the water was on the low side, I had only just filled the system and it might have held some air bubbles that were

trapped in the engine, and I am not sure if the thermostat works correctly. Just to be on the safe side I have now ordered the lower temperature one [55-1108/74](#), which I will install asap, but with races coming up and another long motorcycle tour this month I'll see what I'll get done.

## **The Icen-Norton**



*Above: As bought in 2006(!) just outside Norton Motors Ltd in Rugeley.*

The Icen was a project I bought off its then owner through Richard Negus over a decade ago. Mainly to get the 5-speed Quaiffe in it. Only after researching its history and realising it was a contemporary pirate copy of the Gus Kuhn racer I decided to get it back into working condition.

I had hoped, against realistic judgement, to collect the Icen ready to race from Rainer zumach before this month's race meeting in Rijeka. However, it wasn't quite ready yet so I'll have to postpone the test rides to next spring. That said it now starts to look like a motorcycle again. So I'll have to use the TX and our old "Family Racer" which I haven't ridden for a while. I look forward to both.



## **The 650 Mercury**

Having ridden the Mercury to work for a week, I fell in love yet again with this very nice if mild little motorcycle. Just the job for little roads and no great rush. Makes me contemplate if I should use it for the across Germany tour we plan for later this month.

What becomes apparent is the lack of breaking. At the time the

simplex 8" brake was probably one of the best in the market, but in today's traffic brakes that work really well are an indispensable safety factor.

Given I had converted my Signal Orange roadster to a Norvil Proddy brake I had a spare duplex brake plate assembly ([06.3281](#)) and put that in. Easy to do but one also needs a new cable ([NM24987/TLS](#) for low bars, [NM25038/TLS](#) for high bars) and off you go. Having come to work on a SLS brake in the morning and gone back home on a TLS I can vouch this makes an enormous difference. Safe riding in modern traffic at last!



*Mercury with TLS brake plate 06.3281 and new brake cable NM24987/TLS.*

**Karl:**

**Norton Commander**





After covering a few more miles on the Commander it has started to show its age, with a few parts failing. This first issue is a known problem as the Indicators decided to stop working while out on a long ride, so I had to go back to old fashioned hand signals! Once back at Norton Motors workshop the team soon diagnosed the issue and fitted a new handle bar switch ([92.2271](#)).

While apart we took the opportunity to replace the Hand Grips - ([31A.26241.00](#)) Left hand & ([31A.26240.00](#)) Right hand.



*New - 92.2271 Fitted HANDLEBAR SWITCH L/H (P52) & 31A.26241.00 GRIP L/H*

While out riding I noticed the temperature gauge was moving around and not giving a true reading, and when the Commander runs at anywhere from 85 to 100 degrees, I found myself looking and worrying about it overheating, so a new one fitted. ([55.1227](#))



Over the coming months we will remove the fairing and send them away for painting & Repair, keeping the Dorchester Grey colour.

**Tales from the Workshop.**



Well, we hoped August would be a slower month to help us get on with some long-term project bikes, sadly the opposite occurred with more bikes appearing out of sheds and garages wanting recommissioning or serious repair.



*I think we should get our Model 50 going or leave as it is, any thoughts?*

This beautiful 1952 Model 7 was completed having had a full engine rebuild and rebuilt magneto and dynamo. Simon enjoyed his test ride so much it covered about 50 miles around our beautiful country lanes. Tough job but someone had to do it! Applications in the post written on £20 notes only please 😊

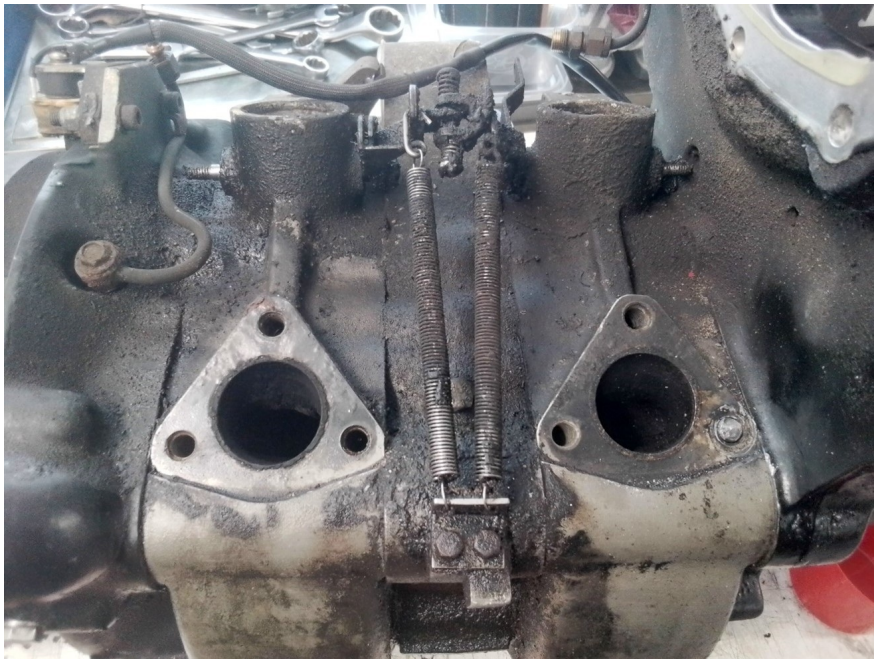


On the bench at present, we have a selection of rotary bikes, firstly a very special Commander which was no.1 off the production line and was used as the test bike for many magazine shoots. Sadly, having covered quite a few miles the water pump had broken up and the exhaust had seen better days.





One of the things we are looking at improving is the water pump and also new air-cooled and water-cooled exhaust pipes are in production after seeing the first test batch the other day. These have improved flanges for greater strength and should be less susceptible to stud corrosion as below!



The second rotary on the bench at present is a very beautiful NRS - 588 this has come out of storage for recommission and carb set up after the owner finding the cable routing for the choke assembly to be a tricky if not awkward to put it politely.



We will be doing a full check over to MOT standard and health check including our digital rotor compression test to confirm the condition

within the chambers for the owner. Lots to do but as you can guess we really enjoy working on all these bikes for you.

On the Commando front we now have new Tri-Spark ignitions in stock and with several bikes awaiting these we should be able to make some space for the next few months' projects on the way including a shed find Commando and another Norton 588 Classic.

On my project DKW 2000 from Sammy Miller, I have made a bit of progress and as the VMCC club visitors will confirm its beginning to roar if not putter into life. In fact, it surprised me when it sparked into life on the electric start and managed a good lap of our car park.



Happy and safe riding!

Paul and the Workshop Team.

### **A Big Thank You!**

During our Open Day and visit from the Vintage Motorcycle Club (VMCC) we were collecting donations in memory of Mick Hemmings for the Air Ambulance Service.

Thanks to everyone, we were able to raise a total of £271.45 for them, so thank you for your generosity!





**Andover Norton**

For raising

**£271.45**

Hampshire and Isle of Wight  
Air Ambulance  
Unit F4 Adanac Park, Adanac Drive, Nursling  
Southampton, Hampshire SO16 0BT



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**Thanks for reading this  
month's edition of "The  
Source"**

**The Team from Andover  
Norton**



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