



THE
SOURCE 10|2020

Dear Andover Norton Customer,

Due to an internal communications hiccup, our calendar printing took longer than anticipated. The calendars are now in stock:



Andover Norton International Ltd.
2021 Calendar



Paul & Kerry Dickson
Tasmania, Australia
1947 ES2 and Big 4

[Shop](#)

“Golden October”

Expecting a "Golden October" I not only took part in a short version of our annual "Old Boys Tour", but my wife and I also took the Commando with us to another hiking holiday in the Black Forest.

The Old Boys Tour, early in the month, was cold but nearly dry, so we enjoyed about 600 miles in three days on five Commandos and a Triumph(sorry!). One of us had made a small mistake with his oil pipes in his rebuild- no, not the usual one that results in an engine disaster! and saw smoke in his mirror on his last test ride and decided NOT to use his Commando. On the way back, dropping him at home, Fast Fraaaanzi saw the mistake and since then everything is fine...



Above: The offending beast at rest. One exchange of the pipes going into the oil tank and it could have taken part in the Old Boys Tour. What a shame!

The hiking holiday in what is normally, one of the sunniest and warmest regions of Germany, turned out as an often wet and always chilly period so bar one ride together that we both enjoyed despite the cold, and one I took alone, the Commando stayed in the garage. A shame given the beautiful roads and views the Black Forest offers!



Very windy, cold day hence the gloves strapped to the carrier for the photo... This is the paraglider start point at "Zuflucht" but temperatures and wind were so uninviting I was alone up there.

Andover's new soft- and hardware:

Meanwhile in Andover, as some of you may have noticed, a major change took place that Karl and Phil had worked towards with our team for months.

We have introduced a new software and stock managing system that has, after the expected early hick ups, speeded up our picking and packing considerably.



We are now near the point to pick, pack and despatch orders within 24 hours. The new bar codes and scanners will also reduce picking errors that did occur, though rarely, in the past, and lead to better stock control.

The money we invested in training and software is a high five figure sum that, we hope, will be to your benefit and make us serve you even better.

Book Review: Brad Jones: “Norton Villiers Triumph. Viable proposition or a house of cards?”

Norton Villiers Triumph

**Viable
proposition,
or a house of
cards?**



Brad Jones

Angela Hemmings drew my attention to this book which looks into creation and eventual failure of NVT. The author is obviously a BSA/Triumph fan, hence reserves a whole chapter to the B50 Speedway engine and another one to the Isolastic B50. The enthusiasm for the niches in the market for these stillborn projects I don't share, but that said this is probably my only criticism of the book.

I found the analysis of the various NVT/Norton strategies fair and the description of trade union politics as well as the constantly changing government policies and their failure to stick to agreements accurate and just.

As opposed to many other write-ups Dennis Poore is not seen as the big bad wolf but is correctly described as a man who really tried to make the British motorcycle industry rise from the ashes of the BSA/Triumph disaster. But he was taken for a ride, together with his Norton/Villiers concern, by politicians who were solely interested in personal profile or in proving their own views of industry.

Those who have read most books on the subject will find few new facts. That said it is a very good book showing the final crash of the British motorcycle industry was due to political maneuvers and trade-union self-interest and in-fights rather than a failure of the NVT management.

Single Carb Conversions

We get often asked for single carb conversions for Commandos. We intentionally don't offer them. The advantage of having but one carburetor are clear, especially if both carbs have had it and synchronizing them becomes impossible. Furthermore many owners never understood how to synchronize carbs, have erratic running even with carburetors in serviceable condition, and hence want this conversion.

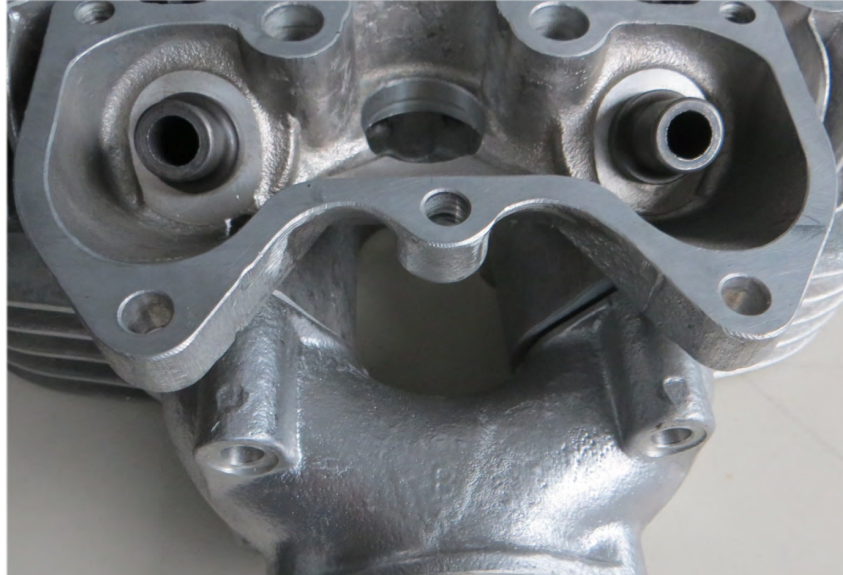
A recent mail from a Triumph customer and the picture he sent of his "T140E single carb conversion" done by a previous owner puts into a nutshell why I think these conversions aren't advisable especially on a Commando.



Above: The home-made conversion of a T140E to single carb. Also interesting how the bellmouth touches the old air filter casting thus leading to yet another handicap to air flow.

Triumph offered the "Tiger" and the "Bonneville" models with, in most years, the only difference being the cylinder heads. Doug Hele in a weak moment admitted there was virtually no power difference between the supposedly "super-sporty" Bonni and the "mild touring" Tiger. A test many years ago in a German magazine where the Bonni was put back-to-back on a test bed with the Tiger gave a difference in horsepower of about 2bhp maximum, something you may not even notice on the road.

However, a Tiger and a Bonneville have different cylinder heads. The Tiger head has the inlet ports slightly angled towards each other, and is designed to take a single manifold that lets the mixture into the head as directly as possible with minimum resistance and changes of direction. Manifold and Tiger cylinder head form a well engineered, extensively road and performance-tested package, unlike the manifolds invented in dark corners of a garage meant to go on Norton twin-carb heads.



Above: Triumph Tiger head and manifold showing how a proper engineer designs a working package.

A Commando head has the inlets parallel. That wasn't necessarily a problem for a 2 into 1 manifold as there was enough space behind the cylinder head to allow for a long manifold.

However, with the frame support tubes bracing plate making a more rearward mounting of a carburettor impossible, the 1 into 2 manifold needs to be as short as the normal ones and leads to the mixture taking two right angle turns on its way to the inlet valve.

A look into a Triumph manifold from the carburetor end shows you the peak of a nice curve towards the inlet tracts. A look into the aftermarket Norton ones shows you a flat wall, and you can virtually see the mixture hitting the brick wall and scratching its head...

With the gasses thus handicapped, the single carb Nortons run well up to about 4.500 to 5.000 RPM but then run out of steam as the gasses can't get round the bends fast enough. Some try to "improve" on that situation by fitting bigger carbs, which normally just makes the lower end of the rev range worse.

Mind Triumph used the same carb size on Tiger and Bonneville. A bigger carb just means a bigger hole and less air speed over the needle jet, thus worse mixture. If the inlet tract is then castrated, which it is by the 1 into 2 manifold, you have castrated your inlet in two ways.

Many say the range over 5000 RPM is of no interest to them. True in most riding conditions but think back to your last overtaking maneuver where things got a bit close and think again!

Which is why we don't offer this modification.

Ashley's Bit: Tyre Maintenance

Recently we had a new owner of a Commando that purchased an Avon Roadrunner tyre. After very little use it was found to be cracked around the side wall just above the rim on both sides of the tyre. The owner was unaware that the modern tyres needed to run at higher pressures, despite being the same tread pattern and type of tyre fitted in the '70's. The Avon website currently gives information on what pressure modern tyres fitted to classic motorcycles should have in them, problem is many owners still don't have internet access these days.

Please check your tyres weekly if you ride that often, after any prolonged period of inactivity, check not only the tread but also the sidewalls. Pressures do vary, check them cold and use an accurate as possible gauge to do so, this will help prolong the life of the tyre, give maximum capability from the tyre and ensure that water dispersal is effective. If you are leaving until it looks a bit soft, or feels a bit soft then it is most probably lacking a large amount of pressure.

FOR SALE: NORTON COMMANDO 750 MK1 1971 FRAME /ENGINE 141975

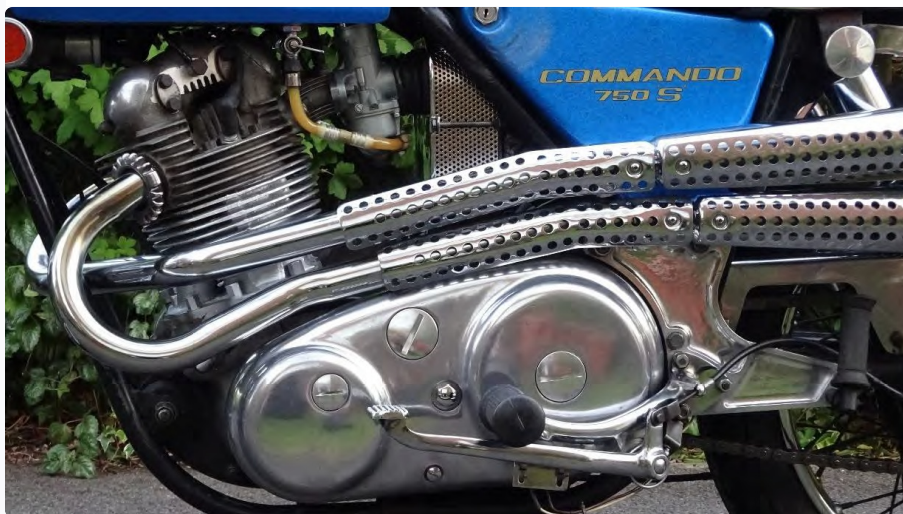
I purchased this Commando in January 2016. The seller had bought it from the first owner's widow in 1989 intending to restore it, but with many other bikes very little work was done and it remained a 'future project' for 26 years until its sale to me. The Commando was last used in the mid 1980's. I have more information on the bike's history if it of interest to the new owner, as well as photos of the bike when I purchased it in 2016.



My objective was to return the bike back to good working order without unnecessarily replacing original components and also to retain the interesting patina acquired over 45 years. The bikes petrol tank and side covers are still in their original metallic blue paint. The frame and swinging arm are in their factory black paint.

Many key components are the originals: front exhaust pipes, chrome mudguards, mudguard stays, headlamp and rim, headlamp halo and brackets, clutch & brake lever assemblies, air lever, Wipac horn/dip switch, rear light unit and fairing, amber & red reflectors, chainguard and air filter box, Dunlop front & rear wheel rims and side stand assembly.

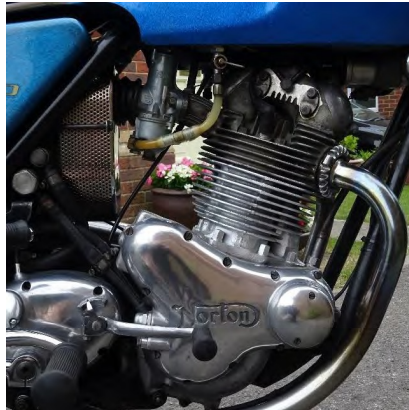
The chrome is in good condition. It still has both front and rear registration number plates. Some new parts have been fitted, all from Andover Norton. (This is not an inclusive list): handlebars, tyres, inner tubes, pistons & rings (standard size), big end shells (standard size), valve springs, fork stanchions, fork top bolts, fork bushes and seals, gearbox bearings, swinging arm spindle and bushes, rear drive chain, front and rear isolastics, 30mm Amal Premier twin carburettors, clutch friction plates. All receipts are available.



There are some upgrades: magnetic sump drain plug, Pazon Surefire ignition, Podtronics regulator/rectifier, later type centre stand fitted to the gearbox cradle (the original type centre stand fitted to the frame is hard to use and does not lift the wheel off the ground), external oil filter kit, gearbox layshaft roller bearing, chrome plated brass exhaust lockrings, which are less likely to loosen.

At first I replaced the 19 tooth gearbox sprocket with a 21 tooth one but reverted back to a 19 one as I prefer it for. The Roadster Mk1 has a central oil tank with a battery placed behind it, across the frame. The side covers and petrol tank are original and made of GRP (fibre glass). I have lined the petrol tank with Caswell clear two part sealant to protect it from ethanol fuel. I have used this before

and it is completely reliable. The first Roadster model was identical to the 'S' type, apart from the exhaust system. For the last few years I have run the bike with an 'S' type exhaust system (again from Andover Norton). Two exhaust systems are included in the purchase price (i.e. Roadster & 'S' type). The side cover decals currently fitted are 'S' type but Roadster ones will be included.



This Commando has been completely stripped down to its individual parts, assessed, all worn parts replaced and then re-assembled to ensure it is reliable in everyday use. I have many photos of the bike's rebuild. There are no signs of abuse, damage or broken fins to the engine or gearbox. The bike rides well. The clutch is quite light and the gears all engage cleanly. When purchased by myself the mileage was 25,283. I have since ridden 5,500 miles enjoyable miles on it. The bike is located in North Wiltshire, England. Please ask any questions. Viewers are welcome. Inquires can be made to simon.amos@andover-norton.co.uk

Price: £7,950

**That's all for "The Source" for now.
so until next time!**

The Team at Andover Norton



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