



Dear Andover Norton Customer,

March started with your orders at a never-previously-encountered level. We take it as your support in the unpleasant, undesired legal proceedings. Thank you for your solidarity!

Getting back to what we would like to spend 100% of our time on, spare parts, we are currently testing various new suppliers to continue to offer goods that for various reasons are no longer obtainable from our previous sources.

Seats are one of them. We had new press tools made and seat bases pressed. The last missing ones are those for the “Fastback” seats. To check the drawing we have, plus to check the original manufacture and upholstery, we obtained one of the very rare early orange seats from my friend Rudi and took it apart (Shock! Horror!).



The new bases are now in the making and will complete our range of seat bases. The next we heard was that our seat manufacturer is bankrupt. That did not hit us unprepared as we had already started to look for a new supplier and, samples permitting, we hope to have found one.

Since we still have a sizeable stock of the various seats we hope we can bridge the supply gap for you until the new ones get made.

Another front is our cast iron cylinder barrels. Again, we needed to find a new supplier since the previous foundry no longer casts iron. The current supply gap of the 850 barrels will shortly be filled by the last batch of barrels cast by the old company. These are now at honing and painting, so not very far away.



Above: The first new barrel cast by the new foundry. To be checked and (we hope) approved by us shortly.

Talking of the barrels gets me to one of the great mysteries of spares supply, the unpredictable demand. One should think history repeats itself so, for a company that has dealt in Norton parts for decades, it is easy enough to forecast demand.

Not so! My experience in my German company has always shown crazy fluctuations in demand, made the more inexplicable by the fact this demand comes in waves from totally unconnected customers many miles apart. On Triumphs the year 2022 in my shop showed an unprecedented and now unrepeated demand for all parts to fix the handlebars (Triumph part numbers [97.1425](#), [97.1580](#), [97.1581](#), [97.1527](#), [97.1529](#), [97.2221](#)). This demand was easy enough to satisfy since those are small, cheap parts that my suppliers stock in masses.

The 850 barrel gap was equally unpredictable but not so easy to rectify. When Ashley and I discussed the ratio 750 against 850 barrels for the last production run a couple of years ago we agreed on a ratio that made sense according to past sales in both companies. All was well until everybody seemed to decide they needed 850 barrels, not 750s..... So we still have a few 750 barrels but ran out of 850s a few months ago.

The same goes for stanchions, all made from the same high-quality steel tubing we have to get specially manufactured to the correct spec in 3 ton lots. Since we have [06.7090](#) (short Manx), [06.7714](#) (all featherbeds and earlier Manxes), [06.3423](#) (Commando), and [B2/605](#) (pre-featherbed long Roadholders), again we have to decide what to make. Which is easy enough whilst we have enough raw material, but becomes critical when we run low and, as now, have to re-order another 3 tons....

That is what keeps us on our toes all the time, and offers surprises even for old, well-weathered spares specialists like our buyers and me.

But then sometimes, we get things right as the comment I just saw on a webshop order: "You guys are amazing, I bought a basket weave Interstate seat off you the day you shut down for the Christmas holiday and you managed to get it to me on Christmas eve, less than 24 hours from order to delivery. Simply amazing." Thank you, a remark like that inspires us!

Our Bikes

Joe's Signal Orange Roadster

After a decade of service and with a lot of miles on the clock that gave up in summer last year (now repaired) I decided it was time for a repaint of petrol tank and side covers, the tank having various scratches and the transfers going, the side covers ditto plus the left hand one having fallen off the bike during a ride, most probably because I had not properly engaged the dzus fastener, and looking very scratched by the road surface it slid on.

I also took the primary off to correct a mistake a friend of mine made a while ago when he helped me and put the side stand bolt in the wrong way up, thus getting it in the way of the spring that then consequently got longer and longer. Since my fibre plates [06.1339](#) looked somewhat worn, I put in the replacement Barnett plates pack [13.1923](#), and, being at it, just for fun, our [13.1948](#) 3mm thick steel plate to achieve lighter clutch lever action. Since I tend to ride a lot in dense traffic this may well be an improvement.



At that distance you don't see the scratched side cover, or the disappearing transfers....

Joe's Family Racer

Got it on the workbench, changed the motor oil, and checked the electric connections of the very basic wiring loom. Found nothing wrong with them. Also found the bike already has a Pazon ignition that I had forgotten I ever fitted, but may have done to forestall the usual Boyer hickups with the stator plate playing up. Checked battery voltage which read just above 8 Volts. For the life of me cannot remember if I had checked it after the bike conked out in Rijeka in the second lap of the second race.... I will have to start the bike up after re-charging the battery and see what happens after Easter.

Joe's TX750

In Rijeka last year the TX ran very well but we could hardly believe the oil temperatures the digital meter pointed to the oil tank showed. I discussed the phenomenon with Rainer, who built the engine, and then remembered a remark from Bob Rowley in an e-mail exchange we had about the short strokes tested when they were first conceived. Bob mentioned vibrations, and that these vibrations upset the carburetion.

He found the bikes would run lean on WOT no matter what main jets he tried, He found the area around the float needle did not let enough fuel into the fuel chamber and decided to modify the float chamber around the needle seat. He made me a drawing where he cut a horizontal slot, and added: "From memory I used a 3 mm thick cutting disc might have been more but so long as the needle

has something above the slot to guide it. Use a diameter of wheel that is sufficiently small to make a wide slot." I have drawn a line into a float chamber to demonstrate:



Again something I need to do so I can test it next time I get on a race track.

Rainer had fuel flow problems on the AMAL Mk2 carbs on his salt flats racer, too, when he had it on the test bed, and in frustration finally switched to Mikunis, which cured the problem. His modification looks like his:



The disadvantage may be that the needle is not guided in the top proportion, so Bob's mod makes more sense to me.

Simon's Bit

Commando Preparation

Simon is getting his 1972 Commando 750 Mk5 ready for Spring riding. Machine number 230558: it was put back on the road in 2003 and covered 65,000 miles since then.

A leaking oil seal was troublesome last year so the front forks have been removed, cleaned and checked. Only new seals and oil were required. The front wheel bearings were worn and replaced. Removal requires heat and, ideally, a blind bearing puller. The oil tank rear bracket had fractured some years ago - a common problem. A new thicker bracket (Andover part [06.2511](#)) was brazed in place.

The usual service items were completed, including oil and filter changes and the Commando is ready for approximately 3,000 miles riding in 2024.

Remove, flush out and repair oil tank. Fit new oil lines

Dismantle, clean & rebuild front forks with new oil seals & oil.

Fit new front wheel bearings.

Lubricate swinging arm

Engine & gearbox oil change. Fit new oil & air filters.

Clean brake caliper and fit new pads



An expertly brazed oil tank bracket.



New bearings installed.



Don't do this!

FOR SALE: Norton Commando 750 Interstate 1972

Frame/Engine 208925, Registration RPB 519

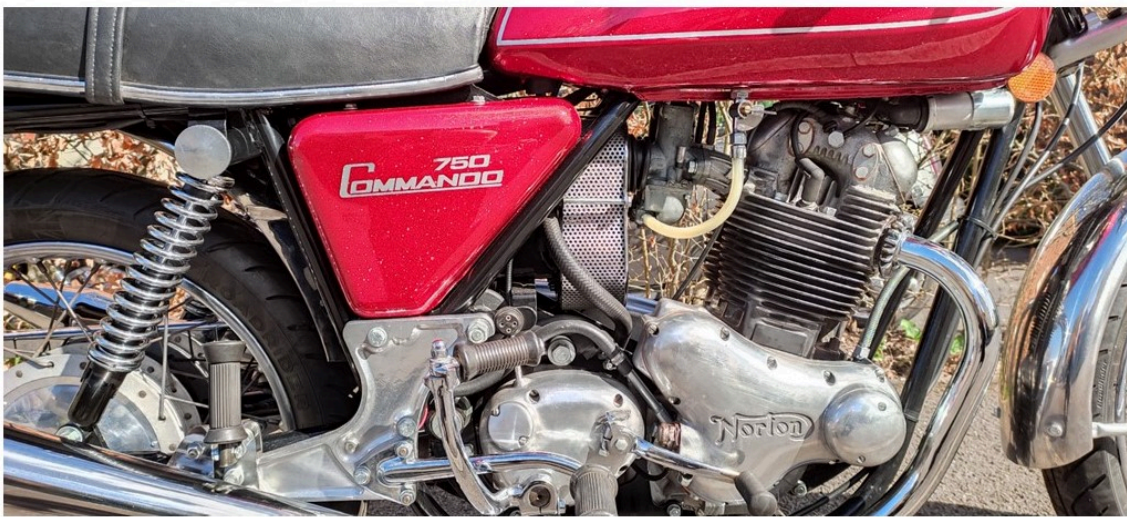
This is a private sale -the seller is an Andover Norton employee. Owned since December 2011, mileage 29,700. Mileage now 61,077.

Between December 2022 and March 2024 this motorcycle has been completely dismantled, every part checked, refurbished or replaced, as necessary. Receipts for new Andover Norton parts fitted during the rebuild period including valves, piston rings, bearings, suspension units, isolastic components, full exhaust system, headlamp shell, harnesses, brake shoes, drive chain, stator and more.

250 running in miles have been completed and the engine oil renewed.

Professional painted in Fireflake Candy Apple Red.

Frame, swinging arm and gearbox cradle powder coated gloss black.



Steel tank and side covers. Original seat in excellent condition.

Avon Roadrider tyres. Michelin inner tubes. New oil pump 2014

New replacement Andover Norton 750 cylinder barrel and pistons fitted in 2017. This has 850 style through bolts.

New rear sprocket/drum assembly & bearing 2020

New Renold timing chain 2020

Clutch overhaul with new Surfex fibre friction plates 2021

AN 13mm bore front brake master cylinder. New battery 2022

Twin Amal 32mm Premier carburettors. Original Dunlop chrome rims.

Tri-Spark electronic ignition. Boyer Powerbox regulator/rectifier

A photo record of the restoration work is available

Price: £8,995. To enquire please email septamus@hotmail.co.uk

Ashley's Bit.

With Norton classic bikes prices at a low, it does not mean you should pay top money for Norton, there are a lot of honest bikes that have gone through auction for less than £5k with some needing what looks to be very little maintenance to have back on the road.

Sadly, there are a few Nortons that seem to make it to the auction that have suspect history, with little chance of being registered or being able to be put on the road. The decision on what to buy is always a hard one to answer, nice and shiny but with a suspect rebuild history or a complete bike with lots of original parts that was put away 30 years ago with matching paperwork.

This brings us to what we see here, over the winter the workshop team have seen a mix of scruffy and super shiny bikes. Sadly some of the shiny bikes needed a lot of attention just to be made safe to ride, the scruffy well used bikes tend to be the easier and cheaper bikes when they pass through the workshop.

Recently, we had a bike that had not gone far on a test ride and whilst it was parked up, I noticed that the fork stanchions were not vertical and when the handlebars were pointing straight ahead the front was well into a right hand turn.

Thankfully the owner knew of this as the handlebars were not 'square' when moving forward. Despite this bike being capable of being ridden, it must have been hard work and not a comfortable ride and there is always the safety aspect which in cases like this seem to be forgotten, there was no way of telling what this bike would have behaved like under hard braking in an emergency.

This issue with the bike could have been the difference of staying upright and in one piece stopping in the shortest possible distance or parting company with the bike with potential injury to oneself and/or the wallet. If you think your bike is not correct in the way it handles then please take it a local motorcycle repair facility or our workshop where you can get a valuable second opinion.

A tale of a gearbox.

I recently assisted an NOC member with a gearbox he could not get back together though I know they had done this several times in the past. This gearbox, in 29 years of knowing it and the owner, has always had regular problems and with both of us being owners of MK3's this seemed strange as mine has worked faultlessly with regular oil changes and maintenance.

The gearsets were a mix of AH and AHB, the layshaft 4th gear was marked with a 6 but was actually to Commando diameter, some may think "*surely the owner must have spotted this issue with a mix of gears as many know not mix the gears*" but the owner was riding Nortons before the AHB gears were introduced and as such, never queried it.

The bike was known since it was sold and the gears were put in it at the factory, no surprise being a MK3. I suspect they were hammered together and sold hoping to be never seen again by the receivers. The gearbox is now back together with correct pairs and one worn out gear replaced awaiting many miles of use.



FAQ Monday with Ash
Which Gears Should I
Be Using On
My Commando?



ANDOVER NORTON
THE ONLY GENUINE SOURCE!



My own bike

Having had a serious ear infection back before Christmas with suspected perforated ear drum I now find myself being reluctant to ride without decent ear protection, in the past I used off the shelf ear plugs with mixed results, so now I have decided to bite the bullet and get some custom made ear plugs for under helmet use.

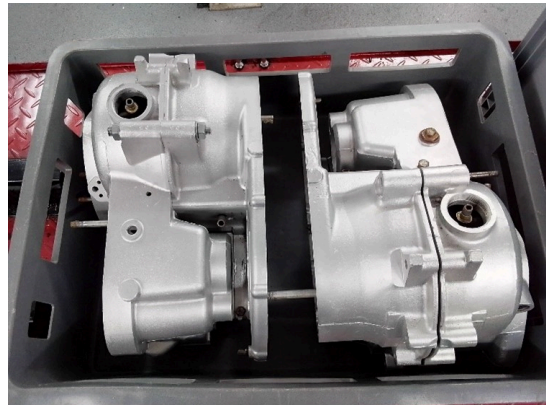
Thankfully, my opticians also do these as I was advised to get them to do the impressions, when they told me they also do ear plugs and motorcyclists are some of their main customers for them, I thought they only did hearing aids.

My 850 started first kick, a good sign but I did drain the carbs and run some fuel through the lines. This year I don't have much planned work on the bikes, mostly riding so I will put off any work to the winter.

Tales from the Workshop

Another month passed in the workshop and still the work keeps arriving, again a good mixed bag to keep us on our toes as well. It's quite nice sometimes to have some variation, such as gearbox strip but also something like a Triumph twin engine coming in as a kit for us to rebuild is quite exciting!

Tri Spark kits have also been a popular choice recently for that reliable spark along with general servicing ready for the summer sunshine!



One nice project Will is working on at present is a Commando that was owned by the customer's Father, and has been in storage in a damp shed for over 20 years. We are rebuilding the bike keeping its original patina but making sure it's a nice perfectly running bike underneath. What a lovely project and a nice memory to keep!



One thing that may be of interest is we are still sorting through Mick Hemmings' equipment and setting up toolboxes for the jigs and specialist tools he used and fabricated over the years.

We will of course be cleaning these up to carry on using the tools he had, some of which are pictured below. This is a fraction of the tools obviously but I'm sure everyone is glad that he will not be forgotten and his kit in a good home being sorted and still used. One of great interest is a crank assembly jig for Norton singles which hopefully will be ready to show on our open day.



As for our bikes we are still trying to get time to sort our ex-Nottingham Police Commander, but the little Triumph has really sparked our interest even though the Mag hasn't produced that spark yet!

This 1928 Model NL has been dry stored for 50 years after a light accident but again we hope to have this running for the open day so no pressure there then



We are still offering a free UK collection service for your bike to our workshop only leaving you delivery back to worry about, but we are hoping that with the good weather ahead you will come see us and review the work undertaken and ride home as many of our happy customers have in the past year.

Happy and safe riding Paul and the Workshop Team.

Open Day - 18th May.

Don't forget that our Open Day is not far away now and we look forward to seeing everyone there!



**Wishing all of our Readers
"Happy Riding"
The Team At Andover Norton**



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