



Dear Andover Norton Customer,

Some news of what your team in Andover is up to that I hope to be of interest for you:

October Motorcycling

October in Bavaria was like a prolongation of summer, so I did a lot of riding. One afternoon for example the shop was pretty quiet and the sun shone outside with temperatures well in the 20s (°C), so I rang my friend Guenter. We agreed on a little tour on our Commandos through the back roads in his area and a good two hours saw us doing not much more than 65 miles in total but riding nearly all the time up hill, down dale, and through innumerable bends, often on single lane roads.

We both enjoyed our tour and Guenter's yellow Commando, which is in the 2023 calendar, and that had angered him over the last year or so with a leaking cylinder head works now, with another head, and rides, as it should.



My somewhat dirty Signal Orange Roadster (it was rainy the days before) and Guenter's.

Joe's week in England

November in our parts is not the best motorcycling month and I (vainly!) hoped it wasn't going to be too busy in my German shop. So I planned a week in England to see changes and progress at North Way.

When I arrived on Monday we had a meeting on parts that are out of

stock. I see these as a personal insult and tend to be ashamed of shortages, thinking we should have 100% of all parts we list at all times. I know this is practically impossible, but it is the state I try to achieve.

Predictably I heard sorry stories about subcontractors going broke, slow deliveries, delivery time promises not being kept, jobs declined we used to get done by the same people before, not to mention shortages of raw materials. That said, while I was in Andover outstanding deliveries came in almost daily, and some long-term projects will soon be finished and in stock.

Going downstairs into our “retail shop” I happened to meet Norman White who just collected parts he needed in his workshop. He told me he had the keys to the old “Norton Villiers Triumph Performance Shop” and would I like to see it. We agreed on some of us to go to Thruxton that Wednesday to meet up with him and have a look.

Changes in the Stores



Our new mezzanine (on the right, behind the fork lift)

Our new mezzanine is now in place so our packers can work at civilized temperatures under it. That wasn't the case last winter. An added advantage is that we now have new shelves on top of it. This leads to taking our raw materials/unsorted items stores gradually down and the items now being identified, counted and located on our system.



This area was once our raw materials/unsorted stores, now diminished to the last two lines of racks behind our van.

I hear we find stuff now we did not know we had and gain stock and tooling through this exercise. Our Andy (more below) whom I got to know as methodical and exact during our move to North Way does it whenever he has time. We hope to have everything on the new shelves and on the system by the end of this year.



The new shelves on top of the new mezzanine. Avon tires stocked up since Avon announced they will now shut their English manufacturing plant down.

Visit to Diane & Richard Negus

On Tuesday I went to see Richard and Diane Negus in Lincolnshire. My SatNav told me this was going to take over 4 hours per way and indeed it did. In retrospect I had to admire Richard's coming to our Open Day four years ago on his Aprilia and going home that night, the more so as I don't see much potential to do it faster on a bike.

It was good to see both Diane and Richard again after such a long time and to learn more from Richard as I always did whenever I met

him. Unfortunately riding a motorcycle is now no longer an option for him but I still hope we will see him at an Open Day in the future.

One thing we did argue about was if we had the fairing tooling for F1 & F1 Sports models. Richard swears he never had it in Norton Motors Ltd in Rugeley he ran for us. I was pretty sure I had seen it when Andy and I went through all the rotary fairing tooling last time I was over, identifying most of it and Richard identifying the rest when we sent him pictures of the items I could not place.

After my return the next day I practically fell over the F1 tooling which was in a box ready to go to our supplier to have new front fairings re-made. Richard is still adamant we never had the tooling in Rugeley but I am at a loss to explain where else it could have come from.



Box with F1/F1Sports fairing tooling before it went off to be used for re-manufacture.

The Thruxton Race Shop

So Wednesday was the day I should see the birthplace of my 1970 Norvil Production Racer. Karl, Ashley, Andy and I got on our motorcycles with Karl having the first ride in his life on a Commando, in this case our 850Mk3. I took our Model 88 wideline, Ashley his Commando, and Andy had the first real ride for many years on the Honda he inherited from a relative. But our Andy would much rather have an 850Mk3 Commando, so if you have one for sale please tell our office!



In Thruxton, Joe, Andy, Norman White. Dry if cold weather, fortunately.

In Thruxton we met Norman and walked over to the building that looked o.k. from the outside but was in long-time neglected, run-down condition inside. Norman told us about the absent heating in his days there and showed us the various rooms. The “drawing office” where Peter Williams designed the racers, engine test room, fabrication rooms, and the assembly shop where Norman used to work, his specialty being to assemble bottom ends and others to finish the engines upper half.

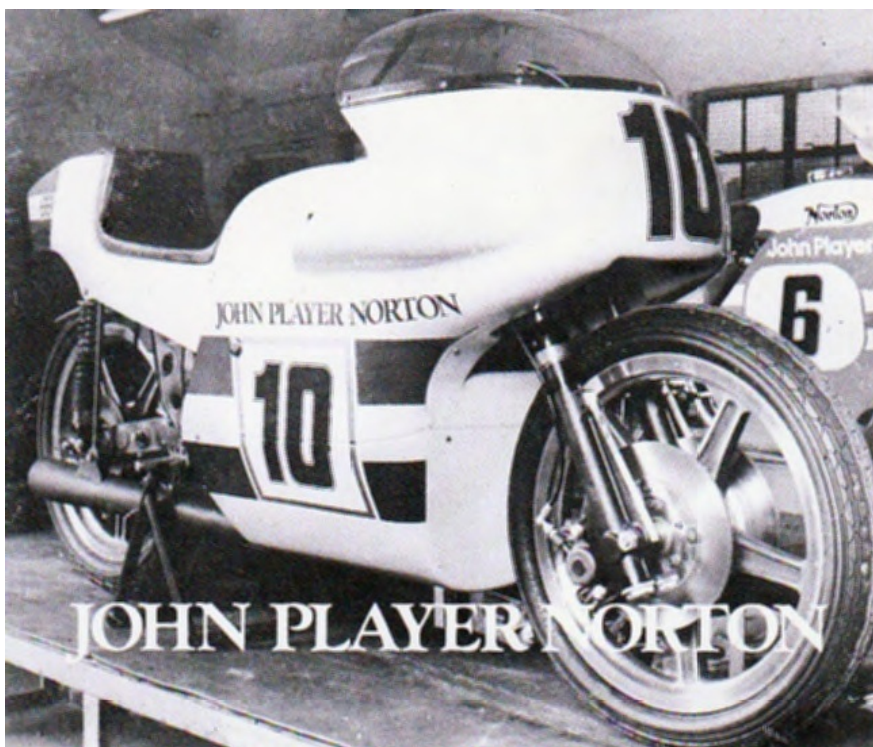


The blue building is the old Thruxton Race Shop, reception on the right, assembly on the left.

So I got to see the birthplace of my 1970 Proddy Racer since all but a handful of late Proddies that were finished in North Way were assembled here and tested on the track which runs a few hundred yards from the building.



Impressive? No way, but historical ground: The Assembly Room where Factory Racers and Proddy Racers were assembled



*Picture taken for a brochure in the same room, most probably in 1973.
Norman's workbench was the one on the right, next to the window.*

After taking our leave from Norman we did a short detour via the track building, then had a little excursion in the Andover area over nice B-roads instead of going straight back to North Way. Enjoyable but our Andy was a bit weary of the damp roads due to having been off bikes for so long. I told him this was normal. I tend to be a bit insecure first time out after the winter break.

On our return I had to stand back to see the unveiling of a present for my family. And what a nice idea that was: the team had acquired a kiddie bike in a sorry state and rebuilt it as a replica of "Nepomuk", our rotary racer.



*"Baby Nepomuk", c/w all transfers faithfully copied from the original.
We must discuss the settings for the suspension though front and rear
end feel somewhat rigid!*

Yellowed Paper in Northampton

Thursday was reserved for a visit to Angela Hemmings who threatened to force lots of yellowing paper on me/us. Being the kind man I am I agreed to at least have a look and went to Northampton to see her.

Since I had seen Mick's workshop and stores before I knew what to expect and Angela was a bit peeved that I was "a typical man, not showing any enthusiasm but a poker face" since she expected delirious enthusiasm!

Given there is always too little time to assess what Mick had hamstered together over decades I looked at but a fraction of what Angela intended to sell me and we agreed on a sum for the historically extremely interesting and rewarding papers. Frankly, it is practically impossible to name a fair price for them, but I think we are now both happy.

I took but two little boxes of the lot with me and on looking through them I already found a lot of information I did not even know ever existed. Like, say, a file giving the technical spec of the "Thruyton Club Racer" models of which but ten at most were produced one of which I have. Priceless for me, worthless the rest of world population!



The McIntyre Matchless, sorry about the bad quality of my shot. On the workbench in the background the bits to build probably the only 500 Excelsior Manxman racer on the planet.

I also admired (again) the McIntyre Matchless, remembering Dave Pearce's blunt statement: "The chassis of the Norton C652 is but an unashamed copy of the McIntyre Matchless!"

I look forward to going through the papers as soon as they are in our hands.

Dinner & Return

Thursday night was an enjoyable dinner with Karl and our ex-MD Phil. I am happy Karl and Phil got along so well in the transition period and that the friendship and trust are ongoing. Whenever we are short-staffed or we have a special project Phil is happy to help, and I hear he was recently called in when sickness and holidays made us struggle.

Friday I tied up a few loose ends, then flew back to Munich, reassured the company is alive and well and in Karl's capable hands.

Simon's Bit

Dealer Service Sheet 14-3

An interesting Norton Commando service document has recently come to light. It's one that we haven't seen before.

Aimed at dealers and dated 1970, the sheet covers a variety of subjects with an emphasis on 'trouble-shooting'.



New Webshop Areas

Keen eyed readers may have noticed that 2 new segments have appeared at the top of the “News” section of our Webshop.

If you have ever missed one of our previous editions of “The Source” we will be making them all available to view in the new “Newsletter” section.

[Newsletters](#)

We have also added a “Videos” section, that will host our ever growing collection of clips of our Trade shows, visits and projects. All of these are also available to view on our [YouTube page](#) as well!

[Videos](#)

Featured Products



ANDOVER NORTON
CALENDAR 2023

[Shop](#)

ANDOVER NORTON 45
YEAR T-SHIRT

[Shop \(S\)](#)

[Shop \(M\)](#)

[Shop \(L\)](#)

[Shop \(XL\)](#)

[Shop \(XXL\)](#)



ANDOVER NORTON LOGO T-SHIRT

[Shop \(S\)](#)

[Shop \(M\)](#)

[Shop \(L\)](#)

[Shop \(XL\)](#)

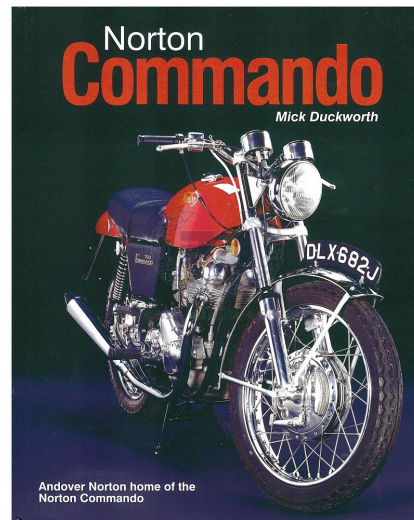
[Shop \(XXL\)](#)



Norton Commando by Mick Duckworth

[Shop](#)

[Shop
\(Signed Copy\)](#)

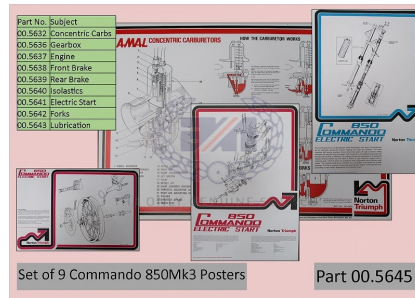


MUG 'GENUINE FACTORY PARTS'

[Shop](#)

Mk 3 WALL CHARTS
(SET OF 8)

Shop



**Thanks for reading this edition
of “The Source”
The Team at Andover Norton**



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