



Dear Andover Norton customer,

An exciting month lies behind us with some major events for us. Most important for us, and a new experience was the...

## **Stafford Show**

Karl booked a stand at the show, partly to meet and greet our customers, but also to get direct feedback from people who may not know us.

We took a load of “seconds”, i.e. parts that did not pass our quality control but are useable, and that we have now sell though the [“Autojumble-Seconds”](#) section of our webshop.



The Andover Norton stand team noted the comments made. Most notable were two comments:

- that people did not know we sell direct to Norton owners;
- that some did not know of Andover Norton at all.

In view of the fact, Andover Norton has been around for 45 years, also given Andover Norton always sold to end customers, I find it amazing some don't know we do. That said, there were periods in the past when private owners were not exactly encouraged to buy from ANIL directly, the company's focus being on wholesale rather than retail.

We have stopped supplying to distributors in the UK, so the comment Karl heard, “I buy your parts from XYZ” is no longer valid. And as the saying goes: *“Why deal with little Charly if you can go to Charles?”*

The other group who did not know we exist seems even less likely. Most of this group are people with no internet skills who still go by either word of mouth or buy their parts from people that were recommended to them a long time ago. Often, their sources removed our labels and put theirs on to veil where the goods came from. Their customers remain in blissful ignorance, believing complex to make parts like crankcases, cylinder barrels, tappets, frames etc. come from

that little garage.

We since discussed how we can reach these owners but apart from print advertising, which mostly disappears in chaotic layouts (the "Advert graveyard") and is seldom read we have no real answer. Given the high cost and, from experience, negligible effect of print advertising, I much rather invest the money in product development and quality control equipment than to make publishers richer.

That said, the Stafford Show was good for the feedback and was enjoyed by the whole team, including our ex-MD Phil who helped us. We may, in future, have a stand at a few selected shows, and will let you know well in advance.



## **New Product**

One product that was far more complicated than we anticipated is our new Commando gearbox subframes. With ongoing metrification in Europe it gets more and more complicated to acquire raw material in non-metric dimensions. Steel plate needed for those subframes was yet another example.



"Why bother?" I hear you ask, since 6mm plate is not that far away from  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6.3mm). The problem is that the swinging arm mounting must be the correct width. 6mm plates will give you 0.6mm of immediate side play in the swinging arm mounting area where you can least tolerate it. Add to it other components like the crankcase and gearbox also need to fit to the subframe, so you cannot simply

increase the distance between the plates. Hence you have a problem with metric steel plate.

Our Ashley found the required material in the US at last and we are now in the final stages of assembling new, proper subframes again.

And talking of new product, 750 barrels [06.1705](#) and 850 barrels [06.5074](#) are now back in stock.

## **Vintage New Product (not ours!)**

Though this is nothing to do with us, I just received pictures from two sources, one from Germany and one from Liechtenstein, showing petrol and oil tanks for 1930s Nortons.

The painted ones are restored originals I believe, the picture came from the man who lines them:



Whilst the ones from Liechtenstein are all new construction;



It helps if one does not have to work to a price. I have spent more time and money on personal motorcycle projects than was economically feasible. When customers see some of my bikes and ask what I paid for them I truthfully reply: *"Including the money and time spent on them much more than their market value!"*

But the satisfaction of riding and enjoying a motorcycle that you have done everything you could to makes the time and money seem unimportant.

## **Rare Nortons for Sale**

Within the last week I had two customers ring me about rare Nortons they were offered and intended to buy. Fortunately, they asked me to look the bikes up in the dispatch records.

The first bike was a Norvil Proddy Racer accompanied by a long story of how it was rebuilt in England, then came to Italy, got a certificate from some Italian Motorcycle Authority saying it was genuine, then found its way to Germany. Several things, including the convoluted story, sounded suspicious to me. I looked the bike up and told the prospective buyer: "*Could that genuine Proddy Racer speak, it would say I started life as a Fastback Commando and was shipped to Germany when new!*"

The second was a call from the US. A German living there got my number off one of the dealers I supply who told him to ask me. The desired bike was a garden gate Manx, and in the pictures it looked fine though not 100% original. The first thing I did not like was the type of the numbers stamped on the crankcase. They did not look like the numbers I have seen on original engines.

The mystery was easily solved as soon as I looked the number up. Again I was tempted to say " Could that Manx speak it'd say, *I am a 1949 ES2 tarted up with Manx components!*" It is not good enough to hammer "D11M" in a crankcase if the rest of the number is down for an ES2's.

So buyer beware! We offer an identification service under <https://andover-norton.co.uk/en/shop-details/17062/factory-despatch-record-frame-eng-no-> .

This can save you thousands of Pounds you might be tempted to spend on a bike that is not what the seller pretends it to be.

It can even yield a pleasant surprise, as I found with my featherbed Inter. After I had bought it because it was correct in all details it turned out to be the first featherbed Inter ever produced and shown at Earls Court, 1952, then shipped to Switzerland.



## Our Bikes

### Joe's TX750:

Regular readers of the "Source" have heard of my two piston seizures on that bike. I sent the bike to Rainer Zumach, who has access to a dyno so the carburetion could be tested and set correctly.

Though I wasn't happy about welding stubs into the original exhaust pipes, the lambda check can only be done that way. Rainer found a place where these stubs are near-impossible to see if the fairing is fitted:



When running the bike on the dyno, Rainer saw what was probably our problem all along: the float chambers foamed over and spilt petrol with weak mixture as a result. Sitting on the bike, on track, with the fairing in place I could not see that. Since the phenomenon only appeared over 4.500rpm it could not be noted after starting the bike and before getting out on the track.

Since I never had that on other Commando racers, including my genuine 1970 Proddy Racer where the carburetors are mounted on

solid stubs too, I decided it was time for research. I asked two old Norton men for advice, one being Norman White, the other Bob Rowley.

Norman White admitted that he rode my bike with a long-stroke engine and was no longer with Norton when the few "production" TXes were made and tested.

Bob Rowley writes: "We tested a small batch of short-stroke 750 cc, 5 off if memory serves, we had two swinging arms break at MIRA. Dave Rawlins went through the timing lights at around 110 mph. Back locked up and rear tyre worn down to the rim, he only got off at around walking pace. The vibration was very high frequency. John Baker and Fred Barlow stripped and checked and the Balance Factors were found to be correct to spec."

So apparently vibration was a problem then. Rainer put the carburettors on rubber stubs, re-set the isolastic, and rang me today to say he rode the bike for about 15km, revved it to about 6.500rpm, and everything ran faultlessly plus the lambda figure was fine.



I asked him to put the beast on the dyno at next opportunity to give us a graph showing how the engine performs and where it runs out of steam. Since it is too late now to take it to the Panoniaring later this week, the bike being about 500 miles away, the next opportunity to track test will be Rijeka in September.

### **The bikes I take to Panoniaring**



The 1960 Manx had a magneto failure last autumn in Rijeka, that felt and sounded like a dying engine. In the first race I retired, fully convinced I had a mechanical problem. Starting the bike up again later on the insistence of fellow racer Fast Fraaaanzi, we found nothing was wrong mechanically. I hence entered the second race only to find that after a few laps the bike started to misfire and died yet again.

Over the winter my friend Hebsch Schuesseler had the mag and did what he could to it, handicapped by the fact his man who used to rewind magnetos and dynamos now looks at them from far above.

So Panoniaring is the test if only oil in the mag and a duff condenser were the problem, or the if fault is more substantial.

I further take our trusty old "Family Racer" Commando. Not sure when I last rode it, it was Christine's favourite mount until she disappeared to the States, but it has always been a good ride and pretty reliable, so I know I will have something to enjoy myself on if the Manx magneto doesn't work.

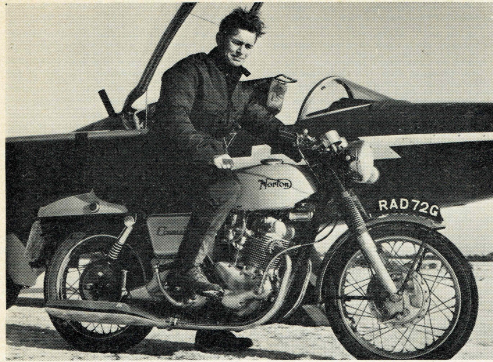
Bar oil changes I did very little on it. I did replace the too-long alloy versions of [06.0345](#) we had from somewhere when we built the bike a quarter of a century ago using spacers. Realizing this as I changed the fork oil I replaced them with the proper [06.3479](#) Proddy racer type fork top bolts.

## **Ash's Bit**

Karl was sorting through some photographs we had here that had not been looked through. They included many topics from the building of the AJS/Matchless building on the corner of North way in 1968/69 which is now Able and Cole. From S type prototype, desert sled P11/G15? Being ridden around a yard and on display, and a local school visit to the assembly area.

There was also a rendering of the later 8 valve, 5 speed twin engine with the OHC's being driven by a belt drive system, what was interesting in that the drawings for this engine we have in our collection. There are also a few photos of what looks to be

experimental engines on test beds, but it is hard to see what engines these are.



frame, gearbox, main shell and electrics all original Rapide; forks, wheels, gear-box, outer cover and change mechanism, Comet; valve gear, rockers and push-rods, Comet and Meteor.

First time out there was trouble with the gearbox, resulting in a bent mainshaft. Nothing doing in the trade by way of a replacement—mostly too short at clutch end—had one made to pattern—and off we went again with chair attached. After a few tentative runs, all seemed to be well. Ran well throughout 1961/1962, except from shuddering trouble and broken

*Flt-Lt. P. R. Evans, a pilot in the world-famous R.A.F. Aerobatic team, the Red Arrows, recently chose a 1969 Norton Commando for his personal transport. He took delivery of the machine from Norton dealers H. & L. Motors of Stroud, Gloucester, and is here photographed with the machine alongside the aircraft which he regularly pilots*

First, let me say that my own example of the beast, which I no longer own, was a 1952 C Rapide which I bought in 1965 with a real live 23,841 miles on the clock.

Why did he not use some light alloy on the brakes?

And further to P.C.V.'s continued insistence that all the needless parts of the conventional frame were abolished, did he not go a little too far and "forget" to include a rear mount for the seat? The solution to this sticky problem which he arrived at, that of hanging the rear of the seat on the rear fork, adds more than a little to the already massive unsprung weight bill. When this design practice was followed, all the other junk necessary for the rear of a motorcycle—mudguard, tool holder, rear stand, etc.—had to be hung on the unsprung part of the bike. Surely a couple of tubes would not have hurt.

Some comments on the general engineering of the monster might prove more cutting to P.C.V.'s apparent inability to see its faults. Who, for instance, was responsible for the detail work on the engine shaft shock absorber? I am not referring to the use of many small springs, although one large one would do as good a job, but to the fact that the sleeve nut which holds it together is only  $\frac{1}{16}$ in wide and has to be driven up tight with a hammer. In any normal practice, therefore, the person responsible for such a thoughtless abortion would be roundly carpeted. Why not a nice  $\frac{1}{2}$ in-deep nut from which a good ring spanner would not slip under pressure?

The exhaust port nuts were my next dislike. They were expensive, unnecessary and damned annoying. Give me a good stub fitting every time.

The sweetest feature of the machine was

Some of the photos that Karl showed me was of a Gentleman sat on his Commando next to a jet aeroplane. This I recognised from my collection of scans, some going back to 1909, now I could put a name to the face in the photo. It is Flt-Lt P R Evans RAF who was a pilot in the Red Arrows display team.

We have both the photos, and the one not in the article shows him with a smile and more the aircraft in the background, the angle is also slightly different. What is also interesting is that the bike we believe is still out there as a V5 was issued in 1995 according to DVLA and the bike was never put on the road, so is it languishing in your projects?



## Wet Sump Valves

Recently there has been much mention of anti wet sumping valves, personally I would not fit one as any oil collected in the sump can be easily removed. The instructions for one currently on sale, suggest that the interruption switch can be wired in line from the battery to the ignition switch. This far from ideal and can actually be very dangerous.



The reason being is that total current for all the bikes loads will be through the switch on the valve and associated wiring, this could lead to minor problems from melting cable, switch failure but the real danger is at night, if the cable and or switch fail at night you will be left with a bike that is now dead and no lights - mid bend on an A road is not the ideal place to be when this occurs. Likewise, during the day on dual carriageway or motorway if you are not in the inside lane your bike be totally dead moving at speed with no indicators or brake lights.

Please be careful where you wire anything into your bike, think of the affect of failure and the redundancy you have left. Adding another potential point of failure at this position is not ideal.

### **Introducing Craig Audley, Workshop Assistant**

Andover Norton is pleased to welcome new employee Craig Audley. Originating from Chippenham, Wiltshire, his early career covered test and repair responsibilities at Dyson, who were based in the town before their rapid expansion took place. Craig's background is engineering based. He also has wiring, soldering and PCB manufacture skills. Carburettor manufacturer, Burlen Fuel Systems of Salisbury (where Craig now lives) benefited from his employment prior to Andover Norton.

For recreation, Craig has banger raced at Ringwood and Stanlake circuits. Now his spare time interests include computers and motorcycles. Three bikes feature in the Audley collection: a classic Honda 400/4 Supersport, Yamaha XS1100 and Kawasaki 454LTD currently being converted to a bobber.

Component assembly, parts trial fitting, the restoration and maintenance of Andover Norton motorcycle collection - our workshop has plenty to keep Craig busy!



## Open Day

Only 2 weeks to go until our Open Day!



**Invitation to the 2022  
Andover Norton Open Day**  
Saturday 21st May  
10am to 4.30pm

Address: Unit 6, Wooler Park  
North Way, Andover. SP10 5AZ  
[w3w.co/wimp.clumped.scouting](http://w3w.co/wimp.clumped.scouting)

Visit our new, bigger premises!  
Meet the team of Andover Norton!  
Enjoy the company of your fellow riders!  
Get a high quality photo of your motorcycle!

If you would like to collect spares please pre-order at least 3 days in advance.

As always, our team will be there to meet and chat to you as we open our stores for the first time since our move in 2019.

As previously mentioned, we will **not be selling spares on the day.** However, you can order parts beforehand for collection on the day, so if you wish to pre-order, please let us know at least **3 days in advance.**

Please note that our Barbeque with **Cash Only** as all proceeds from it will be donated to our guests, The Wessex Blood Bikes Charity.

As a bonus, **the first 10 Nortons to arrive on the day get one of our new Anniversary T-Shirts as a gift!**

We hope to see you there!

## 45 Years of Andover Norton

As mentioned earlier, Andover Norton has reached a Milestone of 45 Years and to celebrate, we have commissioned a commemorative T-shirt to mark the occasion.



Available in most sizes, get yours from our web shop now!

[Shop - Small](#)

[Shop - Medium](#)

[Shop - Large](#)

[Shop - Extra Large](#)

[Shop - XX Large](#)

**That's all for now,  
Until next time!**

**The Team at Andover Norton**



## Andover Norton International Ltd

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