



Dear Andover Norton Customer,

We hope you all had a good start into the New Year and wish you health and happiness in 2023.

Our December was again very busy. Despite closing the shop but not the webshop from 23rd December till 3rd January, we are currently trying to get everything ordered in that period out the door as quickly as possible, plus the new orders, naturally!

In the last "Source" I promised to comment on a kickstart shaft an "alternative source" decided to get made since it took us longer than planned to have proper ones re-made. We tend to purchase certain items through third parties that make us curious, given we know the party in question lacks the original drawings. The result: 6 holes measured, 3 were oval, 3 dimensions checked out of tolerance. And the choice of material was also "interesting" and bore no resemblance to factory specification.

Some may not be aware that we have stopped supplying most retailers in the UK. We try to support workshops, but are of the opinion Norton owners should turn to us so we are certain and happy with the quality of the parts they are getting.

Talking of workshops, ours will shortly be on the net under www.nortonmotors.co.uk.

Our Gus Kuhn Racer:

We had an interesting mail from our customer Dave Harris:

"Hi, great to read about the Gus Kuhn bike and the history of the bike. My own Gus Kuhn Commando has an interesting history not raced as far as we can tell but a factory developed bike exp1010 fjb stamped on head and crankcase was eventually sold to Trevor Ireson TT sidecar ace from Swindon."



"1010" I know as an experimental rotary factory bike that went through many development stages and is still about. Whether this here machine was a development bike I do not know and I suspect the "FJB" stamp could mean a rebuild by Fred Barlow, in the 1980s known as supposedly an expert on Norton twins.

Our Bikes:

Over the Christmas holidays I had time to think about the projects I want to do over the always far-too-short winter period, and this they are:

Joe's Mercury:

The Mercury runs fine but from when I bought it till now the instruments always gave unrealistic readings. Whilst the road speed indicated on the speedo was on the VERY optimistic side, the revs showing on the tachometer were unrealistically low and did not seem to go up beyond 3.500RPM though the exhaust note changed significantly. At long last I sent the instruments to a chap who repaired other to my satisfaction in the past. I now have them back and installed and look forward to testing them on the road as soon as weather and salt-free roads allow.



Joe's TT/F1Sport "Lydia"

Lydia over the past few years had a tendency to overheat within 5-10 miles and I had tried several things in that time. I cleaned the radiator out, changed the water, took the thermostat out in case that malfunctioned, checked the choke cables (more about those anon).

Since an old customer of mine was to send his Commander water pump to Andover for attention I thought I should probably do the same, hence started to get at the pump.



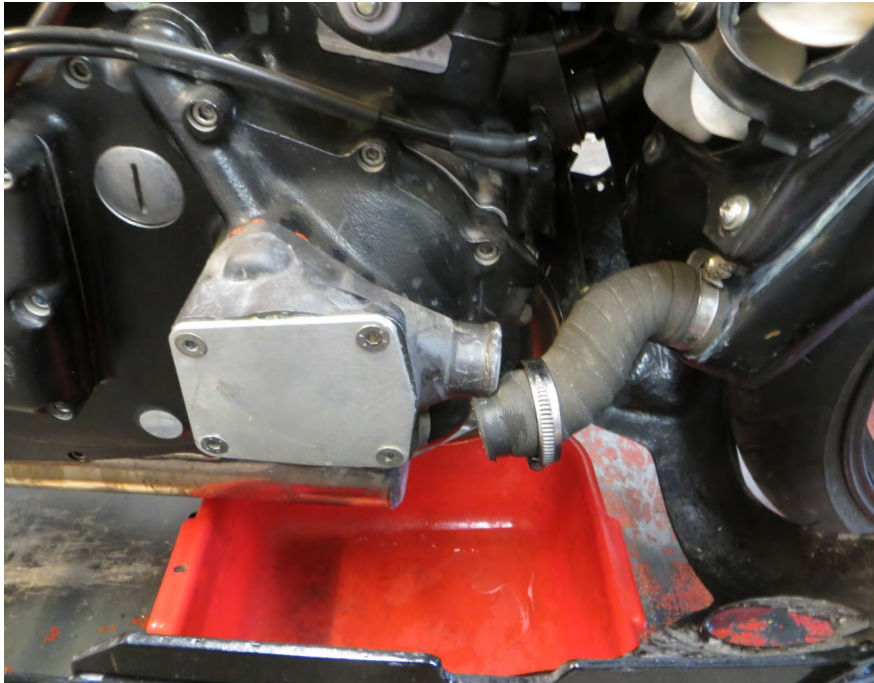
"Lydia" on the workbench. Water pump sits in front of the white plastic tank.

Getting at the pump on a fully-faired motorcycle is not as easy as on a "naked" bike. After removing the trim panels and the side covers the main fairing needs to be taken out of the way. That main fairing shell is now held on by the front indicators that are fitted to the induction pipes. Take the indicators off and the fairing moves forward and then rests on the front mudguard. It is therefore advisable to put a piece of cloth on the front mudguard to keep the fairing from getting scratched.



"Lydia's" front fairing put forward as to allow access to the water pump. White towel on front mudguard stops scratching the fairing.

Then place a tray under the water pump, take the radiator hose off, and let the coolant drip into that tray.



This was the easy bit. Getting the water pump off the primary cover after removing the two long screws that hold it on is the real task. On this bike the water pump was in situ since 1992, and it took a lot of persuasion to get it off, the more so as the water feed pipe from the engine to the front of the pump puts in additional resistance.

Before I took the pump off I removed the cover and, looking at it in the water tray, revealed sludge in its worst form.



Above: Water Pump Cover with Sludge.

The back of the impeller didn't look any better, but then this is no doubt my fault.



Oh Dear! Impeller doesn't look like it was fit to pump water.

Richard Negus, after seeing the pictures, said: "***That's one of the problems for aluminium water-cooled engines. The coolant additive not only protects from freezing temperatures but also reduces corrosion of the castings. Ideally, the coolant should be replaced every 1 - 2 years.***" He advised me how to clean the water pump including the impeller, then went on: "***Check the water passages in the pump housing, clean as necessary. Next is to clean the engine and radiator, There is a solvent to add to the water system which is supposed to dissolve the sludge, but you may have to do it several times.***"

With the bike always working perfectly in the past I admit I never considered a coolant change, so I am completely at fault for the state of "Lydia's" cooling system.

Talking of "Lydia's" cooling system, the reason why I checked the choke cables is the bike's history. Its first lady owner, whose first name was "Lydia" (hence the bike's name), had no end of problems with the bike overheating, a condition we were unable to repeat. Only after she sold the bike to me, no doubt fed up with that symptom, did another customer of mine find out what caused it: Lydia had opened the choke for starting and forgotten to close it afterwards. The over-rich mixture no doubt washed some lubricating oil away inside the engine which promptly led to overheating. Ever since I had the bike in the mid-1990s it was fine until now, no doubt, the clogged-up cooling system caused the old symptoms.

After taking the impeller off its shaft my hope the impeller's fins might be full of sludge and thus unable to pump water failed. The impeller was basically fine with a bit of residue on it, so I have a blockage somewhere in the system. Richard Negus again: ***"Before you use radiator flush, use a hose pipe to wash the loose stuff out. The main castings have bigger water passages but I've still seen centre plates blocked, only found when stripping an engine."***

I have now ordered a solvent for the cooling system and some wonderjet that uses water plus air pressure a German motor parts wholesaler offers specifically for blocked cooling systems. I will report on the results but may have to wait for warmer weather before I start the dirty operation out in the yard!

Joe's C652 ex-press bike

After shoving the bike lift from left to right for over a year I decided it was time to start on it in earnest. As always when a bike was apart for many years things seem to disappear and only long searches then find items one **KNOWS** must be there!

Add to it that this frame is new, was hand-made, and just like the original Tigcraft ones is slightly different to the others and further add to it things get forgotten over time, as I found with the headlamp brackets. In the crash, the original ones were bent, but I knew I still had new ones that came off the MZ Scorpion. What I either never knew, or forgot over the quarter of a century since we had the short production run is, that the headlamp brackets had small "ears" welded on to take our instrument combination.

Looking for, amongst other things, the side cover transfers I found a box with these in it on a shelf I could have sworn I had inspected when first looking for them. I also found a lot of other useful things I did not know I had, but also found how many small jobs have to be done before items, like the yet undrilled mudguards, can be fitted. At least the front forks are now in the bike, and I proceeded from there.



The C652 starting to look a bit more like a motorcycle. Dummy in background sports my old leather jeans from the 1970s and my old Barbour "Leonid Breschnew Replica" jacket with the masses of now vintage pins and stickers.

Since the "Source" draft took longer than anticipated due to an unexpected order overload I had another Sunday in the workshop, putting new needle bearings and seals in the swinging arm, getting the swinging arm back into the frame (handmade frame, remember? Not everything lines up perfectly at a first attempt!) plus the cantilever rear suspension and the rear wheel. Again, searching for certain parts in the bins neglected for over a decade took more time than anticipated, but in the end I got everything together and it was rewarding to have the poor old press bike on its own two wheels again after all these years. Next will be an overhaul of the carbs and installation of airbox and carburetors. Meanwhile the headlamp brackets are away for welding the instrument console brackets on.



Our 1998 press bike on two wheels again after over a decade....

In the course of the assembly I find lots of little details and tricks I wasn't aware of before and start to see the rebuild as a tribute to my late friend Dave Pearce of Tigcraft who created this competent little motorcycle in 1997/1998.

Simon's Bit **A Norton Commando Renovation Project**

Simon is rebuilding his 1972 Combat 750 Commando. Purchased in

2013, he has covered over 30,000 miles on it. The renovation will include new paint and the checking of every component and renewal, if necessary. This Commando will be for sale in Spring 2023. Simon is reducing his Norton collection.



Winter riding has taken its toll with the paintwork. Some careless riding along a muddy lane resulted in a fall a few years ago. Only minor bruises resulted but the steering stop broke upon road impact. Commando specialist, Norman White at Thruxton, Hampshire welded a new stop (AN part [07.00180](#)) and repaired the oil tank rear bracket with AN's strengthened, part [06.2511](#).

The front forks have been checked, cleaned, and reassembled. Most of the internal parts were still within specification, probably due to regular oil changes. However, new collars ([06.1137](#)), seals ([06.5483](#)), gaiters ([06.1115](#)), and drain screws ([06.0354](#)) were fitted. The frame, swinging arm, engine cradle and various smaller parts has been degreased and masked ready for black or silver powder coating.





The bike is currently a red Interstate model with Roadster side panels. However, now is an opportunity to change the Commando's appearance.

To make it attractive as possible to potential buyers he wants to decide

- 1) The colour to re-finish it.
- 2) Roadster or Interstate style.

We would love your feedback. Preferences please!



**We hope you have enjoyed this edition of
“The Source”
Until Next Time!
The Team at Andover Norton**



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