



Dear Andover Norton Customer,

July was busy but August started even busier. The fact we had staff on holidays and off sick didn't help so in some cases we simply could not despatch the same day as we have done in recent months. Apologies for that!

Phil Albutt's retirement - a few words **from our Phil:** **September 30th 2021**

Dear All,

Leaving an irrigation business where I ran the warehouse before reorganization led me to a van sales role, which I didn't enjoy, I started work for BSA Company, Blockley, Gloucestershire during September 1988, and became a nomad. Beginning with a transfer to the Andover Norton office in 1993, moving again to Southampton as part of the BSA-Regal Group in 1994, then returning to Andover in 2012 by way of Hungerford 2007.

I experienced three different business owners and associated directors, dealing with marques ranging from NVT Easy Rider and Rambler, BSA Tracker and SR400, MZ motorcycles two and four stroke models, before getting up close with the unapproachable Norton and AP Racing products and various motorcycle publications plus manuals and handbooks for Triumph motorcycles. Creating relationships with customers who often handled more than one of these brands or products, and now the time has come to step off the carousel and let others have a turn.

The various owners over the years have each added to the history and existence of Andover Norton. Simply put: Michael Jackson and William Colquhoun in my early years, David Bennett at BSA-Regal continued manning the rudder and then onto Joachim "Joe" Seifert and his family. To say Joe kick started and re-energized Andover Norton is an understatement. An absolute fan of the Norton brand coupled with his ambition and abundant drive, Joe's leadership and knowledge base lifted the company to great heights.



I leave as Andover Norton's nomadic history is tethered to a property worthy of its current standing in the world of vintage motorcycle parts manufacture and supply, with an established commercial base and an excellent web site. All thanks to the support of team members, both past and present, here at Andover Norton (ANIL).

Having never ridden a motorcycle in pleasure (or anger) other than once wobbling around a carpark on an MZ ETZ125 Sportstar and then a PGO T-Rex Scooter, I sometimes felt a bit fraudulent in my dealings with you all, missing out on the passions of the two-wheel life. As Nick Hopkins, my predecessor at ANIL once jested, I was a man without a soul. Unlike my successor, Karl Smith, who has acquired an AJS Tempest and is learning to ride.

As kids, my brother and I were fortunate to have a Bolen garden tractor to drive around the garden, including a rotavator. We could drive it as much as we wanted so long as we did the rotavating, and as we progressed, our father, who had a civil engineering business allowed us to drive tractors with/without trailers and building site dumpers at an early age. Despite the legalities at that time, being drafted in as drivers during the long summer school holidays.

Just look big when you are driving was the instruction. We were also fortunate my grandfather was a tenant farmer, and we kids had some sort of chassis, no bodywork on it at all, comprising engine, running gear and a somewhat upright steering wheel to drive around his fields. We used to stand up to drive it, with strange foot angles to work throttle, brake and clutch pedals and an awkward gear change stance.

My little brother swinging like a pendulum off the steering wheel if we cornered too fast, the fact his foot was off the throttle meant the vehicle slowed to a safer speed. Our mother was much more relaxed when father acquired for us a Vauxhall Cresta car, with 3 speed column change with seats and enclosed bodywork. Great fun in our grandfathers 'long field' that ran alongside the A4189 going faster than the road cars. In the best traditions of the BBC, do not try to copy this at home.

So, we were perhaps indulged with the four-wheel life and didn't get or need the two-wheel experience? In fact, I probably was driving

before I could ride a bicycle.

Having dedicated my working life to supporting those who paid my wage, I feel time is right now to step away and do a few things for myself; well, my wife wants to get a dog.....but after that! Walking, photography, bit of modelling, (making not catwalking!) So many history books to read, the longer I live the more history to study, and time to look at the world afresh.

I have had some great experiences acquiring loads of memories and friendships and no doubt will be around any events which Andover Norton host; and to which I might(?) be invited.....or just turn up.

So, to all work colleagues past and present, customers and suppliers, many thanks for your support and friendship and wishing you all good luck for the future.

Regards

Phil Albutt

Joe says: I will write a bit about Phil's role during my reign in next month's "Source".

Andover Norton Insight..... Workshop & Inspection

Not many people have visited our new site since we moved in and seen the extra space we have for our Workshop & Inspection area.



Above, one section of the workshop. The team assemble and test all new part runs to ensure fitment is correct, from the smallest washer to a full exhaust system. We also test fit parts, from pistons to camshafts, to our motorcycles that we run on the road for a number of months giving them a proper test.

These two team members work within the Workshop & Inspection area. Tejay has worked for Andover for a number of years and Peter recently joined. Both ride motorcycles, and Peter was an AA patrol man for a number of years.



Peter



Tejay

Below is the Inspection and Test fit area. We have a number of Norton models on-site and this is where we make sure that all parts we sell fit correctly. The MK3 below is having our latest run of balanced down pipes checked making sure the pipes tighten and the balance tube fits correctly.



We also have a Manufacture Storage area; this area is for items that are due to go into the Workshop & Inspection area and also to go out to our suppliers for additional operations.



Mick Duckworth's "Norton Commando"

One project, that after a far too long a genesis, finally came in from the printers is the Duckworth bible on the Norton Commando.

Norton Commando

Mick Duckworth



Andover Norton home of the
Norton Commando

Originally published in 2004 in the Haynes Great Bikes series, Norton Commando by Mick Duckworth was soon recognised as the definitive history of the Isolastic-framed twins made from 1968 to 1975.

A celebration of the Commando in all its forms, it tells the fascinating story of the model's inception, development and life after production ended, with input from many important figures involved, some of whom are sadly no longer with us.

Continuing demand for the book after it went out of print prompted Andover Norton International Ltd and the author to make it available again. Although the new hardback just released under ANIL's imprint is substantially the same as the original, there are key changes.

Content relating to the Commando's enduring presence as an eminently usable British Classic has been brought up to date, nuggets of newly available historic information have been added and some corrections made where necessary.

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This is a new and very much revised edition, proof-read and revised by Mick and proof-read and indexed by our Phil who was working away on the book in the few free minutes he had in his tasks as our book man/software guru schooling the team members in our new software/assistant to Karl in company matters etc. When Phil retires next month I know we will miss him. He may find we will ask him to assist us in future!

Andover Norton Clothing



We have stopped selling the "Norton Motors" clothing after TVS/Norton took offence and have since started a new line. In fact one we have been asked for before, the "Andover Norton" range. I rather like the traditional Andover Norton colour and our logo (our registered TM by the way), so who wants to show he or she insists on the real deal for parts can now show it to the ignorant dipsticks, sorry, other Norton owners out there.

Available in Small, Medium, Large, X-Large and XX-Large

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The new Norvil Fork Sliders

Yes, I confess, the Norvil Proddy Racer parts are a hobbyhorse of

mine. When we bought the Norvil side off the Hemmings' we got tooling for sliders that was not up to modern casting procedures so, ignoring the advice "we'll never get our money back on the new tooling!" I decided to proceed nonetheless.



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Many a roadbike I saw in the past using the pukka Proddy Racer slider(s), calipers and self-aligning brake disc, had the unsolved problem how to mount a road mudguard.

The new tooling offered the opportunity to integrate a threaded "ear" for a mudguard stay so you can now use at least one mudguard stay. Which is enough, as every 850Mk3 will show you.



On Tim Seifert's Commando, using an (unsightly) adaptor plate on a standard slider, that offers the option. But just looks like a chickenshed exercise which it normally is too, and Tim for one is in the market for the new proper solution.

Our Bikes/Joe's OHC racers

As planned, I went to Panoniaring, better known as "Paranoiaring" because Tim, Christine and I (me several times, ooops!) have come off on it in the past.

My friend "Fast Fraaanzi", probably the fastest man I have seen on near-standard Commandos in our races, accompanied me as supporting mechanic and "Grid Girl" since his own race engine is still with our engine man Rudi Kolano.



Above: My "Grid Girl" Fast Fraaaanzi behind 1960 German 500cc champion Rudi Glaeser's 1961 bike on which he ended as runner-up in that year. Glaeser of BMW fairings fame.

We took three OHC jobs, the 1937 30M, the 1949 30M DOHC Garden Gate, and the 1960 30M.

The 1937 bike was involved in my spectacular high-speed crash in Rijeka in 2019 and has since been rebuilt by yours truly with the help of Stu Rogers, who straightened the corkscrew-like front forks, and Otto Ziegler, who straightened the bent frame and also got it nearer to the original geometry. I suspect a crash in 1937 led to a 2 into 1 frame repair that upset the handling. This led to the purchase of another 30M racer by the first owner in 1938. In retrospect I now know why all pictures I have off him are on the 1938 bike.



The 1949 Manx that Albert Moule rode in the 1949 TT, retiring for unknown reasons, I had not ridden for years, having had problems with the float chamber running over. The week before we went to Hungary I took the bike to Rudi Kolano who found there was a manufacturing fault with the float/viton needle/float chamber top I had bought from Burlen after the old float gave up. The bottom seat of the needle was not opened up wide enough for the needle to stop the incoming petrol hence the carb flooded all the time. Rudi opened the seat up and now the float needle works.

The 1960 Manx just had its "Torrey Canyon" engine completely overhauled by Otto Ziegler. It is now, at long last, pretty dry even after a race and runs very nicely.



At Paranoising temperatures were in the 30°C in the shade region over the three days. Unfortunately, there is no shade on the track and during the training sessions, all day the first day and the

morning of the second, I was out 40 minutes in the hour on two different bikes and found black racing leathers with protectors make for very hot trainings and lead to an incredible consumption rate of mineral water in the breaks!

Though we did make considerable progress getting the carburation right on all three bikes the two old ones simply would not run full throttle and with limited time we did not get that last problem sorted.

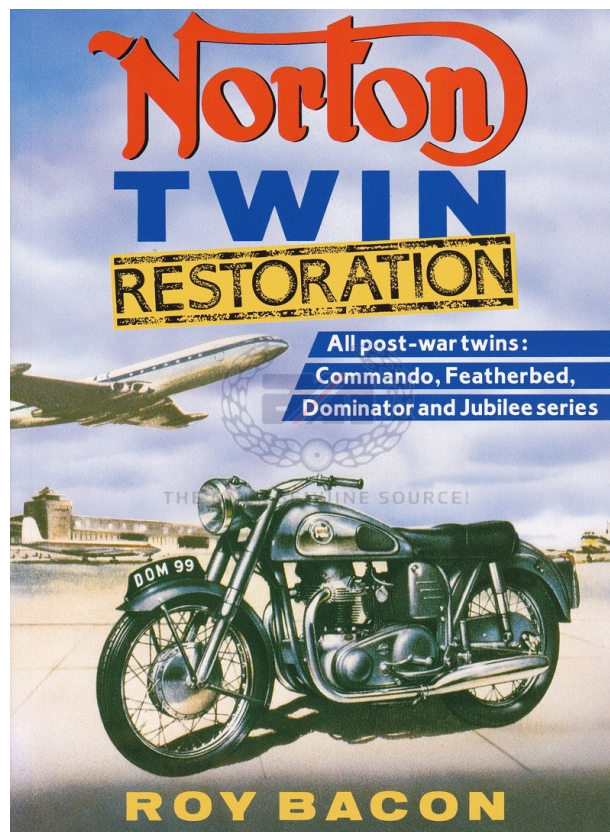
The 1960 Manx I entered in the first race. Only 12 competitors in that class plus two big BMW twins thrown in by the organizer, with all the front bikes being "modern" singles, Seeley Matchlesses and suchlike under very fast riders. I took my humble position in 12th spot and started the race well aware this might be where I'd end up. After the first lap everybody but the other original Manx in front of me had disappeared over the horizon so I concentrated on that, crept nearer, overtook him, he came back the next lap, so I overtook him again and saw to it I stayed in front. In the last lap I got a slight misfire so did my damnest to go as fast as I could, not realizing my opponent had quit the lap before.

In the end due to DNFs and DNS's I ended up with 7th place. The second race on the third day I did not enter because my only opponent had had a crash in the 750 race and did not start the next day.

I have ridden lonely races before and there is nothing more boring but to go around the track with no challenge.

Next meeting is Rijeka in September. I hope fast Franzi has his Commando racer together by then so we can race together again.

Featured Products



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Roy Bacon

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**That's all for this month's "Source"
Until next time!
The Team at Andover Norton**



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