



Dear Andover Norton customer,

May lies behind us. It had, for us, the highlight of the year, an event we had been looking forward to all over the Covid period: our first Open Day in three years.

The last Open Day was held in our old premises in Brunel Gate. Then we moved into our new premises in North Way, just opposite the old home of Andover Norton.

After the two years of renovating the new premises, sorting and locating all spares, raw materials, and tooling, we were keen to show our new facilities to our customers. Even more so since an overseas customer came in a few months ago and said: "I thought you were a hut in the middle of a car park!"

Karl publicised the Open Day in social media, and what a success that was:



A snapshot of our car park during the busy day

All our staff but Simon Amos (holidays) and Tee Jay (Covid) eagerly helped our effort to prepare everything for the day and to make our guests feel welcome.

We didn't have "Guests of Honour". But if anyone qualified for that title it was doubtless our old friend and (often) scathing critique Angela Hemmings. Nick Jeffery chauffeured her to the Open Day and even Angela admitted she enjoyed the day immensely!



Steven, Son of Dave Croxford, JPN works rider "Crasher" Croxford, JPN mechanic and occasional rider Norman White, Nick Jeffery, Angela Hemmings, our retired MD Nick Hopkins.

That said, other notables from Norton history came. Locals like Mike Jackson and Norman White, not-so-locals like Bob Rowley, Dave Pearce of Tigcraft, Mick Duckworth, and Dave "Crasher" Croxford with his son whom I had never met before and who was probably just there to wind his old foe Norman White up.



Author Mick Duckworth speaking with Bob Rowley, first tester, later Chief of Production in the Rotary era.

Our Simon Blackwell manned the grill and was assisted by Pat and later Zoe who handled the filling and distribution of the burgers. We sponsored the food and drinks and asked the guests to give money for the "Blood Bikers", a charity that has volunteer motorcyclists rushing blood to points where it is urgently needed. After the day the Blood Bikers got in excess of £1000 from the piggy banks. Thank you all for giving so generously!



“Little Simon” grilling away with Zoe filling the rolls and serving the never-ending queue.



The Wessex Blood Bike Riders joined us with a sample of their vehicle fleet.

So what did we show? In the main stores we showed part of our Norton collection plus a few bikes loaned for the occasion: a “Worx Racing” Manx replica and Norman White’s 1972 works Commando racer, both complimenting my P55 0001, the first F1 ever to leave the factory and ever to be raced.

Also exhibited were our wideline Dommi, the Fastback Commando of Tony Dennis, one of the two fathers of the Commando, “Jake”, the “Commando Triple” with third conrod and steel piston to kill the parallel twin vibrations, our “template” 850 in mid-restoration, our 850Mk3. Next, Phil’s NVT “Easy Rider” we gave him for his retirement. He brought his “Captain America” helmet but declined to demonstrate

the fire-breathing beast to our guests because he is still looking for the “I wasn’t born to follow” jacket.

Then the 1997 “Ironing Board” Norton C652 prototype, the only one in our collection that was ridden by the late and great Geoff Duke, plus the 1999 “Combat” prototype that never made it into production because the then incarnation of “Norton Motorcycles, Inc.” went down just before we had finished the prototype.



Customers could also roam our offices including our Meeting Room where we had the historical BSA Board Room Table covered with photographs from the Bob Rowley collection. This included a series of photos showing how on the other side of North Way, just opposite our premises, two buildings were erected in 1968/69 that then became the assembly plant for Commandos and the birthplace of Andover Norton.



The BSA Boardroom table c/w chairs, Richard Negus' drawing board that was the birthplace of innumerable technical drawings of Commando and later rotary Norton components.

Naturally, we did a bit for the entertainment of the guests. I did a couple of rides on "Nepomuk", my F1 racebike, and our Karl rode "Trusty", our tractor with the Norton Big4 engine. So we demonstrated the extremes of our collection, the fastest and the slowest.



The first P55 (F1) to ever leave the factory. I got a lot of flak from the family for not donning appropriate riding gear...



Karl could hardly handle the power and very nearly overshot the end of our drive, but returned safe and sound to the staff's relief!

We were also visited by Alexander Rollings and David Mitchell of The Classic Motorcycle Channel who have produced a video for both the F1 and Trusty on their YouTube Page.



P55 / F1 Video



Trusty Tractor Video

We thank all our guests for coming and enjoying the day with us. We heard no end of positive and encouraging comments from you and the whole Andover Norton team members are now even more motivated than before to serve you all well, promptly and fairly.

Karl told me how every staff member was still enthusiastic about the event and proud to have made the day a success as well as being part of our company.

Our Bikes

Joe:

Not much on my normal road bikes. I had very little time in the last four weeks since in addition to the Open Day I took part in the "Grab the Flag" 3-day race meeting in Hungary. The weather was mainly dry contrary to the forecast. Fortunately it rained during the nights and the track didn't take long in the mornings to dry up. Important at Panoniarig because in the wet some patches are like ice. Been there, fallen off without warning!

This time Fast Fraaaaaanzi at long last got his engine in time to build and race his trusty Commando racer, so as opposed to last year I had a fellow rider. Our friend Guenter came with us as mechanic and support.



Fast Fraaanzi leaving for the track

Unfortunately, within the first day it became obvious our Franz had problems with his ignition. So Franz and Guenter took the whole system to pieces and exchanged all components, one by one, to find the fault. This took them most of the second day and cost Franz the start in the first race in our 750 class.



Despair! Nothing seemed to do the trick until.....

After they had worked most of the day with no result they finally decided the problem may be the battery. I could have kicked myself, because it was for exactly the same reason Tim, Ashley, and I had worked on the C652 Supermone racer at A1 Ring four years ago to no avail until we realized at last the battery was faulty. And so it was here, showing sufficient voltage until under load, then collapsing completely. Since I had a spare battery with me Franz put that into his bike and, hey presto, all was well...

I had meanwhile ridden my Manx in the relevant trainings. Though the magneto now worked fine after the repair by my friend Hebsch Schuesseler, carburation was still off, i.e. too rich, and what I really wanted after two days of main jet and needle position changes was a leaner needle jet. Which I did not have with me! But even if I stood no chance against the two replica Manxes in the field, from the power point of view as well as from my riding abilities even though I wasn't as hopeless as I feared.



Working away on my carburetion.... As I seem to have done all through the meeting!

I did have our trusty family racer with me, veteran of over 25 racing seasons. Getting on it is synonymous with feeling comfortable, and the good old thing really runs like (fast) clockwork. My training times were the usual disaster, but in the first race I gradually reeled a Suzuki Four in and had a very enjoyable fight with us overtaking each other several times and me finally beating him over the finish line. In that fight I had equaled my lap times of 10-15 years ago and was happy. On the last lap the bike started to misfire in high revs and in the discharge round revs started to be limited to 5.000rpm. Fazit: battery gone.



Our "Family Racer" all Andover Norton shareholders, friends and I have ridden in trainings and races over a quarter of a century. Comfortable and fast (for a Commando!).

Now Franz had my spare battery so I roamed the paddock and struck gold with a Triumph customer and fellow competitor who loaned me his spare battery. In the second race I was all alone on the track after having lost the tow of slightly faster riders and the whole race was pretty boring, given there was no duel. My lap times returned to my usual training times and I'd rather forget that one.

Franz had started in the same race but due to suffering from a cold felt after two laps he wasn't fit enough and retired. Not without passing the cold on to yours truly, though....



This is what helmet and visor looked like after 8 laps in the second race. In our part of the world you have few insects left. In this part of Hungary they still thrive. Which explains the many bats flying over the road leading to the circuit when one arrives in the evening hours.

Ashley:

The MK3 rear wheel is now well under test and seems to be retaining its tension, shape and trueness all of which are good signs, so now onto the front wheel.

All the details we have here are that the MK3 used the [06.1951](#) rim, which would be the Dunlop MC 275 pattern. This was used on the early MK3, but the later models Dunlop MC 288, which suggests we are lacking drawings as there would have been a difference in the rims we believe. There are two drawings 06.6025, which uses the [06.1951](#) rim and the spokes as per the parts book, this has the spokes either side of the valve position as outer spokes. The next 'later' drawing 06.6628, again uses the [06.1951](#) rim, but the all the inner spokes are the same gauge and the outers are of a different but same gauge, the spokes are also different lengths to the 06.6025.

However, the lacing pattern for this later drawing is different, the spokes either side of the valve position one is inner and the other an outer spoke. Most rebuilt MK3 wheels I have seen, irrespective of who has built them seem to have this later lacing pattern of one spoke being inner and the other an outer.

So as far as I can tell, the following relates to the spokes either side of the valve position



Above: Pre Mk3 - MC 275 - Spokes Inner

MK3 - MC 275 - We believe spokes would be inner with heavy gauge swapped to disc side. Original photo would be welcome.

Below: MK3 - MC 288 - Spokes are Outer.



Why the early MK3 used MC 275 and later models the MC 288 rims we don't know, so if anyone out there can help us or has the Dunlop catalogues of the time with the difference in then I would like to view them, scans or photos would be welcome.

Calne P11 Bike Meet

During the Open Day, Karl met with Roddy Allan, who asked us to highlight the upcoming Calne Bike Meet, a gathering of Norton P11 and Hybrid motorcycles, all P11, N15CS, G15CS etc owners are invited to come along.

The display area will be along the Wharf footpath just along the river from the Town Hall. Vehicle access from the main crossroad road traffic lights is gained via Patford Street behind the Town Hall. Roddy can be contacted for additional details on 07967 345156.

Calendar Competiton

We are still accepting entries for our calendar competition, but time is running out! So if you want to enter, please send your quality pictures and write ups into newsletter@andover-norton.co.uk as soon as you can!

Featured Products



ANDOVER NORTON 45 YEAR T-SHIRT

Small

Medium

Large

Extra Large

2X Large

WHEEL RIM - FRONT -
DISC BRAKE

Shop

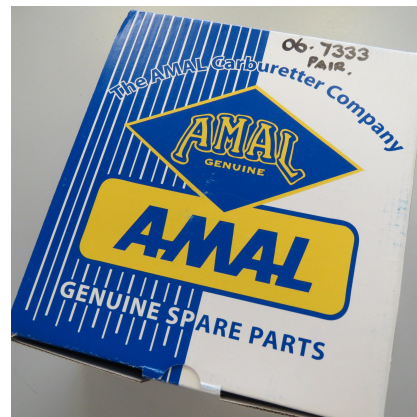


CARB PAIR - AMAL
PREMIER 30MM (750
COMMANDO) 220 JET

Shop

CARB PAIR - AMAL
PREMIER 32MM (850
COMMANDO) 260 JET

Shop



**We hope you have enjoyed this
edition of "The Source"**

The Team at Andover Norton



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