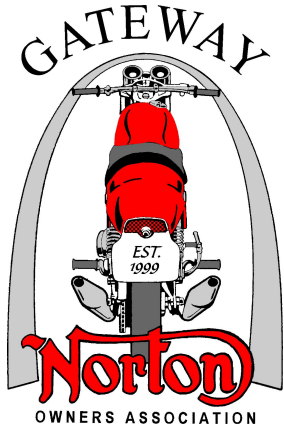


Gateway Norton Owners News #50



**"To Promote the
Use and Pride of
Norton Motorcycle Ownership"
Compiled by Marty and Peggy Dupree
April 2012**



KING'S COLUMN The Norton Experience

I sure hope everyone listening has a fond memory of a Norton experience. Mine was about 25 years ago on a "Commando Fishin' Mission" with Kurt Baue. His insistence, initially, talked me into buying a Norton. I found one for the pricey sum of \$400 and bought it. He then organized the "World's First Missouri Commando Fishin' Mission 1984." We strapped our fishing poles on our horses and headed for Hermann, Missouri after work. He knew of a pond that was overgrown and in need of some bass-removal. We rode right up to the pond just at dusk and within 5 minutes I had a "big-un" hooked (5 lbs. 1 oz. to be exact). Kurt caught a few, too! (Maybe you have seen my poor, stiff, stuffed, dead-ass bass near by drill press.) So: I landed the creature, put the giant in my saddlebag, and we headed back just after dark, down Highway 19 from Lake Hutcheson to Interstate 70. It was a "Regal" evening. We rounded a bend and I down shifted to third and gave 'er some stick. That was the "Moment!" That ol' Combat came on song and that has been impossible to forget. We stopped in a tavern on the way back to weigh the poor thing, and to have a beer-pop or three. Folks were friendly back then, gas was better and cheaper, and Nortons always run better on cool May evenings with three beers in ya and a 5 pound fish was gigantic back then.

Now to present day: downstairs, I am working on two e-Bay "prizes" (one is Craig's List) that are probably worth less than the \$400 I paid for mine in 1984. Trouble is, the owners paid 10 times that amount and have yet had the "Experience." Poor Chaps have just been pouring cubic dollars into them, hoping just to ride them, without a fish in the saddlebag! I feel sorry for the way things are for new owners today. All the bargains are gone, gas is crap, parts are rare, expensive, my labor is high, and fish don't bit like they used to.

One of these belongs to our new member Mark Chapman, who is spending a lot of money just to ride the bloody thing again. He had a few precious moments before the thing rattled like two skeletons screwing on a tin roof and smoked profusely. I feel like I should take him on a "Fishin' Mission" as soon as I get it done.

The second poor fella doesn't know if he can master shifting it yet, 1 up and 3 down! After purchasing it he only heard it run for a moment as fuel was running out of the carburetors. The front end is crooked, the swing arm is badly bent, it has a 16" chopper rear wheel and no brakes, but has nice new pipes, mufflers and seat. Next month I will give a full report. I am thinking about having him join the Club. We need to sell him on the virtues of "The Experience." Let's all be nice to him and encourage the poor chap. Maybe he can have "The Experience" soon.

Winter Meeting Notes

Meeting held on February 22 at The Corner Bar in St. Charles with 19 members present. Doc Coogan and Kurt Baue rode their Nortons, Dave Kaufman rode his Harley. Mike called the meeting to order and first time attendee Joe Heitkamp was introduced. He has a '74 850. Steve reported there were seven T-shirts left and reminded us that we have GNOA coasters for sale at \$2 each.

Old Business: Steve reported that we will have a trash pickup day April 22 with the 29th as a rain day. He read a thank you letter from MoDOT. He also said that the hubcaps we found were sold for \$22 and money donated to the Club.

Basic Treasurers Report was given and a full report will be made at the Spring meeting.

New Business:

- ❑ Spring Kick Start meeting will be held at Kurt Baue's. The date is April 28th in honor of James Monroe's birthday. There will be burgers and dogs. If you have saddlebags or are coming in a car, please bring some drinks, snacks or be generous in "Bucking up" to help pay for this. More information in the calendar of events.
- ❑ Mike has offered to do tech work on a Norton - contact him if you have a project that will take less than 2 or 3 hours. Bill Henkel mentioned he has a "Colortune" carburetor synchronizer that he would like to see if it really works. Maybe we can have a "Smack Down" between Mike and the Colortune!
- ❑ Tom Mitchell and Scott Dowler will host a ride April 15. See Calendar of Events for details.
- ❑ Club member John Murray brought a centerstand he made of 4130 chrome moly tubing. It was absolutely gorgeous. He plans to make 15 or 20 of these and place them for sale. There will be more information supplied at the Spring Kick Start meeting.
- ❑ It was brought up that the SoCal Norton Owners are having a ride from the St. Louis Arch to the Santa Monica pier from September 8 through 16. Discussion followed and some members thought it would be nice if we could meet them while they are in St. Louis. Marty Dupree emailed the ring leader and will give a report on what he found out at the Kick Start meeting.

Bill Rueckert donated the book *Leanings* by Peter Eagan as a second place prize for the 50/50 drawing. Bill Henkel won that. Bill Rueckert bought a 50/50 ticket but had to leave early, so gave it to Marty Dupree to hold. Well, Bill's ticket won, so his take of \$15.50 was donated back to the Club. Thanks Bill for both of these nice gestures. Class dismissed.

Last Day of the Year Ride

Ed Perry

I had help from R & K Cycle (I like Ron at R & K, he lets me learn from him by helping him) to tune up my '74 Norton. So on the last day of the year I rode for 20 miles. I was hoping for 80 miles, but the south wind was pushing me between the white lines and yellow center marks. Well, I headed out of town on an east/west route, Highway 24. I ran the bike up to 70 and I finally got behind a pickup truck. I decided the wind was whipping too fast, and slowed down to turn around. When I released the throttle, the 850 began to backfire somewhat. The pickup truck hit the brakes. I don't know if the driver of the truck thought I was breaking down or shooting at him! I turned around and headed back to Mt. Sterling, IL and decided to try a north/south road, Highway 99. Boy, what a blast heading north. I ran the trusty steed up to 70, then onward to 80, then 85. Well, I was making good time and began to wonder again. I bet I'm getting great fuel economy with the wind pushing me south. Again, I slowed down and turn around to head north.

You know, I remember when I was younger and thinking that it's not so bad riding into the wind, although it's a heck of a lot more enjoyable having the wind at your back. I start out and man! A 30 mph wind in your face is quite stong! 50mph felt as if I was running 80! Illinois doesn't require a helmet while riding, but I use one, I don't get along with a windshield on my bike.

So I returned to town and decide to fuel up. As I'm getting ready to fuel up, I hear three loud Davidson motorcycles stop for fuel also. While I'm gassing, I hear comments, "Hey, a Norton!" Another guy, "Not many people ride those bikes anymore." I'm grinning with pride.

A 6' 5" guy walks over and says, "Cool bike man." I said thank you. He said you don't see many in this good of shape. Remember, this gent rides an \$18,000 Davidson bike. I said thanks again and told him I've owned this machine since I was 18.

I went in to pay and realized I left my wallet and cash at home. So happens, the man I bought the bike from was there, and I asked him for a \$3 loan. He was smiling ear to ear. He said, "OK but my interest is high!" I said thank you. On the way out of the gas station, two more Davidson guys said, "Hey, look at that Norton!" So all four of us began to start our bikes, and I'm thinking, "Come on first kick." She responded. Good ol' pea shooter. The bikes let me take off first. I tried to make the Norton sound awesome. Went home and grabbed \$3. My better half asked, "Problems?" I said, "Yes, no cash to pay the pump. I borrowed \$3 from Bob (the previous owner). He charges an arm and a leg for interest, so I better get back to the station." Well, I paid Bob back. He said, "You sure took off in a hurry!" I said, "The Norton still has it and it starts on the first kick after it's warmed up." Bob then said, "You took the windshield off" and I replied "It's not a car Bob. I like a helmet."

I bought the '74 850 MKII from Bob at the age of 18 while my parents were on vacation. Gee, 30 years ago! Bob told me "I thought your mom might kill me for selling the motorcycle to you." It's been along time since I spent time with the Norton on "the last day of the year."

P.S. I have my eye on the 2012 Campout. Sorry I didn't make it in 2011.

Member Profile

Frank Murphy

I'm 57 years old, live in Town and Country with my wife and her three dogs. Three of my daughters are in college and one has graduated and is looking for a job in Denver. In addition to my Norton, I like to ski, listen to all kinds of music (with a particular fondness for the Grateful Dead), work on projects around the house, and have an occasional (or more than occasional) cocktail.

I was born in London but moved to the US when I was 2 years old, so I lost my accent before I could speak. I grew up in New Jersey while my father worked on Wall Street. I started riding many bikes in high school . . . the best one I had was a Bonanza with a 100cc Hodaka 2-stroke with 5-speed transmission and full suspension. Moved up to a Yamaha RD 350 in 1972 which I rode during college. The Yamaha was a street version of Yamaha's successful small road racing bike, and fun but always envied a friend who had a Norton 750.

Went to school at the University of Vermont, then went into the oil and gas business as a financial guy in 1978. Lived in Tennessee (where I met my wife Patti), moved to Texas, then to Connecticut (where my four daughters were born), then back to Houston, Texas with American Exploration Company. American was sold to another oil company in 1997 and I was offered a job with A. G. Edwards to help them

build an oil and gas investment banking business (i.e., a sales job where I convinced oil and gas companies and pipelines to use A.G. Edwards to raise money in the stock market). Did that for 10 years until A.G. Edwards was acquired by Wachovia, I moved to Wachovia, they were acquired by Wells Fargo, I moved to Wells Fargo, then a year later I resigned to join a smaller investment banking firm out of Milwaukee called Robert W. Bayard and Company. I'm still based in St. Louis and working with oil and gas companies to help them raise money, do I.P.O.'s and advise them on mergers. We have 10 people in our group and office in Clayton.

After a 30 year hiatus, I convinced my wife in 2006 that I had enough insurance for her to let me buy a motorcycle and began looking for a Norton. Because I travel a lot, I was able to look at bikes in various locations. . . (Houston, Dallas, and Sturgis . . . saw Mt. Rushmore on that trip) and finally ended up buying a 1975 Interstate (electric start . . . OK, I'm not a purist). I bought the bike from Baxter Cycles in Marne, Iowa . . . it was a consignment from a guy in Bozeman, Montana. The bike black with gold pin striping and is in original condition. It rides OK, but at some point I would like to do a full restoration. I look forward to joining everyone for a ride in the spring.

Contact Information:

Mike French, King/President:	636-940-9365	mfrench9365@charter.net
Steve Hurst, Membership:	636-928-3391	shurst01@att.net
Marty Dupree, Newsletter:	636-398-4049	madx2@centurytel.net

Dues are \$5 per year running July thru June. They are non-prorated to keep bookkeeping simple. Make check payable to "Steve Hurst" or send cash to Steve at: 966 Weybridge Ct. W. St. Charles, MO 63304.

A motorcycle club was on their yearly bike tour. No one wanted to room with Mike because he snored so badly. They decided it wasn't fair to make one of them stay with him the whole time, so they voted to take turns. The first guy slept with Mick and comes to breakfast the next morning with his hair a mess and his eyes all bloodshot. They said, "Man, what happened to you?" He said, "Mike snored so loudly that I just sat up and watched him all night."

The next night it was a different guy's turn. In the morning, same thing, hair all standing up, eyes all bloodshot. They said, "Man, what happened to you? You look awful." He said, "Man, that Mike shakes the roof with his snoring. I watched him all night."

The third night was Gary's turn. He was a tanned, old biker, a man's man. The next morning he came to breakfast bright eyed and bushy tailed. "Good morning!" he said. They couldn't believe it. They said, "Man, what happened?" He said, "Well, we got ready for bed. I went and tucked Mike into bed, patted him on the arse, and kissed him good night on the lips. Mike sat up and watched me all night."

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

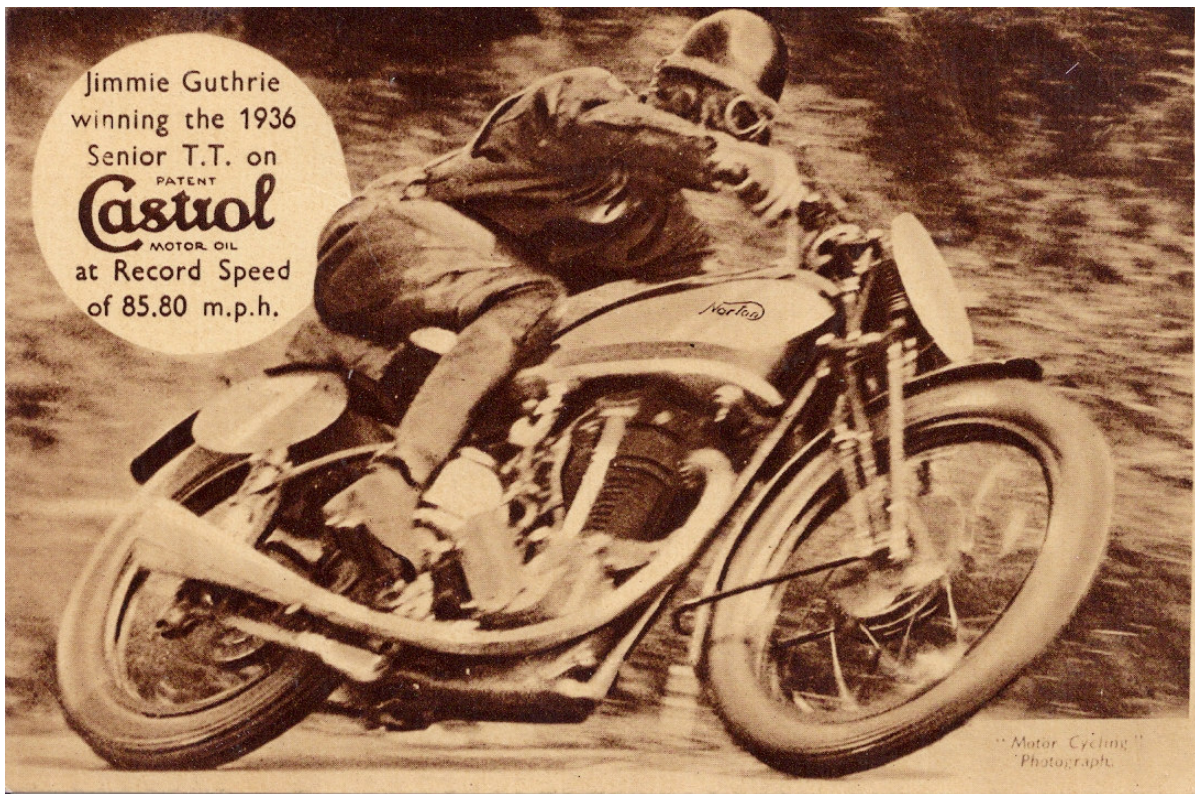
- April 15: GNOA Club ride. Tom Mitchell and Scott Dowler are hosting this ride. Gather at Quick Trip on 5th Street at Hwy. 70 in St. Charles. Meet at 10am, ride leaves at 10:30. For more information call Tom @ 636-946-0717 or Scott @ 636-987-2820.
- April 22: GNOA "Adopt a Highway" trash pickup day. Highway 79 north from Hwy. 70, approximately 2 miles. You will see our sign. Will meet at 9:30am.
- April 28: Spring Kick Start meeting at Kurt Baue's, 528 N. Benton in St. Charles. Starting time is high noon. Mapquest for directions. His phone number is 636-947-3895.
- May 5: Antique Motorcycle Event for bikes 35 years and older (1977) hosted by Mike Stiedley. Will leave his house at 11am. There is plenty of room for trailers and some food will be served at the conclusion of the ride at his house. **Call Mike for reservations: 636-798-2473.** 1518 Schluersburg Rd. in St. Charles County. Mapquest directions.
- July 17-20: INOA "End of the World" Rally in Vermont. Check their website for details.
- July 20-22: Vintage Motorcycle Days at Mid Ohio. Google for details.

Editor's Comments

Thank you everyone who submitted something for this newsletter. Annual dues are payable in July. If your envelope has a yellow highlight, your dues are about to expire. Please be ready to pay up at the meeting, or mail them to Steve Hurst. See contact box on page 4 for info. Thank you very much!



A reader of the Real Classic website sent me this picture of his "barn find" 1928 Model 18. It still had it's 1953 tax disc attached.



A postcard Marty Dupree recently acquired