

## Northumbria Branch Newsletter Feb 2018

### **STOP PRESS!! DOG JOINS NORTHUMBRIA BRANCH!!!**

**Yes, folks, our membership has been increased by ONE DOG!! He's a dab hand on the computer (all four paws). He is not so good on Facebook, but he's a whizz at Facelick! And at the AGM, he voiced his assent to all agenda items with a hearty tail wag. And!!! He will BITE any members that do not pay their subs by March 30<sup>th</sup> at the latest. (And it is far from certain whether he has been injected for rabies, so you had better watch out!!). To avoid this terrible fate, if you have not paid, send £5 by cheque (made out to Norton Owners Club Northumbria), to Alan Millar, 5 Barrassford Close, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 8XT, guardian of the club funds. (Mind you with some members it is hard to tell whether they have rabies or not).**

**Sooooo - ---- here is the scribe's unofficial AGM report: (Simon has e-mailed the very comprehensive authorised version that has also to be filed with the Big Norton Club in the Sky = BNOCITS). Anyhow this is what a befuddled scribe remembers.**

**Turnout** at AGM has almost doubled – now 27 people and a dog. (It must have been brought on by the new secretary).

**The branch ossifers gave their reports** (authorised versions from Simon). Of particular interest to your scribe is that there will be a kind of relay, where various branches pass on a baton to neighbouring branches. It starts in Tamar in April 2018 and reaches us in August 2021!! (What kind of bike are they riding???)

**There is also going to be an attempt to round up main club members** in the region who are not in the branch.

**All ossifers got re-elected** by general acclaim and one WOOF!

**The treasurer** failed to make a financial loss in spite of all his efforts. This could be a man to go into business with. (Branch subs will stay at £5.00.)

**We are volunteering to run the National Rally** in 2019 or 2020. Since the Big Norton Club In The Sky now does most of the work in organising rallies (at least it says so), it should be less hassle than last time.

**Evening rides:** We'll try to keep these going. Wednesday evenings seemed to be preferred. Also the possibility of longer day-time rides for members who are retired (most of us). – Clive of the Hat alias Motorcycling God organising.

**First aid training:** Simon is going to try to resuscitate the plan.

## **And now: the programme:**

**Items in red are for information only. No official branch attendance.**

**(Scribe's comments from scruffy notes taken at AGM are in italics)**

You can nail this on your kitchen wall!!

- a. Ryhope Pump House Show (Classic Car Show – 1<sup>st</sup> April) - *Includes a small autojumble. If you go they like you to stay through much of the day.*
- b. The classic and Vintage day at the Bellingham Heritage Centre = *the station* (22<sup>nd</sup> April) .
- c. Clive Taylor Memorial Ride (13<sup>th</sup> May) To coincide with a visit to the Kielder Show. Simon/John Powell to arrange.
- d. Kielder Vintage Show (Vintage vehicle run – 12<sup>th</sup> May & Show 13<sup>th</sup> May). *With Clive Taylor Memorial Run.*
- e. Custom and Classic Bike Event, Durham Market Place (11:00 to 16:00 3<sup>rd</sup> June). *We were made warmly welcome last time and there was interest in having our gazebo. Decided just to visit it this year and talk about gazebos for next. So it might help if a few members go and look-see this year.*
- f. Annual camping – Wooler (8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> June) Simon to make contact with Wooler. Gazebo, etc. required. *(presume BBQ – scribe). – Date has been moved from 15-17<sup>th</sup>.*
- g. Aln Valley Railway (16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> June) Entry required. Simon/Tony coordinating. *(Pre-reg form attached.)*
- h. The Great Classic Show at Bywell (ex-Corbridge) (1<sup>st</sup> July) Entry required. Simon/John Pye to follow up. Gazebo, etc. required. *(Pre-reg info to follow. The event has changed sites)*
- i. **North Shields Quayside Show (15<sup>th</sup> July)**
- j. **Applecross (20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> July) - <http://applecross.uk.com/campsite/> for booking**
- k. **Tyne Valley Classic Motorcycle Club Show @ Stamfordham (5<sup>th</sup> August, 2018)**
- l. **NOC Reivers' Rally, Melrose. 31 Aug – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept. Hotel Based. See "Roadholder" for details.**
- m. Yetholm. Northumbria branch to organise (7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> September) Bob to arrange. *(More info later in mid-season newsletter, facebook etc)*
- n. Kamtrek – Sean Mulloy 'won' the 2017 event and will be organising. (16<sup>th</sup> September)
- o. **Wings & Wheels (Not planned for 2018). (Major event in 2017, repeating in 2019. We are likely to be there. Included WW2 aircraft)**
- p. **Denholm Show (no information available)**
- q. **Druridge Bay (no information available)**
- r. Bellingham camping weekend – To be organised. Bob/Simon to arrange. Gazebo, etc. required. *Bunkhouse with kitchen accommodation as well as camping*
- s. Christmas Bash 20<sup>th</sup> December Melton Constable

**Scribe and Webmaster blather (Scribe's own rant: Facebooks and/or Newsletters - ????)**

### **Hyperactive and dedicated Webmaster says:**

#### **Norton Owners Club - Web Page (Northumbria Branch)**

1. Unsure as to number of actual visits to page, but Northumbria Branch forum is never used/commented upon other than Webmaster advertising local events and John's Newsletters.

General discussion, sales and wants sections has not been used other than on one occasion, since 2013.

2. Ideas welcomed as to how we can improve the interest in this page, notwithstanding, the uncertainty of numbers of full members to NOC ?.

3. If any member has a new Norton, could we please send in a photo, and I'll include within "Member's bikes" section

## Northumbria Norton Owners Club - Facebook Page

1. Currently 34 members, although a percentage are "sleeping" members with a general interest in Norton / British motorcycles in general, including a few members from abroad.
2. Starting to pick up in terms of activity and quality of information..... more and more posts being recorded on local events, technical data, sales and wants, mechanics / re-builds , restoration services etc and general Norton historical information and photographs.
3. Also now quite a healthy discussion forum to display bike holiday photos, meeting events etc.

### **Scribe says , and PLEADS**

**This** newsletter has mainly reported on events. Now someone puts an event report on Facebook seconds after it is over. And a show of hands indicated the vast majority of people attending the AGM did follow Facebook. So why a newsletter? Committee members demanded it continued, but to be useful it needs to change – more like a magazine? **That needs articles. Which means more contributions from members. PLEASE. Scribe (me) is also most happy to visit anyone's workshop/shed and look over projects or bikes and is happy to prepare or help prepare articles. See the following (Tale of two workshops).**

As to the web site, it never attracted correspondence, but what goes in is permanent and could form a permanent library of useful information. Can we develop this? (Webmaster asks for ideas). More importantly, when I was secretary, there were cases of people finding NOC Northumbria via the web site. We do not actually know how many people look at it. But if it turned out to be mostly non-members, or main club members, it is good advertising. Try googling "Norton Owners Northumbria" and you will find that as soon as you have typed in "Norton Owners North - ", we pop up. Thought: how did the many visitors to the Clennell camp find us?

But scribe is very happy with Facebook. Find someone to line a brake? Let people know you are planning a ride and would enjoy company? Want to tell people something really boring? - Whatever. Lots of potential. Need to consume beer with webmaster to discuss interaction of the printed word and the digital word.

**Note re. pictures:** From now on, you will see bigger and better quality versions of the pictures if you look at the newsletter on line. Go to [www.nortonownersclub.org](http://www.nortonownersclub.org). Click; - branches – our spot on the map – newsletters. Lots of branch history there.

End of techno-babble.

## **Good news for classic motorcycle owners as new MoT exemption rules set to come in for 2018 ! (Article from Webmaster – Hooray!!)**

The Department for Transport has revealed that vehicles over **40 years old** will be exempt from MOT tests from May next year.

Previously vehicles manufactured before 1960 were exempt from the annual inspection but the new rules mean some 50,000 or so more bikes do not need an MoT test.

The new rules, which come in during May 2018, bring Britain in line with most of the rest of Europe and will work on a rolling 40 year basis. As of next spring, all bikes built before 1978 will fall under the new rules, meaning that classic bikes like our Norton Commandos, Triumph Bonneville's, Honda's CB750 and the like will, in theory, be cheaper to own and run.

The 40 year rule also applies to vehicle excise duty (road tax), which are exempt from any fees, although riders will still be required to have [valid insurance](#) for their classic bikes.

These new regulations also apply to classic cars and do place an emphasis on owners to ensure their vehicles are in a roadworthy state. While an MoT certificate will no longer be compulsory, drivers and riders may still present their vehicles for a voluntary MoT test and it remains their responsibility to ensure that their vehicles have no defects that would see it fail the government tests when they take to the public roads.

The 40-year-old exemption will be on a rolling basis, so pre-1978 vehicles will initially be affected, but in 2019 the exemption will extend to pre-1979 ones, and so on.

The reasoning is that very few 40-year-old classics get used on a day-to-day basis, and most are owned by enthusiasts who will meticulously care for them regardless of annual testing. It also means that the exemption

from MOT testing will coincide with the exemption from VED, presumably streamlining the computer records that tie the two things together.

According to the DfT, vehicles over 40 years old have a lower MOT failure rate than newer ones, as well as having a lower rate of deaths and injuries (on an injuries-per-vehicle basis).

While exempted from annual roadworthiness testing, it will still be a legal requirement for all vehicles used on the road to comply with the law – this isn't a licence to use bald tyres or have inoperative lights. Owners of exempt vehicles will also always have the option of submitting their vehicles to a voluntary MOT test for their own peace of mind. However, under the current rules, only 6% of pre-1960, MOT-exempt vehicle owners take up that option.

The new rules come into force on 20 May 2018. One exception is 40-year-old vehicles that have been subject to 'substantial change'. The final details of what will count as 'substantial change' on bikes will be published later this year, but it's safe to assume that if you bolt a modern engine and suspension to a pre-1978 bike, making it into more useable day-to-day transport, you're likely to discover that it's no longer eligible to be MOT-exempt.

John Pye

WebMaster NNOC

### **The Scribe's continuing saga/moans, continued – Norton in bits.**

Quelle Horreur! Piston skirts (rear/pressure side) chewed. Bore against which it runs OK BUTT - Gudgeon pin (LH Piston) has tried to come out at both ends, wearing a vertical trough both sides. (Mystery – I took one circlip out of its groove with circlip pliers. Other was actually broken but the larger part was in the groove – -- ??). Bob Tym's "Tuning for speed" mentions wire circlips breaking, but??? Anyhow restoration means sleeving plus 500cc standard pistons - money!! Conclude that neither Aussie nor Italian pistons are the primary cause, (Though Pete Lovell who is doing the bottom end of the engine as he has always before, prefers the Gandini pistons. - Richard has done my cylinder head and also boat bits! ). Oil? – oil pump? Well, after 15 years from crankshaft regrind and about 90,000 miles, zero crankpin wear. Over-tight piston? – well, the clearances correspond with the figures on the RGM web site. Overheating? Unlikely. But seizures do seem to correspond with a burst of higher speed than normal cruising (more throttle), or a long period up hill while maintaining cruising speed (also more throttle but still well below half).

Pete Lovell suspects a "Wet seize". What the hell is that? Theory that the carburettor gives a "burp" of wet fuel that briefly washes the oil off the bores. How? Carburettor new in 2006 and AOK until this trouble began. Only - after refuelling on the A1 South I had four instances of a blocked pilot jet, and, after a half circuit of the M25, found fuel running out around the tickler button. Never found any debris in the tubes or float bowl and the blockages mysteriously disappeared somewhere North of Madrid. Duff fuel? 3 gauzes in line (tap, carburettor and another in a small strainer in the fuel line). But could a slightly snotty gobbet get through gauzes but stop at the pilot jet – or the fuel needle? – or – for some reason is the float in the carburettor beginning to vibrate under engine load and stopping the fuel needle from seating properly?

Googled "Wet seized pistons". Found pics of chewed pistons like mine but no info on wet seizes on piston engines – except diesels. Here faulty injectors may inject large wet droplets, resulting in oil being washed off the bores and a "wet seize". Also a neighbour does tell of wet seizes on a MG model due to carburettor vibration. So it does exist. And – bolt connecting head steady to top of steering head had gone AWOL. Could this have contributed to increased carburettor and carburettor float vibration?

So – nothing concluded. Have replaced float and fuel valve above the float with those off an older carburettor (brass float different weight plus viton-tipped needle), and added in-line pleated cartridge filter (gift from Bob). Bob will also lend a strobe to check timing better than I can, but ignition is probably not the major suspect. Carburettor somewhat enriched in 2017, following the holed piston late 2016, to produce cooler running, though cannot be super-rich as fuel consumption is superb. ( I also plan to coat the piston skirt with Xylan 1010 – a ½ thou PTFE based lacquer from my old firm). At the end of the day, back on the road and pray

### A tale of two workshops.

(OK, usual disclaimer: In no way is the club recommending either workshop for doing anything. And anything you do with either of these gents will be between consenting adults.) However I can see a good line in stories about members' workshops, especially those who do work for others. Any more interesting workshops??

Having seen stuff on Facebook from **Gordon Scott**, I went so see what he was up to. And was pretty gob smacked. A BIG workshop. Some really interesting bikes. And a lathe off a Russian submarine, big Bridgeport milling machine/drill press, shears for metal, grit blast cabinet (for grit or bead), that can take a frame, paint spray booth/room ditto. His main line of work has been making things out of aluminium, like fuel and oil tanks. He has made 40+ oil tanks (like go between the frame loops on featherbeds). Is a master-dinger of metal and can pull metal into various shapes. He has devices that can stretch or compress metal edges, thus causing it to curl. Gordon also does a lot of machine shop work and is developing reboring (done a couple for himself). No space here to say more. Gordon can be contacted via text on 07804 277456.



Red gritblast and door to spray room behind ladder



Russian sub lathe far RHS



YUM!!!

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**Racing Richard Johnston** says he needs no advertising: too much work already! But here is a man who risks his life, **racing on his own work**, with a 350cc Manx and a Featherbed/Commando. But he has done jobs for quite a few of us. In the scribe's case, jobs with the cylinder head, plus fitting some special magic exhaust valves. The polished inlet ports on Richard's racing head are smoother than something you now go to jail for mentioning.

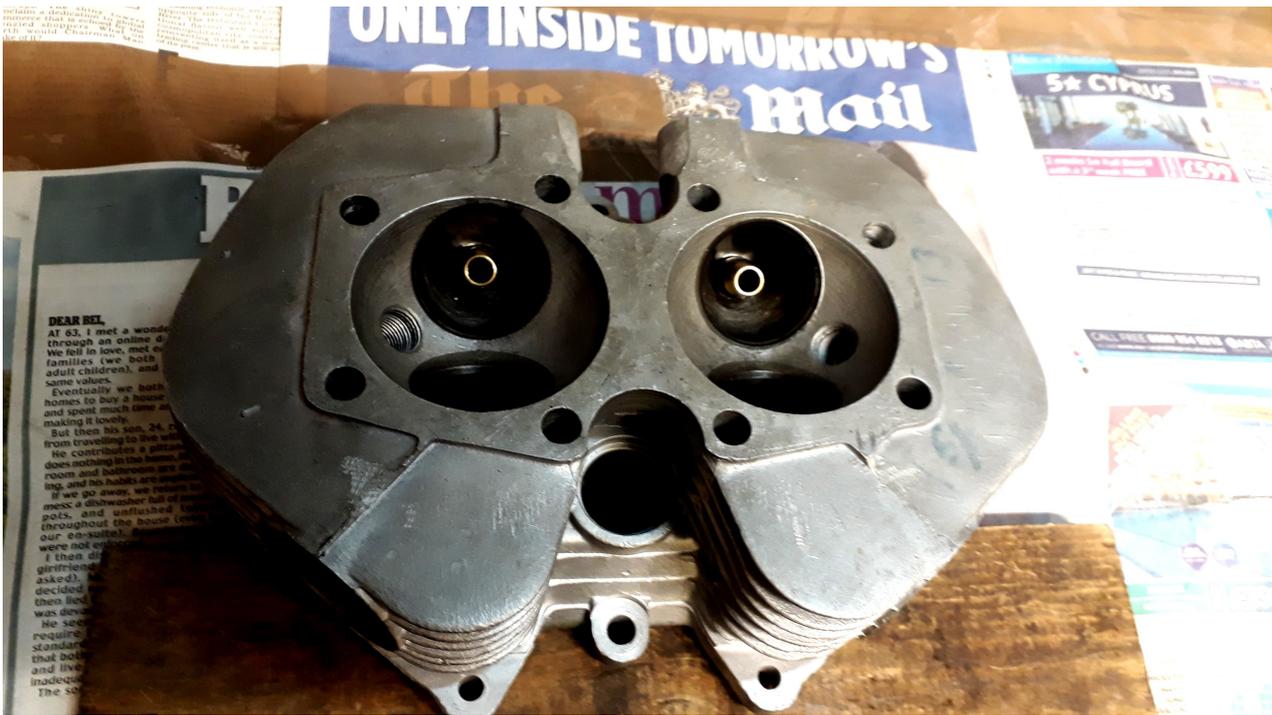
Workshop is stuffed with machine tools, and a lot of trade secret special tooling and jigs to support rebore, sleeving, crankcase and gearbox restoration etc. (Photos forbidden!). He also has agencies for Wassall (bits in general) and Harris (for Triumph bits). Contact Richard by email: richard40m@btinternet.com



**Top right, clockwise:** D1 Bantam, ??, Cub, B25 (new liner), Daytona, T140, T100, Manx, Richard's racing commando motor (Enlarged and polished tracts, guides, seats, the lot)



Ducati: Valves, seats, designed inlet trac



Daytona, new seats to replace cracked originals



No, not off a bike! Electric anchor windlass installed, with original optional winch drum on deck behind. Rope winds itself into knots on this drum. Maker says my fault: power driven winch drum should not be used as a power winch (???). Remind you of anyone? The drum now fitted, from Richard, was modelled on a jib sheet winch. Lizzie can now wind John to the top of the mast and leave him there

**Ossifers - - -**

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Aln Valley Railway  
 Lionheart Station  
 Lionheart Enterprise Park  
 Alnwick  
 NE66 2EZ



Vintage and Classic Vehicle Show  
 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> June 2018  
Entry Form

<b>Name</b> Block Capitals			
<b>Address</b> Block Capitals			
<b>Telephone No.</b>			
<b>Email</b>			
<b>Exhibit details;</b> Including registration no. make, model etc. Brief history if known			
Dates attending, please tick	Sat 16th	Sun 17th	Both Days
A strictly limited amount of overnight camping will be available from Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> June; If interested, please contact the organiser for further details			

Please return form to Roger Harrison at the above address marking the envelope 'Vintage/Classic Weekend'

Please enclose a stamped, addressed envelope if confirmation is required.

Or email to; [classicvehicleshow@alnvalleyrailway.co.uk](mailto:classicvehicleshow@alnvalleyrailway.co.uk)