



Northumbria Branch Newsletter
March 2010

They say the only two things you cannot avoid are death and taxes. Well, there's another: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS!!!

So here's ours!

Where? - Melton Constable at Seaton Sluice, as is traditional.

When? - 12th April (Monday). Time: Meeting starts 8 p.m. prompt (that's what we always say).

Complete with SANDWICHES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

And: Cabaret!! Bring Your best acts – see if you can better Jim Fraser with his amazing rotary engine, daringly exposed. (Or his sparking device that last time caused Jim to really light up!)

Has anyone else:

- Amazing inventions, magnificent creations, and heart-stopping displays for the AGM cabaret?

NB: Dave says, any nominations, please in writing or e-mail due to new main club rules.

And, on the subject of annual general meetings, and things in general – how about briefing you on the branch secretary's meeting of the big NOC in the sky.

OK, you have already had the official minutes of the meeting. But as Clive2 and I went down as delegates, there were some things that came out of the meeting of which I was not aware. Like –

Only 25% of NOC members are actually in branches. And in most branches, only a portion of the members are/can be really active, for whatever reasons. But branches are where the action is. So, fellas, we are IT.

Also, when people join the main club, they tick a box if they want to join a branch. They are added to the list which gets sent to the branch secretary. If they subsequently fail to join, they stay on the list unless the branch manages to get the big club in the sky to remove them. Hence our mystery “non-member members”.

Why does this matter? Well, the powers that be in the big NOC in the sky, are concerned that membership may have peaked. People on Nortons are not young and getting older. I mean, just look at your scribe. So, anticipating a drain of their members into the nearest churchyard, they want to encourage more people into branches. Which is where they hope we'll come in. And I suppose the question they are asking is: can we do more to drag them in?

It is true that the “new Nortons” might also add younger members. (Did I hear that free membership came with a new Norton?). However Chris Grimmett wondered whether the “New Norton” riders may be quite the sort of people who like sitting in muddy fields drinking real ale.

SO they are saying more cash is available to us. BUT!!! It is not intended to issue cash to us so we can just enjoy ourselves. It is available for things that push the name "Norton", and especially the Norton owners' club. For such things we can have the cash, but the catch is they want to know how we spent it. (So: if we want to use the cash, what would promote "Norton" and "NOC"?).

So if anyone's putting together an agenda for the AGM, do they want to talk about that one?

The other thing that struck us is how well organised we are, in Northumbria. (You don't think so?? Well - - -). Branches that met at this meeting ranged from big branches who organised rallies, and had subs, constitutions, AMG's even, and active programmes of events.

At the other end of the scale the branch members are just whoever turns up in a particular pub (and in some cases there is not even a list of them). Branch subs are paid annually, or in the kitty at the pub, or not at all.

Next issue that could interest our AGM is the idea of a Northumbria web site. This came up at the secretaries' meeting and at the last club night. Bob Tym among others has been looking into this, and it looks like we could put one together, latched onto the main club web site. Anyhow, if that's a subject for the AGM, maybe it should go on the agenda too --- ?

Of course that's not all for the AGM, but I thought to bring you up to date on the above.

The T140 Shop:

The T140 shop has moved to Unit 7, Clothworks Business Centre, Industry Road (Near Crosslings), Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 5XB. 07503257317. Open Mon-Fri 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m – 12 noon.

The card being handed out says "wheel building", like he is doing nothing else. Actually he has stopped doing workshop stuff on **whole** bikes. But as well as having taken on wheel building, he still has all the spares he always carried. True, they are for Triumphs, but a lot of parts are common to Dommis.

Technical nerdery (how else do you spend the long winter evenings? – or fill a winter newsletter? This is now going to become the most boring newsletter I ever wrote) :

Well, my piece about degrees from TDC and piston heights did not bore EVERYONE rigid. Jim Fraser even did a beautiful scaled down engineering drawing to prove my maths were right. (Phew!).

The problem in using that piece of arithmetic is that con rod length is not published, so you have to have one to measure.

However, I did check again about the discrepancy re. height before TDC –

The old Norton rider's handbook gives ¼ inch before TDC, (on my bike), which they also give as 6.35mm, **OR** 30°

However 30 degrees are 5.95mm before TDC.

Haines gives 30 degrees. But Bacon gives 31 degrees, which, amazingly enough, is 6.34mm (using my amazing formula), or pretty well bang on ¼ inch.

Well: room for speculation: Did Bacon work backwards from the 1/4inch? Or did Norton start with 30 degrees and then give ¼ inch because it was easy, and close enough? – or the other way round.

Well, here is some more technical Nerdery. When is a chain worn out?

The Haines manual for Dommsis says 1/8 inch per foot elongation is the limit. The original Norton handbook of which I have a copy says 1/4 inch per foot.

I got curious and got into a conversation with the nice lady at Sprockets Unlimited. The nice lady says the guide is 2% maximum elongation (I think she means "slop", or "push-pull" float. Since wear takes place in both directions, that would be 1% actual elongation). This is the point at which the hardening is worn through. Which is as near as dammit 1/4 inch per foot. However I had less than 2% "slop" after 12-15000 miles (Scott oiler) and you could pull the chain further back from the rear sprocket than when it was new – in fact it started out a snug fit. The real issue, surely, is when the chain starts to damage the sprocket. Especially if the sprocket is combined with a brake drum – expensive.

I have a chain test rig: 2 square sticks nailed side by side on a plank with just enough clearance for the rear chain. At one end is a fattish nail to act as a peg to hold the end roller. This way you can "push-pull" a chain that has been washed off with paraffin, and measure the "slop". In my case, I got 1.13%. I decided to buy a new chain anyhow. And I bought a new primary – the old one had done 30-35000 miles.

So I could now clean off a **new** rear chain and measure that. (both Regina, Italian, lest you ask). A new chain has "slop" too – at 0.57%

Applying the difference between the old and new to half the circumference of the rear sprocket meant an increased "slop" at the bottom of the sprocket of 1.9mm from new ("stretch", or additional length, at half this would be about 1%, or about 1 mm), assuming the top run was pulled tight forward. This looked to be enough to loosen and thus "de-load" a goodly portion of the teeth and rack up the load on the teeth at the top. Another way to check is to pull the top and bottom chain runs towards each other and see if the chain loose on an (un-knackered) sprocket at the back. With the old chain, yes! The chain might have gone on a bit longer, but a "slop" of 1/4" per foot, or 2% begins to look like a lot. SO I have replaced a chain at just over 1/8" per foot "slop".

Incidentally the old primary, after 30-35000 miles showed only 0.73% "slop". I did not even need to adjust the gear-box after fitting the new one. Which shows what an oil bath can do for you. But I think at that mileage a replacement was a sensible precaution. The chain was also Regina, a gold colour, with heavy side plates. But, with that kind of chain life, why buy belt drive?

(if you want less of this kind of stuff from ME, send me something from YOU)

Sad news: The following received from Ian Crooks:

"Unfortunately we will not be going to Spain and have decided on other holiday plans for this year which are non motorcycle. We have had a bit of a disaster with all the snow up here. We lost some glass out of the greenhouse, the gutters collapsed on the new conservatory then following a loud bang one sub zero night, the parapet wall of the garage collapsed on top of the Nortons which fortunately were under thick old curtains. Bob the builder has just finished rebuilding the wall but of course its not covered by the house insurance as it was frost damage. Added to that, as I said we had to go out and buy a new computer and the same week the telly packed in so a new one of them as well. All in all, a fun January it has not been.

We may make it to Norton day at Hunstanton on the bike as we can pop over to Joyce's brother Keith in Norwich for a few days so waiting to hear from Joyce if that is a definite. Other than that we will be about at local rallies etc and hope to have the Panther back on the road as well as the Model 7 for this season.

Will get back to the shed now. Having to repaint the Model 7 tank etc."

Well, after that much boredom, here is something to wake you up!! A Caption competition:

How about some captions? E-mail your answers!

Here's the first -



And here's another!



And this one already has a caption. I could not resist sharing this picture with you. This site was a clue on Kamtrek. I was given this picture, complete with caption . Here it is:



“John admiring the effect of his explosive mixture at Edlingham Castle”

See you - - -