



# Peashooter

The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club - Surrey Branch

www.surreynoc.org.uk

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complex based at Donington Park - Norton are at the heart of motorcycle racing once again and committed to investment to make the initiative work. As well as creating a new 'state of the art' road bike the Norton brands will see a vigorous licensing programme through Norton Global Brands to safeguard and develop licensing of all kinds from spare parts to clothing.

Commenting on the programme Garner said 'Our trade marks and brand have incredible strength and value, we will strongly enforce our position as the new owners of these world famous brands and ensure our new partners benefit from a robust protection programme going forward'.

'This is the beginning of a new and exciting era in a brand that was started over 100 years ago by James Lansdowne Norton. It has sustained ups and downs over the years but still stands for performance and excellence. These will be the standards we live by from now on' stated Garner.

## Norton 's Back!

Stuart Garner a UK based businessman and owner of Norton Racing Ltd has bought back all the trademarks and development work relating to the Norton, Manx, Atlas, Commando and Dominator brand names.

Norton Racing Ltd is already in development of the NRV588 rotary engined race bike and now with the ownership of the brand itself plans are being developed to introduce a new road bike for 2009.

'We are proud to have brought the brands back home and we now intend to focus on re-establishing Norton as a premier motorcycling brand across the World' Garner stated.

In the early nineties the brands were bought by Kenny Dreer's Norton Motorcycles Inc in the USA with the view of developing a new Commando road bike for the US market. Nearly \$10 million was spent on design and development, and this development work has formed part of the new deal. Garner hopes this investment can now be brought to bear on a new global project for the Norton Commando 961.

Norton intend to develop a strong presence on the track and on the road during 2009 with a new 15000 sq foot factory and office

### Club Support in Jubilee Year

Members of the NOC Executive Committee have already met with Stuart Garner and are planning a big event next year at Donington that everyone can be a part of. In what will be the Club's Jubilee year we hope there will be Great News and Great Bikes coming from Norton in 2009!



The Kenny Dreer designed 961SS Commando - will it now see UK production in 2009?

<b>Nortons Back!</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Resurrection</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>The Peashooter Guide</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Show News</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>News &amp; Views</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Adverts</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Endpoint</b> .....	<b>4</b>

# Resurrection

**O**ur Branch is doubly blessed with no less than two red 1958 600cc Dominator 99's amongst our members. Both were bought new in the 1950's and both have been restored only recently! This is the story of one of them...

'Ginger' John Halliday is a retired machine engineer living in South London and bought this 1959 model in October 1958 from Gus Kuhn's in Stockwell. John had owned a number of bikes before, notably a Matchless G80 and a G9 Twin but he was drawn to the Norton because of its racing success and allowed himself to be sold on the bright red bike when told his preferred blue was likely to fade. For the next two or three years, he rode the bike across Europe finally deciding to go to work in Germany in 1962. John worked for Hercules, a small motorcycle manufacturer based in Nuremberg and the Dommie served John well, racking up over 80,000 miles by 1964. The exact mileage isn't available as the speedometer broke when the cable came adrift!

In that year John returned home to South London, but not before suffering a nasty accident when a Volkswagen 'T-boned' him and the Dommie ended up in a field with bent handlebars and shock absorber. Testimony to the Norton's durability is the fact that although John was able to limp home "black and blue" on the bike, the accident caused one of the VW Beetles wheel and suspension to be ripped off!

Disillusioned with biking and finding few of his old biker mates still around after his return, John stripped down the bike and stored the parts in his council rented garage - and there the bike laid for 35 years. The garage leaked and the passage of time wasn't kind to the bike's steelware - in 2001 John collected all the parts and moved them to his old friend Frank Collins's garage in Morden. Both John and Frank were founder members of the old South London Branch of the NOC back in the days when it used to meet in a basement room of Norton Dealer, Taylor Matterson in Balham. A former Dominator owner himself, Frank encouraged John to rebuild the bike in 2003 and the two friends worked steadily to bring the machine back to its original



**John Halliday's Norton Dominator 99 on holiday in Gerlos, Austria in 1959**

condition over the next two and a half years. Despite the long passage of time, John and Frank found they had about 95% of the bike and only needed to replace the Exhausts and Seat which had succumbed to the dreaded tinworm. A skilled machinist, John made many small parts at his firm's workshop. The engine needed a lot of work. The pistons were frozen in the bores and the main bearings had to be cut away using a Dremel tool, but gradually the engine was put back together. John took the metalwork to Microblast at Windsor who sprayed on John's chosen Ford Monaco Red paint.

In 2006, the bike was complete and armed with its original registration, Frank rode the bike around the corner where it passed its MOT first time.

Norton's neat and natty Dominator twin took a back seat to the company's range of singles in publicity terms when it was introduced in 1949. But there was no denying that some clever engineering had gone into the new 497cc twins. The long lived engine would eventually evolve into the 828cc unit used in the Commando in the 1970's.

Originally a single twin-spark magneto was used, as was normal practice for the day although John's bike is fitted with the later Coil ignition.. That was one reason Norton stuck with a 360-degree crankshaft layout. But where they differed from most other British manufacturers apart from BSA was in the use of a single camshaft, Norton uniquely choosing to put it at the front of the engine driven by gears and chain. Having the rockers integral with the head was another smart move. It meant there were less gasket faces to leak - and less valve noise too. The chosen bore and stroke dimensions made for a longer stroke resulting in more torque low down.

Dominator designer Bert Hopwood had previously worked at Triumph, where he had learned plenty of lessons about how to make an effective parallel twin. But the thing that made the Norton stand out from the other British twins was the Featherbed frame, used for the Dominator from the back end of 1951. The welded frame was a revelation in how it held the swingarm and headstock rigid in a way other bikes failed to do.

We would see several decades and the terminal decline of the British industry before motorcycle makers would catch up or surpass the design of the frame. Truth be told, the Featherbed could have handled a lot more power than it was asked to, even when the engine capacity increased to 750cc for the Atlas model in 1962.

John is rightfully proud of his resurrected Dommie. Since its rebirth he's hardly ridden his new Honda VTR Firestorm, preferring the Dominator's sure footed torquy progress and wishing he'd not left the restoration quite so long!  
- PW



# The Peashooter Guide

## November

### Classic Motor Show at the NEC

The Classic Motor Show at the NEC, Birmingham from **November 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup>** now features a brand new hall, dedicated to classic motorcycles as well as the usual display of old car and associated clubs and trade stands. Show opens 10am until 6.30pm on Friday, 9.30am until 6.30pm on Saturday, and 9.30 am until 5.30pm on Sunday. Ticket prices range from £15 when purchased in advance. See [www.necclassicmotorshow.com](http://www.necclassicmotorshow.com) or call 0870 060 3776.

24th November Surrey Branch Club Night - 8.00pm  
**Club Meeting** The Royal Oak - Leatherhead - Colin  
 01372 807670

## SPECIFICATION

### 1959 NORTON DOMINATOR 99

#### ▼ ENGINE/TRANSMISSION

type	air-cooled parallel twin
capacity	596cc
bore x stroke	68 x 82mm
compression ratio	7.4:1/8.2:1 (low/high option)
lubrication	dry sump
carburation	Amal 376 Monobloc 1½in
primary/final drive	chain/chain
dutch/gearbox	wet multiplate/four-speed
electrics	6 volt
ignition	Coil

#### ▼ CHASSIS

frame	steel duplex, welded
front suspension	telescopic forks
rear suspension	swingarm/twin shock
brakes front/rear	8in sls drum/7in sls drum
wheels	wire spoke/steel rims
tyres front/rear	3.00 x 19in/3.50 x 19in

#### ▼ DIMENSIONS

dry weight	395lb/179kg
seat height	31in/787mm
wheelbase	55½in/1410mm
fuel capacity	3½ gallons/16 litres

#### ▼ PERFORMANCE\*

top speed	96mph
standing ¼ mile	16s
power output	31bhp @ 5750rpm
fuel consumption	60mpg @ 60mph
price new	£312 18s 7d

\* Figures from The MotorCycle

## December

### Kempton Park Autojumble

9.30am Saturday 6th December **EGP Kempton Park Autojumble** - Kempton Park - Surrey

### Brooklands Motor Museum - Military Vehicles Day 16/11/2008

A Great Day and gathering of Military Vehicles (Test Hill/parades)

Contact: [events@brooklandsmuseum.com](mailto:events@brooklandsmuseum.com)

**Boxing Day Run** - Chiddingly, Near Lewes - Meet at The Royal Oak, Leatherhead, KT22 7PJ at 10.00am

29th December - Surrey Branch Club Night - 8.00pm  
**Club Meeting** with Special Guest Speaker - The Royal Oak - Leatherhead - Colin 01372 807670



### THE CAROLE NASH INTERNATIONAL MOTORCYCLE AND SCOOTER SHOW 2008

This year's Show will take place between the 28th November and 7th December and tickets can be purchased via the ticket hotline 0844 5812345 or online.

The long standing event looks to build on its 2007 success which saw over 149,000 visitors (3% up on the previous year) enjoy the spectacle with a dazzling array of first-ever UK motorcycle launches in a new format Show at Birmingham's NEC.

The 2008 show will feature the largest collection of new 2009 models, with many new and returning exhibitors keen to show their latest products and services. The prestigious event continues to be the first place to see all the new machines in the UK. Adult tickets go on sale at £15 in advance or £17 on the door with special senior, child and family concessions.

# News & Views

# Advertising



Surrey NOC Members at the Branch Inaugural Meeting on September 29th at The Royal Oak

## Membership Success!

Since the send-out to over 200 NOC Members in September, the new Branch has amassed an excellent total of 52 members! This is almost double the number estimated by former NOC Membership Secretary Dave Fenner. At the moment these are basically enquiries although over 30 attended our inaugural meeting on September 29th. the key question is whether they will be willing to pay a small branch subscription? The SGM on 27th October will set the 2008/09 Subscription and it will be the task of our small Committee to ensure we bring in the maximum number of Subs!



Spotted in the Royal Oak Car Park at the Inaugural Meeting - This Beautiful Dominator based Cafe Racer - Is it yours? Contact the editor and we'll publicise the bike's story!

## BLR Engineering

Let us look after your small engineering work - Excellent Quality and fantastic Value- Norton Cylinder Heads and Valve Guides a speciality - 143 Hershams Road, Hershams, Surrey KT12 1RR. Call Ian at:01932 224601 or check out our website at: [www.blrengineering.co.uk](http://www.blrengineering.co.uk)



## EndPoint



In a world where many claim that honour, this is the world famous and truly unique Norton Unified Twin owned by Surrey branch member, Anthony Curzon. The engine was intended by AMC, owners of the Norton Marque at the time, as a replacement for the Dominator. The Engine was lovingly restored and fitted to Dominator cycle parts in 2004.

Peashooter is printed and published by the Surrey Branch of the Norton Owners Club ,

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