



In this issue: Owen fits a Mk3 tensioner to a pre-MK3  
Norton back at the TT with an all Aussie lineup including  
A South Aussie rider

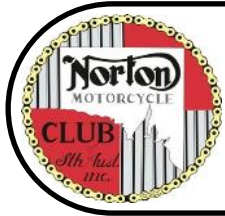
# The **ENERGETTE**

newsletter for the  
NORTON MOTORCYCLE CLUB of SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.  
Est. JUNE 1999



Issue No106  
Dec 2016





**WEBSITE:** [www.nmcsa.org](http://www.nmcsa.org)

**MEETINGS** held on the 1st Monday of the month, 8.00pm start  
**NO MEETING IN JANUARY** and on Public Holidays  
when the meeting will be held on the following Monday



**We meet at the:** VELOCETTE CLUBROOMS  
74 DRAYTON STREET, BOWDEN

**ENQUIRIES TO SECRETARY:** NMCC of SA, PO Box 327 HINDMARSH SA 5007  
**Or EMAIL:** [secretary@nmcsa.org](mailto:secretary@nmcsa.org)

**ALL NORTON OWNERS, ENTHUSIASTS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE WELCOME**

## **NORTON MOTORCYCLE CLUB of South Australia Inc. Committee 2016—2017**

<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<b>Donald Hosier</b>	<b>0433 318 503/<a href="mailto:editor@nmcsa.org">editor@nmcsa.org</a></b>
<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	<b>Con Desyllas</b>	<b>8352 5050 / 0417 005 235</b>
<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>Jerome Munchenberg</b>	<b><a href="mailto:secretary@nmcsa.org">secretary@nmcsa.org</a></b>
<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>Jason Ward</b>	<b>8242 2036</b>
<b>LIBRARIAN</b>	<b>Dave Meldrum</b>	<b>0423 191 620</b>
<b>CLUB CAPTAIN</b>	<b>Owen Greenfield</b>	<b>0401 211 256</b>
<b>REGALIA OFFICER</b>	<b>Lyndi Tietz</b>	<b><a href="mailto:regalia@nmcsa.org">regalia@nmcsa.org</a></b>
<b>PUBLIC OFFICER</b>	<b>Barry Miller</b>	
<b>EDITOR</b>	<b>Donald Hosier</b>	<b><a href="mailto:editor@nmcsa.org">editor@nmcsa.org</a></b>
<b>HV REGISTRAR'S</b>	<b>Ian DeLaine</b>	<b>0407 617 256</b>
	<b>Dave Rocklyn</b>	<b>0423 498 781</b>
<b>FEDERATION REP</b>	<b>Paul Knapp</b>	<b>0421 973 733</b>
<b>WEBSITE ADMIN</b>	<b>Owen Greenfield</b>	<b><a href="mailto:admin@nmcsa.org">admin@nmcsa.org</a></b>

### **For Contributions, please contact editor;**

**Mobile** 0433 318 503  
**By email** [editor@nmcsa.org](mailto:editor@nmcsa.org)

Members wanting any events, services, classifieds, rides, etc. in the ENERGETTE please contact the editor with details for inclusion in future issues.

But don't stop there, this newsletter is about  
The Norton Motorcycle Club of SA,  
**THAT'S YOU.**

If you just want to have a picture of your bike in print, or a shot of the latest mod or repair, send it in! Supply as much info as you can and I'll do the rest. Look at Dave Meldrum's comparison of the different Commando tanks in issue #93. A passing observation in the shed filled a whole page and gives great perspective on different options for someone's bike.

### **Cover photo:**

Is it post-modern art? Is it a three-eyed Robot? Nah, it's Owen checking out his fancy LED headlight settings



## President's Blurb

Dear Members,

Here's to the last issue before the holiday season and the club's own break (remember, no meeting in January). I'm looking forward to the annual December barbecue, hoping to see all of you there.

We've had a lot more activity at our meetings over the past few months. Back in October Dave M brought in a Mk3 engine and got the crowd going, discussing the many updates of the Norton twin since its inception. Last month Owen showed us some of the neat Amal improvements he's developed and certainly captured our attention. Keep up the good work, people! We're still keen to hear your ideas!

Our Christmas lunch this November was fun, though numbers were low this year, possibly due to the inclement weather. Some good food and lots of chin waggin was had, which is what it's all about.

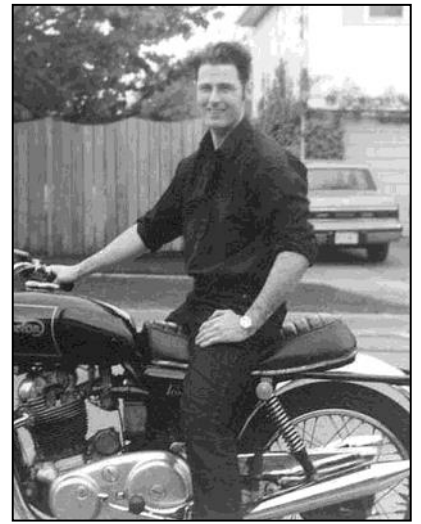
Our Club Captain is currently convalescing after a surgery and won't be able to make the December 11th ride, a volunteer for the day would be greatly appreciated to valiantly lead our members from Top 'o' Taps and along the beautiful roads of the Fleurieu Peninsula. There could be worse ways to spend your Sunday.

There's a lot going on in my life at the moment. Megan and I have decided to move house, the main reason being I need a proper shed (those are Megan's words!). I can barely park two bikes in my current arrangement, let alone work one. Our block is sloping and a bit awkward, so it's cost prohibitive to build where we are. In more personal news, I've decided to buy the Norton a stablemate and am well on my way to saving the cash needed. I'll be going for something modern(ish), a tube-framed Buell being one of those on the short list. I've always had a hankerin' for one, especially after seeing a mate's S1 Lightning back in Canada. Said mate was the crew chief for a successful Buell racing team until recently, and has a high regard for the brand. I think Buells are rather like Norton Commandos in a way. An out of date engine wrapped in an updated chassis. Buell got some good power out of those Sportster engines, and their later models showcased some clever, sensible and out-of-the-box ideas that set them apart. It's a shame Harley discontinued the line.

Other than that, Megan, Eliza and I have a big year or so ahead of us, and my free time will be severely limited. I mentioned at our last meeting I will not be standing for the position of Editor in June. Having said that, it would be a big help if somebody could come forward earlier to help with the transition. Publishing The Energette has been a fulfilling experience for me and I'm sure the next editor will feel the same. The club has the software, Microsoft Publisher, and experience to get you started. Besides, it's time for some new ideas! If you have an interest, please contact me and I will help out in any way I can.

Your Pres  
The Editor

Donald



## Upcoming Events

- 11/12/16 MRASA Toy Run - 38th running of this excellent event, supporting children and families during the festive season. Check out [www.mrasa.asn.au/toyrun.shtml](http://www.mrasa.asn.au/toyrun.shtml) for more info
- 12/02/17 All British Day @ Echunga Oval. Check out [www.allbritishday.com](http://www.allbritishday.com) for more info



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# Norton Shed

## Chain tensioner? Excited? Well, NOW I am! Can we fit it? Well, YES, we can!

By Owen G

Con stopped by my stall at the 2017 Balhannah Swap Meet and mentioned in passing that another stall had a chain tensioner for sale. This was of little interest to me but later in the day he said "Did you see the tensioner, it's just over there?" Since my son was watching the stall at the time and I was browsing items on the way to the canteen, I stopped in to the 'chain tensioner' stall. Well, not just any chain tensioner but a 1975 Norton Commando Mk3 reciprocating hydraulic primary chain tensioner. "Nice" I thought, "but I do not own a 1975 Norton Commando Mk3" so I was only slightly more enthused. The owner of the stall saw our interest in his part and explained how he (a Vincent racer of renown, I later found out) had acquired it to fit to a Vincent but had never got around to it. This got me to thinking "If he could plan to fit it to a Vincent, maybe it could retrofit to an earlier Commando". Holding the tensioner in my hand and visualising it in my primary cases is not especially easy but eventually I convinced myself that it could just work (and the price was becoming more reasonable the longer we discussed the concept) so I bought it. Thanks, Con!

My 1974 850's primary cover was first off a fortnight earlier to fit a set of spiral grooved, sintered bronze clutch plates that a chap from Denmark had sent for the price of postage. These plates replaced the fibre type that slipped badly while testing another unrelated modification. My primary cases now contained 475ml of type F automatic transmission fluid (ATF) to ensure lubrication and cooling as:

The primary chain was now 8mm deep in ATF at rest  
The clutch centre bearing was splash/mist fed by the rapid chain movement in ATF  
ATF infused sintered clutch plates resisted burnishing and subsequent slippage.

The sintered bronze clutch assembly had performed exceptionally well in power transfer to the rear wheel but using ATF at more than double the specified volume of engine oil had a drawback. ATF had coated the drive chain and rear wheel as ATF aerosol was expelled past the felt seal behind the clutch assembly. Off again to fit a 'real' seal, concept similar to that found in a

Mk3 primary cover, instead of the archaic felt type, meant that the earlier primary cases would now be hermetical sealed and pressure then built as the cases were heated (the felt seal had also acted as a 'breather' of sorts). A 'real' breather was also devised that could flow air but not permit ATF aerosol to be expelled under pressure. With these concerns now resolved, effort could be directed to fitting the tensioner.

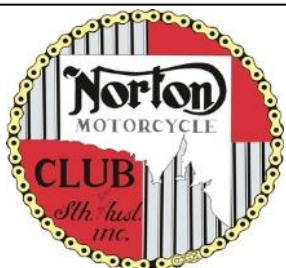
Time spent researching Mk3 primary drives showed that chain slack increases with use and, since the Mk3 gearbox position is fixed, the chain relies entirely on the tensioner to compensate. When parked, the hydraulic reservoir of the tensioner may leak-down over time and the 'slack' chain will rattle and slap until the tensioner reservoir is hydraulically primed again after start-up. When working, the tensioner acts to balance tightness of the chain during acceleration and deceleration and to damp the harmonic frequencies transmitted through the chain at certain engine revolutions per minute (RPM).

In earlier models, the primary chain slack is specified and reduced by adjusting the position of the gearbox input shaft relative to the engine drive cog. The upper and lower chain runs will tighten and loosen depending on the opening/closing of throttle and may 'flutter' at certain engine RPM.

The advantages of combining the features of both designs are:

Adjustable gearbox position - the primary chain can be adjusted to compensate for wear slackness that causes rattling and slap at start-up ( if left), and,

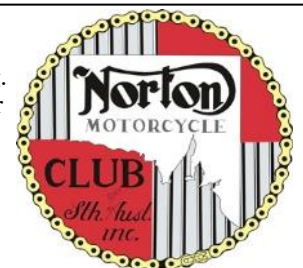
The Mk3 reciprocating hydraulic primary chain tensioner - maintains a constant controlled tautness of the chain (whether accelerating or decelerating) and damps harmonic frequencies at specific engine RPM e.g. at cruising revs.



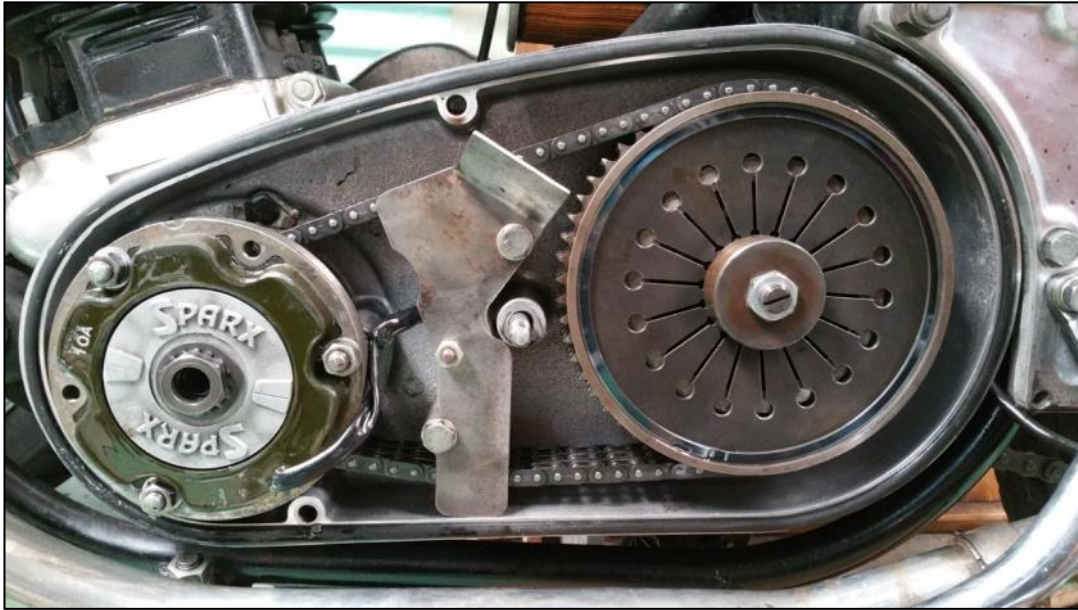
Let us know what's going on in your shed! Full engine rebuild, restoration, chasing elusive mechanical gremlins, even just basic maintenance or race prepping. Share your experiences with us, it just might help someone else solve a problem or learn something new!

Contact us with the story, and pics if available.

Send your info to the Editor at [editor@nmcsa.org](mailto:editor@nmcsa.org)



Fitment trial 1: Plunger alignment / reservoir refill plate fitted. Chain is deliberately slack.

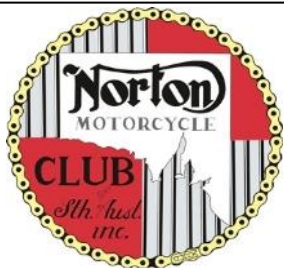


Fitment trial 2: Plate removed to show reservoir check valve and contact of reciprocating plungers.



*Owen has designed & built a number of interesting & well thought out parts to improve your Commando & Amals. At the November meeting he brought some of his carby bits and gave a little talk and demonstration on how they work. The thought processes behind his ideas are logical and simple, he even manages to explain it all in a way that a dingbat like me can understand.*

*As Owen has said himself, nobody needs these improvements, we've lived with our bikes as they are for decades, but it sure make living with the old Brit iron easier and helps them run better - Editor*



Let us know what's going on in your shed! Full engine rebuild, restoration, chasing elusive mechanical gremlins, even just basic maintenance or race prepping. Share your experiences with us, it just might help someone else solve a problem or learn something new!

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# Norton Rides

## 'Classics at Hart' Ride – 16th October 2016

### Official route stats:

Breakfast: Caffe Cena, 101-103 Prospect Rd, Prospect SA

Stage 1: Prospect to Port Adelaide = 14km

Stage 2: 'Classics at Hart'...

Breakfast and/or Ride attendees: Dave Y & Rose - 850 Commando, Owen - 750 Commando  
Donald & Eliza - Bloody Subaru

### 8:30am – Prospect

Showers are forecast for today so we eat under the sails and watch the drizzle puddling in the Caffe Cena car-park and on the road. Dave and Rose have arrived dripping wet: a squeeze of the glove results in riverlets on the table and floor. These 'showers' could quite sensibly be called as 'rain'. A good day for Nortons to be out and about? You betcha! Every day is a good day, some days are just better than others, especially today! The planned ride is short, very short: should only be about 15 minutes tops but turn-out is still low. Oh, well. The local breakfast crowd builds at Caffe Cena but most choose the warmth of the inside seating area. The breakfasts and coffees we have ordered are savoured and consumed but 10:00am soon rolls around. Time to go!

### 10:00am – Stage 1: Prospect to Port Adelaide

Fourteen kilometres and it is raining all the way. North on Prospect, west on Grand Junction then through the back roads to Hart's Mill. A full blown sodden trip without respite from the 'showers'. A trip so slow amongst the traffic that wind speed can't clear water or fog from visors or glasses. Stops at traffic lights has rain running more vertical than horizontal: scarfs and wet weather pants (if worn) are great inventions but truly tested today.

### 10:25am - Stage 2: 'Classics at Hart'

The destination is worth the journey, but aren't they all?! Motor cycles from each decade of motorcycling in South Australia (including 7 of SA's own Tilbrooks in one place at one time). Amongst the many marques and models of the 150+ on display, Norton motor cycles are well represented by well maintained or restored examples. A one-off celebration of a century of riding and riders in SA: we can only hope there is more yet to organise!

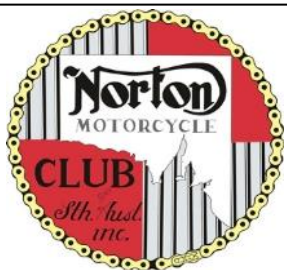
Classics At Hart - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1556846427955993/>



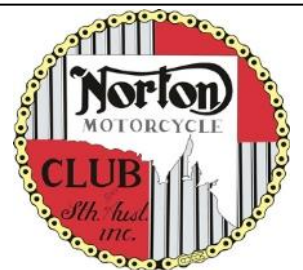


This page, clockwise from top left: A surely raucous JAP speedway outfit. Dave & Rose enjoying the pre-war era display. Italian Motobi. Crikey, Owen! There's a huntsman on your tank!

Previous page, clockwise from top left: A Yam racer and a Manx (owned by Energette sponsor Murray from Murray's Brit Bikes). Pre-war BSA v-twin. A panoramic elevated view of all the fine bikes on display at 'Classics At Hart'



# Norton



# Norton Rides

## Christmas Lunch Ride – 13th November 2016

### Official route stats:

Breakfast: Cascada Cafe, 540 Glynburn Rd, Burnside SA.

Stage 1: Hazelwood Park to Oakbank = 33km

Stage 2: NMCSA Xmas Lunch @ Oakbank Hotel

Breakfast and/or Ride attendees: Dave M - 650 Dominator, Owen - 750 Commando

8:30am – Burnside

A quiet breakfast morning spent chatting to Norton motor cycle reminiscent or aspirational passers-by. Not club specific it would seem, the forecast of clearing showers seems to have deterred motorcyclists in general. A light breakfast is order of the day since another Oakbank Hotel meal is planned from midday. 9:45am and it is time to duck around the corner for the trek to Oakbank to kick-off.

10:00am – Stage 1: Hazelwood Park to Oakbank

Killing time until 10:00am by photographing how an LED headlight looks at pilot, low and high beam settings seems to be a reasonable activity due to the low-slung cloud cover of the day. 10:00am ticks over and it is time to roll on: maybe a run to Murray Bridge and return to Oakbank via the Palmer road? Heading west on Greenhill then turning left onto Portrush when a distinctive, balanced exhaust pulse can be heard at right rear. Hey, hey, Dave had almost missed by one minute but had spotted me joining the Greenhill Road traffic just in time.

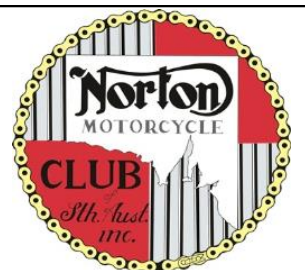
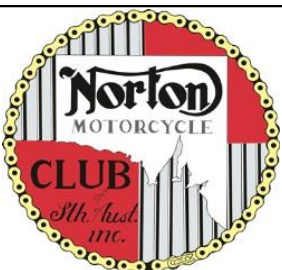
A quick confab, a U-turn on Portrush, a right turn onto Greenhill and we are now heading into the hills to meander away the hours toward Oakbank. True to forecast, we encounter patchy light drizzle: just enough to wet the roads in places and dampen the gloves. Between the spitting, the sun breaks through occasionally and the unshaded bitumen dries off a tad. Perseverance be damned, it's 11:10am. "Let's get to the pub and get settled in before the others arrive". "Yep" is the rationale response. 11:20am – the ride is done (and dusted?) and we're drying our gloves at the main bar fireplace.

Two more bikes to arrive: Dave Y and Rose on the 850 and Steve A on the BMW. Soon all other attendees are settling in on the decking and the NMCSA Christmas lunching begins!



Far left: A lonely Commando at the morning's start

Left: Stunned at the sight of a camera! Eyes up from yer feed for a second







Above L to R: More chin waggin amongst the members. A couple of Nortons parked up in front of the pub

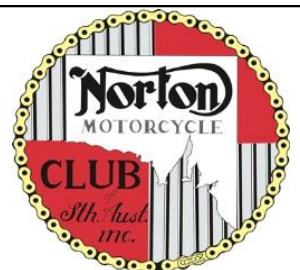


Left: The obligatory shot of the editors baby girl, Eliza, giving the camera her best smile

Dave Johnson at the Isle Of Man TT on the V4 Norton SG5. He set Norton's fastest ever lap on the course this year.

And he's just confirmed he'll be riding for Norton in 2017 as well! Good to see a South Australian lad putting the Norton name on the map again

You can follow Davo on Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/davojohnson20/>



# Norton Marketplace

## For Sale/Wanted

**Wanted** JOE SEIFERT CS650 After any magazine articles and pictures  
Dave Meldrum Ph: 0423 191 620

**Wanted** 16H or Big-4 parts 1937-1947 Sample list below, but interested in all appropriate/period parts/ components in small or large lots:  
Smiths 80mph speedo and bracket, Front wheel speedo drive gearbox, Tool box, Dolls Head gear box complete or any serviceable components, any other fasteners (especially engine/gearbox) odds & sods or "period" 16H or Big-4 components.  
Also complete or parts for late Model 50 engine (alternator) or similar era ES2/Model 19 also considered.  
Steve Adkins Ph: 0434 564 662 Email: Adkins\_s@bigpond.com

**For Sale** Featherbed framed Commando 850 motor  
Frame stripped and painted, Head stem bearings (new), Rebuilt engine with a balanced crank, Rebuilt gearbox, Boyer ignition (new), Belt primary drive (new), Triumph T140 "SPECIAL" wheels, Reconditioned front and rear disc calipers, Rear disc, Rear axle, bearings and spacers (new), Stainless steel bolts, nuts and nylon nuts throughout, Headlight (new, not shown), Swing arm bushes (new), Reconditioned petrol tank with new paint, Reconditioned tacho, Reconditioned carby.  
All reasonable offers considered. Robert Tietz Ph: 8264 3036



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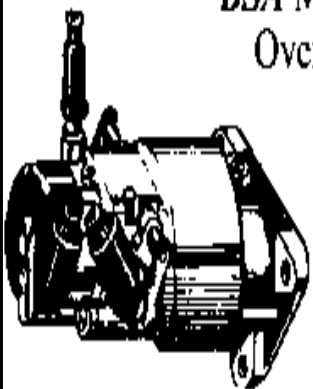
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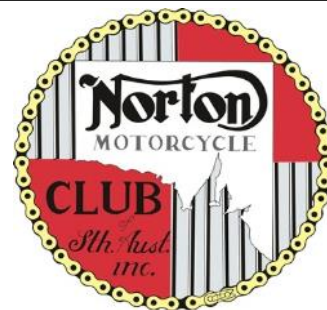
g motorcyles  
gcmotorcycles.com.au

8344 7888

122 Main North Road Prospect



# Ride Calendar 2016/17



## Date/Ride

## Brekky @ 8:30am

## Ride @ 10:00am

11th December  
Southern Coast

Café Buongiorno  
93 Main South Rd  
O'Halloran Rd

Top 'o' Taps Weigh Bridge  
Cnr Main South Rd & Black Rd  
O'Halloran Hill

15th January  
Southern Vales

Stirling Hotel  
52 Mount Barker Rd  
Stirling

Stirling Hotel  
52 Mount Barker Rd  
Stirling

12th February  
All British Day

Mylor Oval  
ABD Entrants Brekky  
8:00am

Echunga Oval  
Echunga Rd

12th March  
Clare Valley

Café De Vilis  
426 Main North Rd  
Blair Athol

Kart Mania  
1 Port Wakefield Rd  
Gepps Cross

9th April  
Murray River

Stirling Hotel  
52 Mount Barker Rd  
Stirling

Stirling Hotel  
52 Mount Barker Rd  
Stirling

21st May  
Southern Hills

Caffe Buongiorno  
93 South Rd  
O'Halloran Hill

Top-o-Taps Weighbridge  
Cnr Main South Rd & Black Rd  
O'Halloran Hill

Ride calendar, maps & 'catch up' points are also posted on  
our website [www.nmcsa.org](http://www.nmcsa.org)



All rides start at 10am unless otherwise noted.

Calendar is prepared in advance &  
is subject to change.

Please check club notices in Thursday's Advertiser  
or call the Club Captain @ 0401 211 256

