

# WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



## ANOTHER MONTH, ANOTHER LOCKDOWN

The lockdown begun in May did not allow rides to start again until 15 June. Numbers were restricted for a while but we have some reports for the second half of the month. I managed to escape Victoria for a week and return without restrictions so hope to see you on rides in July.

Editor.

## CHERRY LAKE 15 JUNE

The ride went to Cherry Lake because the Covid Lockdown meant we couldn't travel more than 25 km from home. The ride was meant to go to Point Cook. We couldn't have gone to Point Cook because there was level crossing work on the rail line and the trains were only going as far as Laverton.

At first I thought there would only be 4 riders based on phone calls and text messages. Paul, Pam, Ralph and Nola arrived just before the start time saying they thought there wouldn't be room for them because they hadn't registered. All up there were 9 riders including Ian H, Sue, Jopie, Robin and myself.

The weather was cold at first but turned out to be a pretty good day with a few clouds and a light breeze. Sue had some trouble with one of her derailleurs under City Link but she sorted out the problem and was able to stay on the ride all day. Morning tea was at Yarraville Gardens



and after a circuit around the north side of Cherry Lake we had lunch in the usual spot. The breeze picked up during lunch and we had to deal with a slight head wind along Maddox Rd and Hyde St. Just after we came under the tunnel under Williamstown Rd at Newport railway station, the leader stopped to check on the group and promptly fell backwards off his bike. There was no damage and fortunately no cameras. Afternoon tea was outside at the Footscray Community Arts Centre.



I asked Sue to lead us through the Flemington Stockyards. Her choice was very good; few hills and no traffic. It took us under Epsom Rd and along Liddy, Gordon and Coote St. Back to Westgarth at about 3 pm. About 55 km.

James

### **CRAIGIEBURN – GALADA TAMBOORE TRAIL 17 JUNE**

Ian H, Bruce and Colin set off from Westgarth a couple of minutes after 9am. Bruce had arrived at about 10 minutes to 9 and, before getting his bike out of the car he asked if the numbers had reached 10 for the ride. On our way to Kensington Station, 8.4km according to Strava, we came across first George and then Sue heading towards Westgarth, they quickly turned around and joined the group.

On arrival at Kensington Station there was Roy waiting for us, as had been arranged. The train trip to Craigieburn was uneventful, as it should be. All were wearing masks as required.

The group, now numbering 6, headed north to the start of the Galada Tamboore Trail.



Riding along the trail was quite pleasant and we made good progress until we got to all the works being carried out at O’Herns Road!

We were required to make a serious detour which led us through the streets of an industrial area. Close to where we were able to re-join the trail we came upon a small reserve where we had morning tea, this reserve was about 13.25km (Strava) from Craigieburn Station (detour included).



After morning tea we continued south along the trail and made a short stop at City of Whittlesea Public Gardens. Pressing on south we crossed the Metropolitan Ring Road and headed west to meet up with the Merri Creek Trail. Along the Merri Creek Trail we stopped at Coburg Lake for lunch.

From Coburg Lake it was a familiar ride with riders leaving the group at various points close to their homes. Bruce and Colin, the last riders left, arrived at Westgarth at 2pm, an early finish as Bruce commented!

Distance covered from Craigieburn Station to Westgarth was 41.3km (Strava). All up distance for both sections was 49.7km (Strava). A good ride with no accidents, injuries, punctures or mechanical failures!

Colin



### DIAMOND CREEK 22 JUNE

Twelve riders started from Westgarth for the ride to Diamond Creek. This was a good number, considering that Ralph and Nola were leading a group to Bonnie Doon on the same day. We were all pleased to have a visit from Pam Styles who joined us for morning tea at Possum Park.

There was a delay just before Bonds Rd in Lower Plenty where Derek replaced the tube on his front wheel. I broke a spoke on the steep hill in Westerfolds Park and then thought the squeaking noise was a bird, until Roger and I had a good look at my bike at lunchtime. We could not have lunch at the Edendale Community Environment Farm due to Covid, so went to the Eltham North Adventure Playground a little further along the trail. The facilities there were as good as any I've seen around Melbourne. Ed and Jenny rode with us as far as lunch and then left to catch the train home.

We pressed on to Diamond Creek. Wolter had sent me an email saying the trail was now complete to Wattle Glen so we decided to try it out. The other riders included Robin, Sue, Roy, Bruce, both Ians and Colin. The path continued along the NW side of Diamond Creek. We saw two rabbits and about half a dozen small kangaroos on the new trail.



There are several fancy signposts along the way showing how far to go. We had coffee at the front of the general store in Wattle Glen. The coffee was very good but the parking was limited. There was one rack for six bikes and very few other spots to lean a bike. We caught the 3:21 pm train back to Westgarth. Jopie left us about 15 minutes before then, rode to Hurstbridge and then met us on the train. He said there is quite a good bike path marked on the main and road for the 2.5 km trip. A long trip back to Westgarth. The weather was fine, a few clouds a mild enough temperature after a fairly cold start. We rode about 40 km.

James

### BONNIE DOON RIDES 21-23 JUNE

Four couples: Pam and Paul, Allan and Kathy, Mandy and Graham plus Ralph and I, drove to Bonnie Doon Caravan Park on a very cold winter's morning. Our cabins were side by side and cosily heated for our arrival. Following morning tea and suitably attired in all our winter woollies, Ralph led us to the Great Victorian trail adjacent to the park and off we cycled towards Merton.

The first stop was so that Allan could adjust his seat to a comfortable height. We paused at Woodfield, which Ralph told us was mostly farming land. He had been working away making notes prior to the trip to provide some historical background to the area. The sun poked out from beneath the clouds and the birds made their presence heard, especially the cockatoos. On the way back there were flocks of them and you could see how they had eaten the top leaves of several trees. Allan was heard to comment 'Did you see the albino cocky?'

I kept Mandy company as she was on tail. Pam joined us for a chat and we were soon a way behind the group. Pam confessed that talking tends to slow her down!! Lunch was held at Merton racecourse where there has been a race meeting on New Year's Day for over 150 years. We had a large table under shelter and by now the sun was shining and the sheep were wandering over the grounds. We did the Age quiz as a group thanks to Kathy and fared very well!

As we rode back into the Bonnie Doon Township, we spied an Op Shop at the old school. What an ideal place for a rummage amongst the old books, toys, records and clothes. Ralph chatted to the woman minding the shop while the rest of us enjoyed looking for treasure. A very pleasant 34km ride today.

Later in the afternoon, we all met in our cabin for 'Happy Hour' drinks with dips, cheeses and biscuits, followed by a BBQ dinner with shared salads and cakes. Ralph did a trivia quiz between main course and dessert, with Kathy and me scoring well. Kathy made us some mulled wine to try and it was perfect for the cold winter's night. Graham later produced his port.

Kathy, as manager, then introduced our 'international' act, in the form of 'George Clooney' [Allan on his ukulele]. She handed out song folders and we had great fun with community singing. I was sitting beside Paul and Kathy noted his lovely tenor voice. Ralph and Mandy sounded like the naughty kids in the group as they sang very loudly at the end of each song.

Tuesday wasn't as foggy, though still cool, as we headed off in the other direction towards Mansfield. As we pedalled up a hill, we thought, at least this will be downhill on the way back. I did note that it was aptly named 'Hangman's Hill'. Ralph stopped at Dry Creek Road to explain that down this road were old gold and crystal mines that he had explored in his youth. By Maindample, where we paused for morning tea, the sun was out and Kathy shared more of her delicious Hummingbird cake.

We rode on to Mansfield for lunch at the bakery. Unfortunately due to Covid, their tables and chairs were all packed up. Undeterred, we bought pies, pasties, rolls and coffees for a picnic lunch in the sun on the grassed area down the middle of the main street. More shop wandering saw Paul buy a cap and Pam found a baby gift for her hairdresser. Ralph and I caught up with new friends from our Tolmie Airbnb this past Easter. We were so impressed with Mick and Prue's hospitality that we've already pencilled it in for Easter 2022.

We all met up again at the old Mansfield station where the trail ends and began our return journey. At one point two of our group needed to 'strip' as they said – what they meant was remove a layer or two as they were hot! We stopped by the trail again at Maindample for a couple of photos. The owners offer free water and sell drinks for local charities. Graham was making good use of his electric bike up the hills and after a breather, we all enjoyed sailing down Hangman's Hill. Ralph stopped the group rather suddenly near some fresh horse droppings. Does anyone know the name of this famous book? He asked. We were all somewhat worn out so said no. It's A Pile on a Road by A. Horse. It's one of his very old Dad jokes!

After crossing the bridge at Bonnie Doon, we stopped at the information about Eildon and the old Bonnie Doon Township. Soon we arrived back at the caravan park after a lovely day of 48km cycling.

Later after showers and a rest, we had Happy Hour in Allan and Kathy's cabin, before dinner at the hotel. We had a table beside the fire, which was very cosy and we spent a pleasant couple of hours socialising before retiring to our warm cabins.

Rain greeted us the next morning and even though we stopped at Molesworth, by then it was heavier, so we made the unanimous decision to drive to Yea for coffee. Ralph thanked everyone for their support and in turn the group was appreciative of his organisation for the rides.

*Report by Nola*



## **BUNDOORA PARK 24 JUNE**

Flushed with endorphins from last Tuesday's ride to Woodlands Homestead I cast back to last Thursday's ride replacing the mysteriously ailing Ed.

Drinking our mocha, batch brew and hot chocolate at the Alphington Food Store, Ian H, Sue and Roger reflected on their ride remarking that despite one wrong turn while meandering through the maze of the back streets of Macleod, the road home was a doddle. Great cafe by the way. And Sundays at Alphington Farmers Market gives the area great atmosphere. (Part owner?)

The afore mentioned riders in the morning watched Bruce deliver the sombre words - no battery. So four became three as we set off for morning tea at Coburg Lake in the sunshine, despite forecasts of rain. Leaving the Merri Creek we continued across Broadhurst Avenue, Crookston and McMahon roads to the Darebin Creek trail for lunch in a pleasant rotunda at Bundoora Park. Crossing Plenty Road we managed on a wing and a prayer to negotiate the route to Macleod Station and once again crossed over Plenty Road via the footbridge to the River Gum trail that runs into the Yarra Trail and home.





I was home by 2, Sue a little later and Roger hours later to some place called Gisborne.

The ride was 40 or so kms.

Ian H.

All done

Thanks Ian



### **.WOODLANDS RIDE 29 JUNE**

Nine riders gathered on a cold June morning . We rode to Haymarket station for the 10.12 to Broadmeadows and met Andrew to take us up to 10. The weather improved as we headed for the morning tea stop on the Mooney ponds creek path and arrived at Woodlands for lunch about high noon.

Unfortunately the tea rooms were closed due to Covid, but lunch in the gardens was quite lovely. After lunch a 3hr ride back along the Mooney Ponds trail to link up again with the capitol trail back to Westgarth, with no major incidents.

This is a lovely ride to the outer fringes of Melbourne, with Kangaroo and majestic river gums to observe on the route. A longish ride of about 55km in total but one well worth repeating in the future

Allan Martin