

# WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



## WESTMEADOWS 1 JULY

The weather forecast earlier in the week had been a bit grim for Thursday with rain. However, luckily the day was sunny and dry plus the morning warmer than usual for winter.

There was only a small group waiting at South Crescent. However, as it got closer to the time, riders seemed to come from nowhere and suddenly there were twelve of us. Many riders hadn't seen each other for a while and there was a slight party atmosphere as people caught up. There were also two members of the BUG, Pam Stiles and Allan Garbutt returning after long absences.

Unsurprisingly, it was a bit of a slow start to get the group going, but some of us rode quickly catching the boom gates closed for a train. We were so quick we left the Tail and some others behind. Not that far up the road group consolidated again. We continued along to turn onto the Northern Pipeline Trail (AKA St Georges Bike path).

From High Street, we crossed into Edwards Street, via the railway station and headed down to Edwards Park Lake from our morning break.

There were not that many other people around, except a very diligent maintenance worker with a loud leaf blower. The park was looking very spick and span with a brightly coloured toilet block that looks like a modern art work.

Pam and Roberta left us after morning tea as they had planned. The remaining ten of us rode a loop around the lake and then headed north on the path along Edgars Creek. We turned west at Glasgow Avenue to get through to Broadhurst Avenue and the Merri Creek path.

Making good time we turned onto the M80 path towards Jacana. James had planned to leave before lunch and so he left us at Fawkner and then there were nine.

After Jacana Railway station we turned north on Langton Street to cross the M80 Western Ring Road and get down into the Jacana Valley Parklands. The path into the valley is a bit steep and going down is a lot of fun. Coming up not so much.

After our easy downhill run, we turned north and met a rather fierce headwind. There was much slower progress towards the Westmeadows turnoff. Some riders at the back got a little relief but those are the days that you don't want to be at the front of the group.

We stopped for lunch at the Willowbrook Reserve at Westmeadows. Sun still shining brightly.





On the way back we took a detour via the Gladstone Park Lookout. It is next to the Jack Gynifer Reserve and gives a wide view across the Jacana Valley Parklands and towards Broadmeadows. Drats! forgot to take a photo. We carried on along the hill top to John Coutts Reserve, crossing the M80 at the suspension bridge to the M80 path again. Another fun downhill and back to the Moonee Ponds Creek path.

Return to Jika was via Moonee Ponds Creek path/Pascoe Vale/Merlynston/Upfield path to O'Hea Street, Coburg. Getting back onto the Merri Creek via Pentridge Boulevard. George, Roy, Ian H then Ed and Roger left us along the way at various points. So, there were four of us who returned to Jika.

One minor mechanical – chain off - Distance 51.70 km back to Jika Jika

Regards

Sue Hiscock

no punctures and no injuries but Roger did have to be untangled from the rubiks cube-like embrace of his bike when he was looking at the scenery instead of noticing that proceedings had come to a sudden halt and he had to slam on the anchors. It only took 4 of us plus advisory squad 5 minutes to unravel him from his heavy electric steed. We whizzed down Exhibition Street along the you-beaut relatively new separated bike lane and then over the tennis bridge for a peek at the sparsely populated tennis centre. Next along smooth and quiet Birdwood Avenue, around three quarters of the Shrine and past the fountain that most people don't know exists to morning tea at Albert Park Lake. Paul and Pam left us here so they could have needles stuck into their arms. Then along the lake, past seedy St Kilda and along Elwood Canal with a detour around the lake in Elsternwick Park to emerge into the urban wilderness of Gardenvale; unfamiliar territory for us north of the Yarra people, where I had to pull out the maps to find the Racecourse I promised everyone we would go to.

We found it and celebrated by having lunch in the middle of it.



Next a sneaky route through the wilds of Malvern and Toorak to emerge onto the Yarra trail, with apologies to Susan for inserting that nasty shortish but rather steep bit

Jopie

### **ELWOOD CANAL AND CAULFIELD RACECOURSE 6 JULY**

A cold start saw 9 of us set off on a ride with some new stuff in it. Luckily we had no serious dramas

## ANNIVERSARY TRAIL 8 JULY

With a very cold temperature of around 2 degrees Celsius, it was surprising to see that ten Riders turned up for the ride. (Later in the day we were rewarded with some warm sunshine).

We rode along to Alphington and onto the Darebin Creek Trail, then headed South over the Yarra River to the Anniversary Trail, where we continued cycling along the trail until we arrived at Frog Hollow reserve for morning tea.



After our tea break, we headed down the trail through Camberwell, Glen Iris, and eventually merged into the Gardiners Creek trail at Malvern East. We continued on this trail until we crossed over the Yarra River and turned West and rode to the Botanic Gardens for our lunch break.



The lunch break was very enjoyable as we were able to sit and chat in the sunshine.



After lunch, David and Wolter elected to ride home via the MCG, while the rest of us rode back up the Yarra Trail until we arrived at the Convent for afternoon tea. After a pleasant chat and a drink we resumed riding on the Yarra trail back to Westgarth.

Report by Paul      Aprox.distance 47km.

### **MELBOURNE AND ST KILDA BOTANIC GARDENS 13 JULY**

Fourteen enthusiastic riders set off from Westgarth at 9.30am with Colin leading and Roger as tail. We had a very pleasant and scenic ride along the main Yarra trail to Melbourne Botanic Gardens for morning tea close to the cafe. After morning tea 4 riders turned homeward; Bruce whose battery was not fully charged and three others who had other responsibilities.

The remaining 10 pressed on through Southbank, along Sandridge Rail Trail and Bay Trail to St Kilda Botanic Gardens for lunch. Shortly before arriving at St Kilda Ralph and Nola left the group as they had to go and get their second Covid-19 vaccinations, we hope it went well!

It was a very quiet lunch time as we sat watching 2 gentlemen playing chess on the large, in ground board.



After lunch the 8 remaining riders meandered through the streets of St Kilda making our way to Albert Park Lake, past the Shrine, along the Main Yarra Trail to the bridge near Melbourne Botanic Gardens. From there we went past the MCG, through the back streets to Wellington Street heading for home. At one point some school children were calling to passing riders "Get the ball, get the ball!" Roger, who had

spotted the ball, stopped to retrieve it and toss it over the fence to the children who were very appreciative. As we continued on others left the group as they neared good routes to home. Just 2 riders, Colin the leader and Roger the tail, made it all the way back to the start!

Well done all, a good day for a ride and another good ride with no accidents, injuries, punctures or mechanical failures!

Total ride distance 48km (Strava)

Colin Finger

### **POINT COOK 15 JULY**

Four riders (Bruce, Roger, George and James) headed off from Westgarth headed for Point Cook on a clear but cold morning. We rode to North Melbourne Station via Royal Park and Dryburgh St, where we met Sue. Was a long trip to Werribee despite the train being express from Footscray to Newport.

We decided to delay morning tea until Werribee mansion, even though it was after 11 am at the station. George took the train straight back home for personal reasons. The entrance to the bridge across the Werribee river was well hidden by bushes and a lack of signs. The path was also partially blocked by a lot of dumped rubbish. I noticed that the trees in the Werribee Treatment Complex near Freeway had grown a lot since my last visit with the BUG. We had morning tea on the tradesmen's side of the Mansion because we found some tables and chairs, A local photographer chatted to us about the birds and other subjects that he was looking for.



After we left the gardens at the mansion we all noticed the NW wind. It wasn't strong, but enough to make itself felt in the flat exposed parts of Werribee. Once we turned the corner into Duncans Rd and Aviation Road, the wind was suddenly in our backs and made for a pleasant ride. There was some mud on the side of Duncans Road but very little in Aviation Road. We saw a lot of what we thought was immature broccoli and lettuce growing in the market gardens. We did not stop at the RAAF museum. It was closed due to Covid. Lunch was at the Point Cook Coastal Park about 1 km east of the airstrip. The lunch spot was well protected from the wind by lots of shrubs. A few blue wrens joined us for lunch.

After lunch we travelled through the new suburb of Sanctuary Lakes without having to go back to Point Cook Road. The wind had eased slightly before we came to the exposed bike path

through the Cheetham Wetlands. We were all getting tired by Newport Station. Three of us got on the train but Sue decided to keep riding. Roger left us at Footscray. Bruce and I took the train back as far as Clifton Hill. Just over 50 km from Westgarth and back again. It felt like a much longer ride. Not a drop of rain until I got home.

James

**Due to lockdown, three scheduled rides did not take place. The last midweek ride of the month was:**

### **JACK ROPER RESERVE 29 JULY**

Lovely day for a ride. There were 10 riders turn up at JIKA (nearby starting point) Roger, Bruce, Ian Hamilton, Roy, James, Wolter, Colin, Sue, Pam Styles and myself. We rode on the Darebin Creek path, really good new paths and bridge work. Struck a detour at one section, did small ride along Liberty Parade, then back on the path. On to Bundoora Park for morning tea. From here I called it a wriggle. Roughly we rode west Broadhurst Avenue, Edwards Street. Gilbert Road. Vale Street through new paths in new area formily the Kodak Factory area. From there, streets paths, new bridges, parks got to Coburg Lake upstream to Queen Street then through Fawkner Cemetery and Northern Cemetery a couple of streets under the Ring Road to Jack Roper Reserve for lunch. P. S. Actually Pam Rode home.

At morning tea but we were joined there by Allan Garbutt. On the return ride I cut through Glenroy streets direct south, Then O'Heas Street bike path then using Coburg and Brunswick bike paths which are really signed normal streets to Brunswick Rd. From there to Jika,

I thank riders who joined me today, We certainly did a lot of directional changes. Good to get out on the bike after lockdown.

Regards to all

George.

## **SATURDAY RIDES**

### **3 JULY**

Despite a forecast indicating 40% chance of rain and an overcast chilly morning; we had a turn up of 14 riders. At 9.30 we headed off through Edinburgh Gardens and along Napier St. to the MCG then on to the tennis centre where we took our toilet stop.

Resuming our ride in a more comfortable state we headed on to the Main Yarra Trail. There wasn't the usual crush of cyclists and pedestrians, mostly masochistic joggers with exposed flesh in such freezing conditions. The group turned off at the Gardner's Creek trail and followed it until we were detoured just past Burke Rd (due to path widening) down a few suburban streets rejoining the cycle path just before we turned off onto the Ferndale Path. A little further on we arrived at Glen Iris Pantry. Those inclined had their coffee and cake and stimulated the circulation in their fingers.

After our break we resumed the Ferndale path for a short distance feeling a bit warmer and cheerier. Then on to the Anniversary Trail, through Hartwell, Camberwell and Kew. At Chandler Highway we were broken up into small groups by the traffic lights but regrouped at Wingrove Street, before heading along South Crescent and back to Rushall; losing a few riders as we passed their home territory. The maximum temperature for the day turned out to be 10deg.

### **10 JULY**

This Saturday was once again very cold. For our usual ride to Port Melbourne and return. At Rushall Station, we had seven and riders turn up. Mist shrouded the path as the sun in an otherwise clear sky, battled to poke through but to little effect. We headed off along the Capitol City Trail and at Royal Park we were joined by Costas and Roy, now there were nine. It was

cool in the shade under City Link but we pressed on to Docklands and our toilet stop. Here we were joined by Pam, now our number was in the double digits.

Heading over the Eel Trap Bridge and down Lorimer Street. the sun broke through and started to made itself felt. By the time we arrived at Caps, the day was looking quite promising.

Having had our refreshments, nourished and warmed we headed back to Rushall. The return ride had all the quintessential elements, that make riding the joy that it can be. All arrived back without incident.

### **31 JULY**

Forecast was for 17deg and little chance of rain until after ride. At 9.30 at Rushall we had 8 starters. At Nicholson Street we were joined by 3 more, including one visitor. On to Royal Park where we were joined by 3 more. We headed off down City Link to Docklands and our toilet stop then continued across the Yarra at the eel trap where our visitor left us. In the more open territory of south bank we felt the full impact of a rather ferocious north wind. Lorimer Street, which usually turns into a wind tunnel, wasn't too bad as the wind was across our ride with a small tail wind component at times. Nobody got blown away and we arrived at Caps for morning tea, sheltered by the dock walls.

Our return journey down the rail trail, which faces directly into the wind, wasn't much of a problem as the foliage seems to break the wind. At the city we lost 2 more riders and at Jolimont we lost 2 more.

The remaining 9 seemed to agree despite the breeze, it had been a most pleasant ride. David Downing