

WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



NEWPORT LAKES 2 NOVEMBER

Ten enthusiastic riders, glad of the chance to ride with the BUG group again, set off from Westgarth at 9.30am with Colin leading and Roger as tail. Being Melbourne Cup day the bike paths were popular with cyclists, joggers and walkers. The weather was warm and sunny, a good day for riding.

We arrived at Yarraville Gardens for morning tea without incident and some riders relaxed in the shade provided by the trees. While there, a number of the Saturday riders turned up, David, Reg and others.



We then proceeded to Newport Lakes and stopped there for an early lunch. Most were glad of the chance to stop and relax for a while, some more than others!



After lunch we headed straight down to the foreshore for a pleasant ride along the Bay Trail towards Williamstown. What a surprise to see the crowds on Williamstown beach and along the paths!



We continued on to Williamstown, which was just as popular and crowded, and rode on towards our afternoon tea destination.

Along the way a helicopter was noticed hovering over Flemington Race Course.

The café at Footscray Community Arts Centre was not open so we pressed on the Kensington where we found Fruits of Passion open so stopped for coffees, etc. As we continued on riders left the group as they neared good routes to home or for other reasons. A group of 5 riders 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

HURSTBRIDGE 4 NOVEMBER

It was an all male foursome that departed from Westgarth. Roger was there having had a medical appointment cancelled, plus Ian H and Ed with myself as leader.

We reached the Possum Park playground with incident. There was a new short section of bike path leading to the traffic lights to cross Banksia Street.

After morning tea, we continued on and passing the Banyule swamp on the right, we stopped to view a mob of kangaroos enjoying a morning feed of grass.



We continued on past Odyssey House and into Westerfolds Park. After a comfort stop at the canoe sheds, we passed through Eltham to stop at lunch at the playground past Edendale Farm. The farm itself was closed.

We continued on the Diamond Creek Trail, along the railway line to Diamond Creek. We paused to admire the mural on the Reece building.



From Diamond Creek, we took the recently completed trail to Wattle Glen. This will continue to Hurstbridge when it is completed early next year.

From the end of the trail we took to the road, fortunately with a marked bike lane. Arriving at Hurstbridge we took the bike trail from the station and arrived at my house for afternoon tea, with blueberry muffins.



The sun was shining by now and it was pleasant to sit outside on the patio. Tea concluded, three riders headed for the train home.

About 40 km.

David

COBURG LAKE AND BUNDOORA PARK 9 NOVEMBER.

The weather was perfect for riding, sunny and no wind. We were very lucky as the following day was showers all day. Roger kindly offered to be tail for the ride and we headed off up the Merri Creek trail just after 9.30am. There was some concern that parts of the Merri creek trail might be under water, as there had been quite a lot of rain a few days earlier, but fortunately there was no flooding. We did strike a section of the trail that was under repair by the local council workers, but we were able to get around it fairly easily.

We stopped at Coburg Lake for our morning tea, and it was here that we were pleased to see that Chris Walsh joined our group. It was quite concerning to see how the local waterbirds had stripped most of the growth on the trees on the small island in the lake.

After a pleasant cuppa and a good chat, we all continued further along the trail until we reached the turnoff to Broadhurst Avenue. After travelling along Broadhurst Avenue and then Crookston Road, we arrived at the Darebin Creek trail and then headed into Bundoora Park for our lunch.

Because everyone was having a good chat at lunch it was a bit of struggle to get everyone mobile again. We eventually got going and headed through several quiet streets to Macleod station and then over to the footbridge that goes over plenty Road. We then joined the River Gum Walk path, which led us into Warringal Parklands.

We followed the river trail around to the Ivanhoe golf club where several riders continued on back home and others had a cuppa at the golf club and then headed home.

Report by Paul (approx distance 40km.)

UPFIELD TRAIL 11 NOVEMBER

The weather forecast was a bit grim with southerly winds and rain, but we ended up with a mainly dry ride. There were eight of us and we rode across the Beavers Road bridge to get across into East Brunswick at the back of Ceres. We did a bit of a leisurely tour through the backstreets of North Carlton, Princes Hill, Princes Park and finally onto the Upfield path.

Along the old section of the Upfield path there are still the ever-present building sites/scaffolding. However, I was pleased that one very narrow risky section of scaffolding near Anstey Railway Station has now gone. Plus, the scaffolding has been taken down at Jewell station. They have been restoring the old station building and it is now looking very spiffy.

Once we got to the new path it was plain sailing. The new cycle path is so good that pedestrians prefer to walk on that path too. We stopped at Moreland Railway station to have a look at the new and old station and then more briefly at the new Coburg Railway station.

Morning tea was at Bain Reserve next to Merlynston Railway station. The sun had come out by then and we had a pleasant morning break. A few of the group hadn't seen each other for a while so there was a lot of catching up to do. It took a while us to move off.

George and Pam left us at morning tea. The rest of us continued on to the Merri Creek Trail northwards and then onto the Western Ring Road to go east.

The major works are still being done under the foot bridge on the ring road. We detoured after the bridge through the backstreets to Edgars Rd. Onwards to the turn off to the Darebin Creek Trail (luckily no flooding in the underpass under the Ring Road).

We stopped for lunch at Norris Bank Parklands. Hardly anyone around except for us and a couple of guys painting the picnic tables. Luckily some tables not being done that day. Dark clouds coming over but no rain as yet.

After lunch we continued on the Darebin Creek trail until McMahon Rd where we turned off for Reservoir and Cheddar Rd. We returned to Jika via the Northern Pipe line with Jopie leaving us at Murray Rd to go to the market. A rather fierce southerly headwind wind had kicked in but luckily, we were riding mostly downhill into the wind.

Distance 48 km back to Jika Jika. A good ride with good company. Plus, better than expected weather always a bonus.

Report from Sue Hiscock

ALTONA AND 100 STEPS 16 NOVEMBER

Despite the cold, overcast day 10 keen riders headed off westward. Roy was waiting to join after the rail crossing at Royal Park and Pam Styles raced past the group as we waited for him to join the group.

Morning tea was at Yarraville Gardens where Harry suddenly appeared to say hello. Ralph and Pam left for home, so we were back to again as pushed into the strong head wind to Williamstown. We all got a wet right foot crossing the ford and water on the path was a feature as we rode around the old racecourse but luckily it was not too deep. There was a minor holdup just before our arrival at the 100 Steps while we waited for a tiger snake to cross the bike path. Funnily enough Bill and I saw the

snake in the same spot when we rode past on Sunday!

A pleasant lunch was had before we headed back through Newport stopping at the toilet block at Altona where I suddenly noticed that there were 6 riders on E-bikes and only 4 of us were on push bikes.

Perhaps those on electric bikes can provide tow ropes to help those of us on pushies up the hills!

The water was still cascading over the ford crossing so we now all had a wet left foot as well as the right.

Roger left us at Costco to head to Southern Cross to get the train home and Roy departed at Royal Park.

The last 8 riders enjoyed afternoon tea at Gelo Bar before a short ride home. All up 64 kms with the strong headwind for most of the morning making a hard workout

Glenys

MERNDA 18 NOVEMBER

Six other riders joined me at Jika. Barbara had not ridden for a while, so her vaccination certificate was inspected ceremoniously by Susan and myself.

With Ed now in the ranks of the electronic riders, he, Roger, George and myself comprised a male electronic peloton with the women riders and Ian Hamilton using only human power.



George said that he only wanted to come to morning tea, so we set off to Norris Bank in pleasant weather.



George was not familiar with the Darebin Creek Trail to Norris Bank and realised after tea that he could get a direct route home along the ring road. He stayed with us until we turned off to the northern part of the trail and headed home.

We carried on but found a detour from the trail to bring us to Childs Road. Crossing the road, the trail continued a few yards to the left. The detour sign, however, pointed right. Encouraged by Ed and his faithful GPS in the phone, we continued right until I persuaded everyone that we were heading away from our destination.

Once on the trail, we had no further incidents on the trail. At South Morang Station, we passed Ian's bollard and continued to Hawkestone Park for lunch.

After lunch we continued to Mernda for afternoon tea at the bakery. I set off to ride home, a first in tackling the Doreen Hill, and retrieve my car from repair. Roger set off by train and the others returned after tea.

40 km.

David

RINGWOOD AND CROYDON 23 NOVEMBER

A weather forecast of afternoon showers, and a ride distance of 60 kms, may have been the reason for a smaller group of nine riders turning up for the ride. Paul was the leader and Ian H. was on tail.

We set off at 9.35am and headed for the Koonung trail via the Esplanade in Ivanhoe. After riding for an hour we stopped at our favourite rotunda next to the trail in North Balwyn near Wandeen Street.

After our cuppa Pam stiles headed home as she was only doing a short ride. Graham and Mandy had driven to Ringwood and ridden down the trail to greet us, while Pam had ridden out early from Northcote. After morning tea we kept riding on the south side of the Eastern Freeway, which was a gradual climb all the way up to Springvale Road. From here we crossed over to the North side of the freeway and went through the tunnel under Springvale road and continued on the Mullum Mullum Creek trail through to Ringwood. There were quite a number of hills in this section of the trail and about six short bridges all covered with slats that shook the heck out of us. It was here also that we met up with Mandy and Graham, who had parked their car at Ringwood and ridden along to meet us. At Ringwood we headed across the Maroondah Highway into Ringwood Lake where we had our lunch at one of the picnic shelters.

After lunch we joined the Northern reaches of the Mullum Mullum trail. This was a gentle and picturesque trail that headed onto Highland Avenue. This brought us out to Maroondah Highway. After a short distance along the service road, we crossed Maroondah Highway at the traffic lights and

headed on to Kent Avenue (a lovely long downhill run) which brought us out at the Croydon shopping centre.

We then rode through the car park to the football ground where we joined another trail called Tarralla Creek trail. This trail took us South until we met up with the Dandenong Creek Trail.

It was here that we all heard a loud 'BANG' and wondered what had caused such a loud noise. We soon discovered it was Roy's bike that had a blowout in the rear tyre. As we had no Roger on the ride, Ian S. helped Roy by putting a \$5 note inside the tyre as a temporary sleeve which lasted the rest of the ride.



We got going once again along the Dandenong Creek trail until we reached the Eastlink trail. We then headed North up the Eastlink trail, back into the Ringwood plaza, for a well-earned afternoon coffee.

After our afternoon tea break, Mandy and Graham went back to their parked car, and the rest of us headed over to the Ringwood Station and caught the train back to Richmond station. We then rode home via the MCG, through to Clifton Hill and then to Jika Jika.

Report by Paul (approx distance 60km.)

GISBORNE MYSTERY RIDE 25 NOVEMBER

The biggest mystery was what the weather might be on the day. It turned out to be as forecast with low cloud and very slight drizzle, on and off, for the whole ride. With some cajoling by the leader to the more frequent Thursday riders; plus coordinating to meet up with Ed, who intended to come by train, as he had done previously.

David, Ian S, James and Mark turned up to Roger's house and were ready to ride 5 minutes before the gazetted deadline, so off we rode down and through the Gisborne Botanic Gardens. David soon twigged that we were going past his daughter's house and gave loud blasts on his bike horn as we passed her house.

Then up the hill to the spot where we were to connect with Ed, who would ride directly from the train station. We arrived at the agreed connecting location a bit early, so Roger left the group and headed off to meet Ed and bring him back to the waiting riders.

We rode along the old (before Freeway) Calder Highway and on quiet back roads to cross the rail line at Macedon Station, then down through Macedon Village shops to a park opposite the Anglican Church, with a shelter and toilets.

After the break and much chatter we headed off around the Emirates Melbourne Cup winning horse racing/breeding/training property with some steady ascents to get the heart pumping. On reaching the highest point of the ride, all were quite pleased to be told "It's all downhill from here." We then had some exhilarating downhill before levelling out and crossing the rail line at Gisborne Station.

As the drizzle had become a little heavier, all agreed that we would go directly back to Roger's house for lunch and finish the ride there.



At the bottom of the decent into Gisborne the shared path was barricaded off with major tree removal works. One of the workers could see our dilemma and opened a barrier to let us through. A brief pause to admire the mural with the theme of Global Warming



and we were soon back at Roger's for lunch shortly after midday and about 25 km. ridden.



Ed could see that he could catch a train and after being assured it was an easy 20 minute ride back to the station, that precipitated everyone to pack up and head for home.

Roger

HEDGELEY DENE GARDENS 30 NOVEMBER

Ten keen riders, brave to be out on a day tipped to reach 30C, set off from Westgarth at 9.30am with Colin leading and Jopie as tail.

As it was expected to be rather warm day the pace was easy going to conserve energy. The ride to Frog Hollow for morning tea was uneventful though there were walkers, dog walkers and other cyclists to contend with. Paul had to leave us after morning tea to head back for an appointment.

After morning tea we continued along the Anniversary Trail and joined the Gardiners Creek Trail. Part way along the trail we took a detour and crossed the Monash Freeway and railway line at Darling Station using the overpass. We then crossed Malvern Road and used some back streets to arrive at the south west corner of Hedgeley Dene Gardens.

On the lake in the gardens we saw Dusky Moorhens busily constructing/renovating a nest and a number of tiny chicks. We continued north east through the gardens and again crossed Malvern Road then under the railway line and Monash Freeway to meet the Gardiners Creek Trail for a short ride to Eric Raven Reserve rotunda for lunch.



After lunch we continued along Gardiners Creek Trail to Main Yarra Trail and headed towards Abbotsford Convent for afternoon tea. At the convent they had a rigorous check in system, fortunately we were all admitted! Then it was back to Westgarth, with riders leaving the group as they got nearer to home or other places they needed to be. Well done all for coping with the heat, another good ride with no accidents, injuries, punctures or mechanical failures! Total ride distance 43km (Strava)
Colin Finger

SATURDAY RIDES

6 November

The forecast was for heavy rain in the early afternoon, so it was decided to get most of the ride done before morning tea and in the face of possible inclement weather, a short ride home. We were going to take the Capital City Trail to Docklands, follow the river around to Burnley Street Bridge, then onto Abbotsford Convent for morning tea, after which it would be a short run back to Rushall.

Come start time the weather was overcast but not too threatening and we had 11 starters, by Royal Park we had picked up 3 more, making us now 14 riders. An uneventful ride to Docklands and our toilet stop. On to Seafarers Bridge, where we crossed to the south side of the river. At a leisurely pace we weaved through the pedestrians, until at the boathouses, we were held up while the rowing shells were brought out and launched.

Back to the north bank at Morell Bridge and onto the Main Yarra Trail. Having been warned, thankfully nobody took the turnoff to Gardeners Creek. At Richmond Girls School once again some were caught as they launched their rowing eightseyey. At the Burnley St pedestrian bridge Kerrie pushed her trike up the ramp, to save her declining battery power. I hadn't tried it before but I towed her with my trike up the hill on the Kew side, to Studley Park Rd, it proved to be quite hassle free. At the Convent being close to their homes, two riders left us.

Having had our fill at the Convent cafe, we headed off. Once again I towed Kerrie up the hill to Heidelberg Rd. Having conquered the hills she had enough power to ride the flats on her own. A short ride and we were all back at Rushall.



13 November was a washout.

20 November

At last a ride without the threat of rain, forecast, 20 deg. Start time at Rushall Station, we had 12 riders, including 2 visitor. The sky was clear except for some very ominous dark clouds on the horizon. At Royal Park we picked up 2 more riders, making our group now 14. At our toilet stop at Docklands the skies

were clear but the air was still quite chilly. One of our visitors, took a tumble in Lorimer St but no damage, we pressed on to Cap where by this time it had started to warm up. Alas Caps was closed, due to some plumbing problem, not sure if the liquid was coming or going. After some discussion we took our fate in our hands and adjourned to the eatery opposite the fish and chips shop at Beacon Cove, which was OK. Having had our caffeine dose we headed back, losing one rider at the City the remaining riders had a pleasant and uneventful ride, in the sunshine, back to Rushall.

27 November

Once again a dry ride was offered by the Weather Bureau along with gale force winds. Heading off from Rushall, 7 riders took advantage of the tail wind to join up with 2 more riders at Royal Park, making us now 9 in number. The sunshine was very nice, but when we rode in the shadows, it was like someone opened the fridge door.

What a pleasant change, in Lorimer St (notorious for headwinds), we had a tailwind to help us on our shaky way. Caps were open, so we took refreshments. Pam joined us at Caps, so now we were 10. Heading for home, we had a severe cross wind, along the Port Melbourne beach front but on the Sandridge Trail, the wind seems to be moderated by the trees and wasn't very noticeable. One rider left us in the City and the remaining 9 had an uneventful ride home. I even managed a bit of a facial tan.

David Downing

VALE BILL DOWNING

My brother Bill and his wife Lisa were longtime members of Darebin BUG. Bill riding on Saturdays with Jack Spicer and Lisa with the midweek group. The invitation from the family is self explanatory.

David Downing.

Dear Friends,

Sadly Bill Downing has passed away. We are having an informal memorial celebration for Bill Downing at the Westgarth Baptist Church Simpson Street Northcote at 2pm on Wednesday 8th December. All are welcome and refreshments will be provided. Attendees must be double VaXed and will be required to sign in upon arrival. With love from the Family