

WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



BRIGHTON BEACH 2 JUNE

Not long after 7 riders passed through North Fitzroy, Michael heard a ping suggesting a broken spoke, which on inspection turned out to be true.

Michael left for home and we continued on to the rotunda in Port Melbourne for morning tea. So good to leave behind the relentless grey skies of the last few days and bask in sunshine while we enjoyed our nibbles for morning smoko.

One only has to follow the path through some serious real estate to find our sunny lunch spot in Brighton. Not long after munching our lunch the redoubtable Michael B joined us after replacing a new spoke and sprinting back. We were all sure he must have changed out of his superman costume to bike clobber in the nearest phone box on the way.

From lunch we headed back to Albert Park and skirted the city to Jolimont. After most of the group peeled off, Michael and I proceeded to Jika thus concluding a stimulating ride on a very nice day.

Ian Hamilton

RUFFEY PARK LAKE 7 JUNE

Five brave (crazy!) riders set off from Westgarth at 9.30am with the temperature at about 7degC and light rain, with more showers forecast for the day. It is great to have Roger back after his OS trip!

We avoided the, doubtless, muddy conditions close to the Yarra and pressed on around The Boulevard to join the Main Yarra Trail by going through the car park at the Eaglemont Tennis Courts.

After crossing the Yarra the riding was quite easy along the Koonung Trail, despite the cold and damp conditions, until we stopped for morning tea at the playground in Koonung Creek Reserve.



After morning tea Pam made the decision to return home and, with a light drizzle coming down, she waved Sue, Ian, Roger and Colin off as they continued the journey.

With next to no other cyclists or walkers on the paths and roads we had a clear run negotiating the ups and downs of the hilly terrain.

Arriving at Ruffey Lake, the nominated lunch stop, quite early it was decided that we would press on to Wombat Bend and stop at Finns Reserve for lunch. There was shelter and toilets here for our comfort! Setting off again with a light drizzle coming down we crossed the Yarra to join the Main Yarra Trail.

It was particularly nice riding through Banyule Flats Reserve where we saw numerous Kangaroos and the occasional Eastern Rosella.

Crossing to the south side of the Yarra near Burke Road, we rode parallel to the freeway and continued along to the Guide Dogs Centre, then north along Chandler Hwy/Grange Road to Wingrove Street and back to Westgarth. The last part of the ride was very pleasant with the sun shining down on us.

Thanks to those brave four who joined me for the ride. Another good ride, despite the showers, again with no accidents, injuries, punctures or major mechanical failures!

Total ride distance 42km (Strava) approximately.

Colin Finger



Leaving Albert Park by the usual route we rode a short section of the Bay trail south past St Kilda. Crossing into the backstreets to get to the Elwood Canal (Elster Canal path according to Google). After Elsternwick Park onto the Elster Creek path again towards Hampton.

After Nepean Highway, we rode towards the Rosstown Trail. The council has helpfully put up some new blue street signs that mark the streets where the railway line was.

The Rosstown Railway Heritage Trail is an unusual kind of rail trail, covering the former Rosstown Railway line. Almost the entire length of the former private railway has been replaced by roads, except for one section of off-road multi-use path, west of Grange Road. The railway ran just one train in 1888.

ROSSTOWN RAIL TRAIL REVERSE 9 JUNE

Wintry air was escaping from Antarctica and it had been the coldest start to winter in Melbourne for decades. All rugged up and hoping the rain held off for a few hours eight intrepid cyclists rode off. David, Ian H, Mike, Barbara, Ed, Roger, George and myself.

This was a 'reverso' ride taking a well-trodden ride and starting from the other end. After navigating south on Wellington St, we whipped around the MCG complex to come out on Swan St. Crossing to the new bike path next to the Tan we sped towards Southbank Boulevard. South along Moray St and into Albert Park Lake. The sun was out but some consternation as the nearby toilets were closed.

While we were having lunch at the EE Gunn Reserve in Ormond the rain came across. We had had all morning dry. Rainwear was hastily donned, some hoping that that would stop the rain. Some success, it did ease off with alternating showers and sun. Some rainbow lorikeets took advantage of the drinking fountain.



We followed the blue signs until turning north to get onto the Djerring trail. Barbara left us at Murrumbeena station and the rest of us rode towards Hughesdale station to turn north again to East Malvern. Sun and showers still alternating.



Turning onto the Gardiners Creek path after East Malvern station we took the Main Yarra trail. We rode towards the city along the Yarra pontoons to Punt Road and retraced our ride past the MCG and Wellington St to go back to Westgarth. David, Roger and George left us near AAMI Park to catch trains.

Another good ride. Distance 53 km.

Report from Sue Hiscock

WATTLE PARK 14 JUNE

After several days of showers, we were lucky to have a dry day for our Tuesday Ride. Ten riders turned up for the day, and as Roger had returned from his overseas trip, he 'volunteered' to be on tail.

We started our ride by heading along to Alphington and then across the Yarra River where we connected up with the Anniversary trail. We stopped at Frog's Hollow for morning tea and then headed south until we reached Alamein station. We then headed East along a few streets until we reached Warrigal Road where we connected to the Koonung Creek trail. We followed this trail North until we arrived at Burwood Highway. After crossing the Highway we followed the trail and turned off into Cardorna Street and then across Elgar Road into Wattle park. There are two paths from this point. One goes North and the other goes West. I chose the West path which is shorter but as it turns out has quite a steep hill. After conquering the steep hill my fellow riders suggested the longer route would have been better, as it had a much easier hill!

We finally reached the picnic area in the park where we regained our breaths and had our lunch in one of the old trams.



After lunch we headed North on quiet backstreets (and a few more hills) eventually reaching a pleasant bike path that took us over to the bottom of Belmore Road. Then we went alongside Elgar Park and came out surprisingly onto the Koonung Trail. We followed this trail down to Bulleen Road and automatically turned off to head to the Chocolate shop for a well earned coffee and a chocolate.

After our coffee stop we continued down the Koonung trail, across the Yarra river at Burke road and back around the boulevard to Heidelberg Road, and then back alongside the railway line to Jika Jika.

Report by Paul
(Approx. distance 48km)

HURSTBRIDGE 16 JUNE

When I arrived at the meeting place only George was there. I went round to the Jika Jika Community Centre to take advantage of a chair to put on rain pants and coat as rain was threatening. When I returned, Barbara and Andrew completed the group and we four set off. Rain held off until we were at the morning tea spot, Possum Park.



George turned back and the remaining three continued. Rain held off until the lunch spot just past Edendale Farm. Fortunately the seating was covered and we sat out the shower, which finished as we were ready to continue.

Andrew decided to take the train at Diamond Creek station but Barbara was keen to complete the Diamond Creek trail which was a first for her. The rain increased along this section of the trail. We parted at Hurstbridge station, Barbara heading for the train and I headed home.

David

HALFMOON BAY 21 JUNE

Luckily the weather forecast had changed overnight from very wet to slightly damp. It was fine and dry when the five of us took off for Half Moon Bay. I hoped the weather would still be good for our fish and chip lunch.

For a bit of a change of scene we rode south next to the Zoo and tram line through Royal Park towards Flemington Road. Before we got too far, Andrew noticed white fluid coming out of his back tyre with white splatters on the bottom bracket. Tubeless tyres, no tube to change. Just some extra air pumped in and a bit of patience to wait for the puncture to seal with fluid. We didn't wait quite long enough so a bit of extra air required after 15-20 mins but all good to go. Quite interesting for us riders with tubed tyres.



Continuing through West Melbourne we turned onto Latrobe Street to take the downhill run to the Docklands. Taking a short cut around the back of the South Wharf DFO we turned onto the Sandridge

Trail. Morning tea was at the Rotunda. I was quite taken with the stand-alone generator with electric kettle attached that a council worker had set up on the ground. Would need a bike trailer though. The sun was out with little wind and it was a good ride along the Bay trail.

Making good time we got down to Half Moon Bay only to be confronted with much disappointment! The Cerberus Beach Kiosk shuttered and closed. No Closed signs, all the signage looked like it was usually open. However definitely not serving today.



Not really having a backup plan we decided to ride a bit further along the coast to the Black Rock shops. We found a nice little park next to the Bay Trail that had a table in the sun and we ate there.



Ian got lunch at the bakery but the rest of us had bought some food with us. There was a young Grey Butcher Bird sitting in a nearby tree, probably hoping we would fire up the BBQ.



Andrew left us at Sandringham to catch the train. The rest of us took the Bay Trail, Albert Park and Moray Street route back towards the CBD.



To round off the changes we rode north up Swanston Street and through to Princes Park Drive. Turning onto the Capital City trail most of the group went right to go back towards Westgarth.

Another good ride. Distance 64 km approx.

Report from Sue Hiscock

ALTONA AND 100 STEPS 23 JUNE

The weather forecast was for rain and cold. In fact, when we assembled in South Crescent it was mild and dry. Nine riders gathered ready for the day's ride, myself, Sue, George, David, Michael, Ian, Ed, Alan and Roger.

We had an uneventful ride along the Inner Circle Trail through North Carlton and Princes Park, past the Zoo to Flemington Bridge. As we joined the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail at City Link we suddenly encountered a "trail closed" sign. We headed around the closed section through the Housing Estate to Racecourse Road. After a bit of "this way and that" we managed to cross Racecourse Road and rejoin the trail.

The ride description had us having morning tea at Yarraville Gardens. I thought it would be a nice change to have it at Newport Lakes. It would have the advantage of reducing the amount of the day's ride where we would be retracing our steps. So we turned off Hyde street at Schild Street before riding along Anderson Street and through Yarraville shops. We continued along Anderson Street all the way to Severn Street where we turned left. We followed Severn Street across Francis Street to Benbow Street where we turned right and then left into Tenterden Street. This brought us to Fogarty Avenue and a new pedestrian overpass across the Westgate Freeway. It is actually an extended and renovated overpass, but there is little resemblance to the original structure. From there we made our way via Kernot and Vernon Streets to Blackshaws Road. After crossing Blackshaws Road it was only a short ride through a few back streets to morning tea at Newport Lakes.



After morning tea we headed down Maddox Road to join the Bay Trail at Kororoit Creek. We followed the Bay Trail to Altona Esplanade before rejoining the Bay Trail at the end of the esplanade. We then crossed Laverton Creek and arrived at 100 Steps for lunch. Ed rode up to the lookout, as did Sue who had not been there before. The rest of the group said “been there, done that” and didn’t see the need to do it again.



After lunch we retraced our route to Kororoit Creek, before heading to Williamstown on the Bay Trail. David left us at Altona to get the train home.

Leaving Williamstown we turned into the teeth of a very strong breeze coming towards us down the river. It was tough going back to Yarraville Gardens where Alan left us. We followed Hyde and Bunbury Streets to Footscray Arts Centre for afternoon tea. The Arts Centre was very busy but they were happy to serve us. It turned out that we had “gate crashed” a wake, but no one seemed to mind a few scruffy cyclists in the corner.

After coffee Roger left us and we discussed how to best avoid the strong breeze on our way back to Jika. It was decided to take route east along Dynon Road before turning north through North Melbourne and the city. I didn’t know the route, so Sue took over the lead. We went east along Dynon Road, Lloyd Street, Arden Street and Queensbury Street, before turning north at Swanston Street. We proceeded up Swanston Street, around College Crescent and into Princes Park Drive. Arriving at the Inner City Trail in Princes Park Sue and George turned right to head home and the remainder of the group turned right and headed back to Jika.

Andrew

SUNSHINE TO TENTERFIELD PARK 28 JUNE

This ride was meant to be led by Ralph to South Morang, however he wasn't able to lead after succumbing to the force of gravity while trying to take a selfie riding his bike over a kerb. When I arrived at the meeting point the other 9 riders had already voted Jopie as the new leader and agreed to follow him to Watergardens and then along the Kororiot creek trail.

At 9.30 and 15 seconds, Roger indicated that it was past the start time so we all got on our bikes and headed on the Capital City trail to North Melbourne on a cold but relatively calm morning. On arrival at the station there was a sign that buses were to be used from Sunshine to Sunbury, so after a brief moment of indecision we decided to jump on the train as far as Sunshine and follow Jopie along the trails.

On arrival at Sunshine, we were the source of an incident that involved the security forces.. A man asked Jopie what day it was and on being informed that it was Tuesday (an answer he didn't seem to like) he viciously kicked a nearby rubbish bin and in doing so he dropped a pair of scissors. This alerted the station security people and they restricted where we could go, as they were concerned about our safety and the man with a dangerous weapon (scissors). They later informed us that the police would not come to investigate as nobody had been injured.

So, after this shaky start we hopped on our bikes and headed west along the peaceful Kororoit Creek trail and stopped for cool morning tea near Ardeer Reserve. After a welcome rest it was back on the bikes and continuing up the Kororoit Creek trail, under the Ring Road, then around a few wetland reserves (Clarian St reserve, Station waters reserve, and Waterfield Park). The loops

around the waterways are a Jopie ride trademark. We stopped for lunch near more water and lakes at Tenterfield Park in Burnside Park a suburb near Caroline Springs. Lucky that some of the riders had a good thermos of hot drinks to warm them up on a day when the maximum temperature was 13°C.



Riders were envious of the amount of winter insulation on Colin's face, while the rest of us were shivering in the cool conditions.

After our photogenic stop it was downhill along the creek with a couple of diversions due to the path being blocked for construction works, through Albannvale, Cairnlea and back to Sunshine station where Susan, David, Pam and Paul decided to catch the train back to Nth Melbourne, while Colin, Andrew, Ian and Roger decided to join the pedal home via the Footscray Arts Centre where we stopped for refreshments before heading to Jika via the Newmarket Saleyards.

All up we finished about 3.30 after roughly 60km of riding.

Ed Smart.

RING OF STEELE 30 JUNE

It was a brilliant winter's morning for a ride, clear and still. The sort of morning when the Lycra brigades head out before dawn bound for the Yarra Boulevard, the sort of morning when you're glad to take the dog for a walk. But I digress. Roger was already at Jika when I arrived to grab the first aid kit and happy to report that the temperature in Gisborne at his time of departure had been 0.8 degrees.

Not all BUG members shared his enthusiasm for a chilly ride as I had only five takers for the Steele Creek epic, but at least I could count them on one hand ... perfect. During the trip along Park St and up the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail I took the troops over the new shared bridge across to Hopetoun Rd and explained the Bicycle Network's dream of a shortcut route over this bridge and beside the Tullamarine Freeway for commuting cyclists north to Woodland St, Essendon, eliminating the on-road section from Vanberg Road. Needless to say VicRoads did not adopt this vision when widening the freeway but at least it looks like we're getting a shortcut at the precarious Nursery Corner section.

At Boeing Reserve some of the grizzled veterans complained that they'd broken out in a sweat, not ideal on a cold morning, and directed me to the front of the changerooms (pictured), where they could catch some sun.



Strava confirmed that I had been averaging 18kmh. Roger showed off the digital refrigeration thermometer fitted on his bike and George explained his latest two-wheel-drive upgrade, currently awaiting a front-brake adaptor.

Rather than head up to the ring road and westwards to the Steele Creek Trail past the Caterpillar warehouse I took the crew along a shared path in front of the Westfield shopping centre and down the grandly named Airport West Green Spine to A.J. Davis Reserve. At some stage not so long ago, part of this linear park was called the Clydesdale Road Main Drain, but council has done a nice job of disguising its heritage.

With no one willing to go through the stormwater pipes carrying Steele Creek under the Calder Freeway we crossed over it at Keilor Road and began the trip down the creek to the Valley Lake (formerly Niddrie Quarry) development, where they still haven't turned the sales office into a café or provided public toilets. It was too early for lunch anyway so we took our refreshments at Coulson Gardens on the Maribyrnong, when it was still barely midday but there were toilets, and a pair of purple lady's gloves if anyone is missing them.

We managed to get rid of almost everyone on the way home, starting with George at the Upfield Trail and Ian H. went off present shopping shortly after. I got to hear a bit about Roger's trip to Europe at Phil's Bakehouse in Westgarth and, after 46km, wondered whether I could extend this ride up Steele Creek next time to the Keilor Botanic Gardens for the lunch stop.

Wolter

SATURDAY RIDES

4 June

The forecast was for an overcast morning with showers in the afternoon. Being the first ride of the month, we were not doing our regular Port Melbourne ride, instead we decided to take the Capitol City Trail to Docklands, then the Main Yarra Trail to Abbotsford Convent and morning tea, then just a short run back to Rushall, in the rain if it came to that.

Come start time at Rushall Station, we had 8 starters, then on to Royal Park we picked up 2 more making 10 in number. On to our toilet stop at Docklands. Crossing the Eel Trap Bridge, we rode on the South side of the Yarra. After crossing Queens Bridge St, we were face by a sign, suggesting we take the "New Bike Path". Which we did. It took us down Southbank Blvd, on a divided bike lane, through a couple of traffic lights, then along side the National Gallery to St Kilda Rd. Then across to Linlithgow Ave to the Main Yarra Trail. A bit more circuitous route than along the river but if there was heavy pedestrian traffic by the river, it could be a useful route.

On to Morell Bridge, where we crossed the river we also picked up 2 more riders, making us now a group of 12. Along the river, the traffic seemed to be mostly joggers, with an occasional cyclist. It was quite pleasant with a bit of sunshine to warm the cockles. Passing Gardeners Creek, the weather got overcast and the joggers gave way to strollers, often with their dogs.

Back across the river at Burnley St and up the Studley Park hill, then back across the river to Gibbs St. a few back streets and we arrived at the Abbotsford Convent only to discover that there was a market in progress. Two of the riders headed off for home from here and the

rest headed for the cafe, which wasn't too busy and we were all able to sit together and take our refreshments.

Relaxed and refreshed we resumed our ride up to Yarra Bend park where 5 more riders left us and a little further on 5 riders arrived at Rushall. Almost the same distance as our usual Port Melbourne ride. Heading home the sky opened up and the rain began.



11 June

Forecast was overcast with a maximum of 13 deg. and hopefully no rain. The ride was to be our regular Rushall Station to Port Melbourne and return.

The morning seemed very cold and at start time we had 7 riders at Rushall and picked up one more at Royal Park. It was a chilly but uneventful ride to Port Melbourne, Occasionally the sun would peek through but didn't add much to the comfort of the ride. Refreshments were taken at Caps, where were all huddled inside and were joined by 2 more riders, now we were 10.

Heading back the weather seemed to warm a little and in the City we lost one of our riders. Arriving back at Rushall without further incident.



18 June

This Saturday was to be our regular ride from Rushall Station to Port Melbourne and return. Forecast was for no rain and a warm day.

Just as forecast the sun was shining and though the air was crisp what clouds that were about, kept out of the way of the sun. At Rushall, we had 15 starters including 4 visitors. Come 9.30 we headed off and at Royal Park we picked up 2 more, making 17 riders. As we headed to Port Melbourne the air started to warm, making for very pleasant riding conditions. At Caps 2 of our visitors had to head off for a prior commitment. The remaining riders enjoyed a rest and refreshments.

Having had our fill we headed back to Rushall. With such beautiful weather it seemed to take no time to complete the return journey. So ended a most enjoyable ride.



25 June

As forecast the weather was cool but the sun was shining and there was little sign of rain. Once again our usual ride from Rushall Station to Port Melbourne and back. Come start time we had 10 riders including one visitor. Heading off we picked up 2 more riders at Royal Park.

Just as last week the pleasant weather seemed to propel us with add incentive. In very little time, we arrived at Caps, for our coffee break. At Caps, we were met by Richard Buckley, whom I didn't recognise, as I haven't seen him for over a decade. He wished to maintain his membership and pay his BUG dues. I was pleased to oblige.

Having had our fill. We headed back to Rushall via the City. Once again the pleasure of the ride helped us make good time. Having lost our visitor, who had better things to do in the City.

David Downing

My daughter Clare had a baby boy, Elliot Cian Singleton, on the 17th June. Elliot was 8lb 4oz and 20 inches.

Clare and Elliot are doing fine. Its been a very busy week settling in at home

Regards Ian Singleton

