

# WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



## BUNDOORA PARK 4 OCTOBER

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### *Seniors' Week Ride*

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It was a bit of déjà vu assembling for the ride inside Jika Jika with the jacaranda in full bloom. We welcomed 3 new riders and 2 partners of regular riders. The weather was pleasant with sunny breaks as the group headed to Bundoora Park via the Darebin Creek Trail.

At Bundoora Park I gave an explanation of how to use the bike repair station, the various tools available and the differences between Schrader and Presta tyre valves. Ed gave a practical demonstration of using the pump Kira from Darebin Council had reflective ankle bands, tube repair kits and Darebin Travelsmart maps available.





Everyone then enjoyed a morning tea provided by Darebin Council. After a leisurely break the group broke into 2 one led by James and the other by me.

Three riders came with me from Bundoora Park back towards Westgarth. They were two new people; Dianne and John plus Jen. It was an uneventful trip. My wife Liz, made a visit to Preston Cemetery after morning tea and rode home by herself.

James

The other group crossed took Crookston Road and Broadhurst Avenue to the Merri Creek Trail to lunch at Coburg Lake. The weather had become fully overcast and cooler than the morning. I was decided to skip afternoon tea. We headed back to Jika on the Merri Creek Trail with riders breaking of at various locations to heads for home.

Thanks to Kira and Heidi at Darebin Council and Sue for organising the ride details with the council.

Ian

## GISBOURNE MACEDON 6 OCTOBER

After considering the rather grim weather outlook for the ride next day, Roger thought it better to cancel as he thought there were little options for cutting the ride short. So he sent out an email for Communications Officer to broadcast, plus blind copying it to the more regular Thursday riders.

Well, someone had other family priorities that (Wed.) evening and didn't check their emails. Consequently, Roger received a TXT at 7 o'clock saying that George was coming. The weather didn't seem too bad, so I said for him to come up and we would to a two-some ride anyway.

A quick call to Ian S, if he still wanted to come up. "No, my battery is only 20% charged." And David M seemed to be not out of bed at 7 in the morning.

George arrived, having had a morning coffee on the drive up and buying his standard sandwich pack for lunch.



So we set off just before 10, with George getting a personalized tour of Roger's wife's family history in the Gisborne district.

Rather windy with morning tea in a park in central old Riddell. Then the slight mist & drizzle threatened, so a mutual decision to abandon the original

plan and skulking back to Gisborne by a different back road route. As we progressed, my brain ticked over and came up with some ideas to pad out the ride. Though the back blocks and paths to the rail-station in New Gisborne, then, heading back to the Gisborne valley, we paused by Roger's Father-In Law's birth place; once a hospital and now a flash old residence.

Though Gisborne pausing to admire the beautiful mural with a Global Warming Theme and up to the cemetery to where F.I.L. & M.I.L. are now resident .... Born in Gisborne and there *together forever*.



Back to Turanga road, having covered 30 ½ km and only 4 short of the original planned route. Having stayed out of the mountains we remained dry. Lunch - with George actually having a mug of tea having realised that he wouldn't get a decent coffee.

Roger.

## RING OF STEELE 11 OCTOBER

There was already a huge crowd gathered near Candy Street corner in Westgarth by the time I arrived, a number approaching that of the previous weekend's 10,000 on the Around the Bay in a Day ride, minus the three zeroes on the end. Among them was John, on his second ride with the BUG after joining the somewhat shorter Seniors' Week Ride, on the previous Tuesday. Brave guy.

This was to be an improved Ring of Steele ride, with the removal of the drag up Mascoma Road from Boeing Reserve, and morning tea relocated to the delightful new picnic area in Austin Crescent Reserve, Pascoe Vale, now with a functioning

convenience. This was to be followed by a cruise further up Moonee Ponds Creek and through the Jacana Wetlands to lunch outside the Gowanbrae Community Centre with its sweeping views of the Moonee Ponds Creek Railway Viaduct we'd just ridden under, plus our fair city (pictured).

The total distance had blown out to 55km so, based on the participants, I generously decided to take Park Street to the Union Street "on-ramp" to the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail rather than heading down to Flemington Road. The weather started warming up quite quickly and most were able to shed a layer by the time we got to morning tea. Here Steve, apparently fully recovered from his recent run-in with the magpies on Cheddar Road, was able to tell us a bit about his stint driving a sag wagon on the Around the Bay.

Once I slowed down and started stopping more often, we made good progress to our lunch spot. We did have to halt at Adelaide Road for a toilet break, thanks to the "community centre" not being open to the community. Having graced us with his presence, George Bailey left us at Jacana to go to a medical appointment. We were undeterred but were not alone when we got to the community centre, with the Gowanbrae kindergarten/day care outfit that operates from a large part of the building on an "excursion" to the picnic area in their fluoro vests. It was fortunate that they retreated indoors after a short time, as some BUG members didn't have Working with Children clearances.



We watched in vain for a train on the viaduct but there wasn't one as it is mainly used by freight. Apparently, it was completed in 1929 as part of a two-track line between Albion (on the Sunbury line) and Jacana (on the Craigieburn one) to get freight off

the Broadie suburban line. It has no stations nor overhead wires, and the viaduct across the Maribyrnong River is part of the same line but has bragging rights for being the second highest bridge in the state, after the West Gate. They might see more traffic once the route of Inland Rail is sorted.

Meanwhile, back on the ride, we found our way to the Airport West Green Spine and down the Steele Creek Trail to the Maribyrnong River. The Lily Reserve lookout was deserted and there was a very clear view of the city. For anyone still interested, the waterway to the west below was Steele Creek. The one further west



is called the Milleara Road Drain. After Robin demanded refreshments, we quickly settled for afternoon tea at The Boathouse's kiosk, from where Steve left us to prepare for an evening meeting. Nola caught the train at Flemington, John begged for mercy going up towards the zoo and so it went on.

I was delighted to find I'd managed to cut a whole kilometer off the ride so this may be the subject of further investigation.

**Wolter**

## **13 OCTOBER RIDE**

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**CANCELLED DUE TO HEAVY RAIN**

## **BALLARAT TO SKIPTON RAIL TRAIL**

**17-18 OCTOBER**

Ralph had the idea for this ride before he had his bike accident, so Allan and Kathy kindly did a reccy for him.

We met at Ballarat Carngham Road which was no.3 on the rail trail map about 5 km from the actual beginning and easily parked on the side of the road. Pam and Paul, Allan and Kathy plus Ralph and me made up our group of 6. This was Paul, Pam, and Ralph's first return to the group after various medical treatments and illnesses, so the pace was kept deliberately manageable and relaxed.

It was cool though sunny and the frogs were croaking after so much rain. Morning tea was held in Smythesdale Park where you are allowed to free camp for three nights. The trail was good in most places, while in some spots, too much rain had made huge divots and we walked through this part. We stopped for around 20 minutes to have a wander around the old Smythesdale cemetery. This proved very interesting in telling us about the gold mining history of the area. Ralph and I bought sandwiches from the Scarsdale general store, where the lady seemed more intent on reading the paper than serving us. We had a picnic lunch at Nimmons Bridge.

Nimmons Bridge was Victoria's fourth-tallest timber trestle bridge when built and is the third-tallest surviving example. It is also the second-largest composite bridge combining traditional timber piers with rolled steel joist spans and a timber

deck. The bridge is the most visually spectacular timber-trestle rail bridge in Western Victoria and is among the most iconic timber-trestle rail bridges surviving anywhere in Australia. Located near Scarsdale and Newtown, the bridge is part of the [Ballarat-Skipton Rail Trail](#). From Golden Plains Shire council.



Coffee and cake were taken at the Avalon Nursery Café, which we just made in time before they closed. The staff were very friendly and obliging and the women enjoyed a wander in the nursery too.



On Tuesday we parked near the Botanical Gardens and cycled around half of Lake Wendouree, before heading towards the main city via side streets. We rode along Canadian Creek trail, out past Sovereign Hill towards the

University before turning back and having coffee and scones at the Beechworth bakery. Returning to the Lake, we completed our lap around, observing many swans and their cygnets of various ages. We had time for a lovely wander around the Botanical Gardens before heading off.

An enjoyable time was had by all.

Nola and Ralph

# AD HOC RIDE TO BRIGHTON 18 OCTOBER

It was an ad hoc ride with the group (seven of us) to decide where we were going. After the previous week with the heavy rain and flooding some parts of Melbourne best avoided. Would morning tea by a lake and lunch by the bay be a safe bet?

It was a beautiful day for a bike ride, with light winds and no rain expected, we decided to take the chance.

Riding through the CBD watching people of their way to and from work is always interesting, when you are going somewhere else. A clear run down Exhibition Street to the Yarra, along through South Melbourne to Albert Park Lake just in time for a morning break in the sun. Afterwards a spin around the gravel path to take in the lake views and the wild life. On the scenic south side, a crowd of tourists taking photos of the view of the lake and the city. Seemed a good place for a BUG shot.



Onwards around the lake we went, passing another tourist group. Another group later wanting to get out of our way but that was the way we wanted to go. We waved Colin goodbye then.

Along the Bay trail, stopping to look at the bay in slight amazement. The bay was so calm and flat and the light made the ships on the horizon look like they were ready to drop off the edge.

Turning off at Elwood canal – canal looking full. Through Elwood Park back to the Bay trail. Our destination for lunch was Brighton Beach Gardens. We found an empty table by the viewpoint so we had a great view while we ate our lunch.

On our return journey we turned off again to continue our path around Albert Park



Lake. I was hoping we would see the Swan parents that are currently raising their cygnets. We saw heaps with cygnets of all different ages.

Another good ride. Distance approximately 48 km.

Report from Sue Hiscock

## ELTHAM 20 OCTOBER

Nine riders turned up at the starting point by 9.30 on a good day for riding with warm spring weather forecast by the Bureau (not BoM) and little or no wind evident. The numbers included 3 relatively new riders which was good to see.

We set off parallel to the railway line heading east through Fairfield then onto The Boulevard in Alphington. Since there had been a lot of rain and floods over the last week the leader decided not to ride down the steep hill to Wilson Reserve but took the more gentle descent near the Scout Hall and ovals. On nearing the river, the path had been blocked off with tape but there was space for riders to get through, and a local walker coming from the other direction said that it should be ok to get through on the path alongside the Yarra river.

On reaching the first turn the path was very muddy but an alternative option was available provided we went over a small dead fallen tree. All looked ok but on rounding the next corner we were confronted by a muddy patch which didn't look too bad, so on we went but found out when trying to ride through that it was very muddy and slippery. This was a bad miscalculation as we encountered may more muddy slippery sections on the path as the whole area had been flooded recently. Riding through the mud with wide tyres seemed relatively easy until my chain came off in the middle of a muddy section so I had to put my foot down into the soft messy water. This happened 4 times and I have now found out my powered bike doesn't like mud. Most of the other riders battled on for a while before getting off and walking through the mud. Soon the leader was the General and leading from behind rather than out the front, while most of the riders trudged through the mud and along the track. A number of riders had to find some sticks to scrape the mud off the tyres and out from under their mudguards.



*Colin wisely walking through the muddy section and other riders hiding in the distance. Note the mud on the vegetation showing the flood level higher than Colin's head*

We eventually emerged near Burke Road. bridge to regroup and clean off more mud before riding to Possum Park for morning tea. Most riders cursed the mud except David who seemed to have a very clean bike in spite of the muddy path.



*Some of the unhappy riders just out of the mud.*

Roger even recoiled is chain to prevent it clogging up and rusting with the unknown water/mud quality.

Possum Hollow was a welcome stop and chance for a chat and relax but it was soon time to get back on the bikes and head off down the path to Eltham. It was an uneventful ride until Eltham however our normal route was blocked off due to the bridge being closed and unsafe. The bannisters or edging were all knocked over by the recent floods so David led us up the path to another bridge crossing only to find that half the bridge boards were missing. No riding over that one either so we headed along the west side of the creek to Bridge Street where we had to ride up the hill and use the footpath beside the road to cross the creek. It was then a short ride past Edendale farm to our lunch spot at the North Eltham Adventure playground. No one had enough energy to venture out to the playground so lunch was under a shelter with seats and tables and a chance for more chats

After lunch first David headed off north to ride home, then Ian decided to ride to Hurstbridge to avoid retracing his route or maybe he was worried about more muddy tracks. The remainder of the riders headed back along the trail but decided to avoid the mud when given an option and ride along the tarmac on the boulevard before heading to Phil's bakery so that Roger could sample his last hot chocolate before heading overseas again. It was an interesting ride and an example that the leader should use caution and not expect riders to follow his offroad adventures.

Ride distance was about 53 km at about 15 km/h.

Ed

## PHILLIP ISLAND 23-25 OCTOBER

It had been several years since I had been able to host a BUG ride at Phillip Island. We missed Bruce who had taken part in all the previous rides. Roger also had attended previous rides but this time was flying to Germany to spend his 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary with his German friends. He sent emails along the way.

Only four signed up to join me but new all very welcome. Weather cleared so that we could cook outside and we gathered for a while next to the barbecue. Wolter came in his mobile home and parked in the back garden. Paul and Pam had a cottage in Cowes and Ed was staying with a friend in Wonthaggi. Jenny unfortunately stayed in Melbourne recovering from her fall.



On Monday the weather was overcast but dry though there was a strong wind. We set off from Sunset Strip heading for Churchill Island.

It was bike path all the way although the wind had blown a small tree to block the path at one point.





We reached Churchill Island and cycled around the path circling the island. At the end, we went through a gate which said that the path was closed due to weather conditions. We all survived.

After a coffee break, I took everyone on a guided tour of the historic precinct.



They also met a few of the residents.



We left Churchill Island and stopped for lunch at the Newhaven bakery. With the wind behind us we rode back along the bike path and detoured along Surf Beach to avoid the fallen tree. The coffee shack there was shut so we continued on to the Amaze n' Things for afternoon tea. We returned to Sunset Strip for a rest period. We gathered at the North Pier restaurant for dinner, the RSL being closed on Mondays. Paul and Pam, walking from their accommodation, got temporarily lost but were given directions by phone.

The next morning, Wolter, Ed and I rode to Cowes and met Pam and Paul at the Phillip Island bakery for morning tea.



We then stopped briefly at the memorial to Olive Justice, nee Grayden, who ran one of the boarding houses back in history.



We continued along the Ventnor Road as far as Grossard Point. This was named for Captain William Grossard who was accidentally shot during preparations for a hunt whilst staying with the McHaffies. He was buried on the cliff at Ventnor.



We returned to the Ventnor Road and had lunch at the café at the Butcher's shop. Something of a local secret, the café here was doing regular business but had plenty of room at its garden tables.

After lunch, we returned to Cowes and Sunset Strip and then home.

28 km Monday, 26 km Tuesday. Pleasant rides with pleasant company.

David

<b>BOTANICAL GARDENS</b> <b>25 OCTOBER</b>
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Eight people began this ride with Ian S offering to be tail. We headed towards the Yarra trail and noticed how fast the Yarra was flowing after Dights Falls, with much debris and fallen trees along the edges. Sue mentioned that a bridge was out of action, and she assisted me to navigate a detour around the Brewery area. Once back on the main trail, it was rather low and close to the river's edge. At one point, it was so muddy, we all got off our bikes to lead them through. Finally on bitumen again, we rode along and took a drinks-break where the Gardiners Creek trail joins. Soon after a couple of cyclists in front alerted us of the need to turn around and cross over the Toorak Road bridge. So, from there we rode on the south side of the river to morning tea at the Botanical Gardens.



Major renovations were occurring at the site, but a coffee cart was available, and the chairs were back so we arranged some around two tables for our refreshments. I forgot my teabag, so Robyn kindly shared her, as she said, 'weak coffee' with me. It was perfectly fine. We met Michael, a new BUG member and it was also great to see Colin again. Ralph left for home after this, and Colin departed near the Shrine as he had a dental appointment. I said to Sue we were now 3 women and 3 men.

We crossed St Kilda Road and headed down Albert Road, continuing onto Kerferd Road to the Bay trail. Before long we were at St Kilda Botanical Gardens for our lunch. Michael remarked he wasn't aware these gardens existed to which I replied, neither was I until coming here with the group. It's amazing how much more of Melbourne and its surrounds you can access by bike.

Ian H and Sue helped lead us a different way back to Albert Park, via back streets, Luna Park, and Acland Street. With little to no wind, we headed for the path around the edge of the lake and before long we spotted many swans with their cygnets of varying ages, either in the water or wandering on the grass.



A smooth ride back through the city saw us arrive at Bedggood Café near the MCG for coffee after 1.30. Ines, one of the owners, joined a couple of tables together outside for us and we enjoyed a well-earned coffee. In my case I can recommend the hummingbird cake – it was delicious.



The BOM (Bureau!) got it wrong during the ride thankfully, though we had all come prepared with our wet weather gear. A very pleasant ride of roughly 40km and thanks to you all for your assistance.

*Report by Nola*

## WOODLANDS HISTORIC HOMESTEAD 27 OCTOBER

Sheltering from the drizzle five minutes from departure I was alone. I was just about ready to go back home to a nice coffee and read the paper when Sue appeared. We decided to cancel the ride and go home or check out a future ride Sue wanted to investigate. So foolishly we set off in the drizzle, rode the route in the drizzle and returned home in the drizzle. Apart from the drizzle it was a very pleasant ride.

Ian

## SATURDAY RIDES

### 1 October

Forecast for a very pleasant 18 deg. and no rain. Being the first ride of the month, it wouldn't be our usual ride but we would ride the Capital City Trail to Southbank, Main Yarra Trail to the Gardiners Creek, then Ferndale Trail to refreshments at Glen Iris Pantry. We would come back by the Anniversary Trail to Rushall. Come start time, still a bit cool but lovely warming sunshine. There were 8 starters including one visitor (who had joined us to limber up for the round the bay ride!), at Royal Park we picked up 2 more. Then our usual route to Docklands for our toilet stop. Crossed the river at the Eel Trap Bridge, then along South Bank to the Alternate Bike Path, just past Queensbridge Street. At this point our visitor decided to leave us. This day the alternative route proved to be a real pain, being constantly stopped by lights at the intersections. Give me a herd of pedestrians by the river, next time.

At Morell Bridge 2 more riders joined us, now a group of 11. For such a lovely day the Main Yarra Trail wasn't too crowded and the ride was most enjoyable. A bit busier on the Gardeners Creek Trail but we moved along at a fair pace, then the Ferndale Path and Glen Iris Pantry for our coffee stop. I was very partial, for the Pantries food but it has had a makeover and where you could see the produce displayed with labels, this time the serving person read the offerings from a list and what was on the plate didn't quite fit what you had imagined from the description but the coffee was OK.

Having nourished ourselves, we set off on our return journey, continuing along the Ferndale Trail. There has been some nice concreting work done on the path approaching Florizel Street and soon we were on the Anniversary Trail. At Camberwell, 2 riders left us and 2 more left as we passed Northcote. Seven riders arrived back at Rushall after a warm and scenic ride.

## **8 October**

Today's ride was to be our regular ride from Rushall Station to Port Melbourne via Capital City Path and return via the MCG. After rainfall the previous the previous day being equal to the monthly average for October we had a forecast was little chance of rain and a maximum 15 deg. At start time the sun was out, a few clouds in the sky and a coolish temperature. We headed off with 8 riders at Rushall and pick up 2 more at Royal Park. Although quite cool the sunshine was made riding a pleasure. Under City Link, there was concern of flooding in the underpasses but fortunately the drainage worked well and we only had to contend with a bit of flotsam and a lot of mud, which restrained the exuberance of those riding without mudguards. Heading to Port Melbourne the wind picked up and was most noticeable when the sun hid behind a cloud.

At our coffee stop at Caps most chose to eat outside in the sun. During our break George busied himself by adjusting the disk brakes on one of the bikes. Refreshed we headed back to Rushall, with one of our number leaving in the city. The rest returned without further incident.

## **15 October**

After a week of torrential downpours and rising rivers, this day's forecast was pretty good, with 17 deg. and no rain. This Saturday's ride was our usual Rushall Station to Port Melbourne and return via the MCG. Come start time we had 4 starters and headed off briskly, but didn't get far before we had a flat, no spare tube. So, tube out, glue on, a bit tacky, patch on. It wouldn't stick. Haste brings waste. Fortunately, another rider had an old tube that had plenty patches well stuck on. This did the job admirably. We were away again and we picked up 2 more riders at Royal Park, a group of 6. Really no need for regrouping.

There was an expectation of some flooding of the road underpasses along the Moonee Ponds Creek but to our pleasant surprise, they were fairly dry, with a little litter and mud but overall, there has been a vast improvement in the way water is managed in these situations, than in past years.

We were down to Port Melbourne in quick time and took refreshments at Caps, outside in the sunshine. Here we were joined by 2 more riders and spent some time coffeeing and chatting before deciding to head back.

On our way back 2 riders left us at Birrarung Marr and the rest now back to 6 riders, headed to Rushall without further incident.

## 22 October

Ride cancelled, inclement weather. Coffees advised.

## 29 October

Due to the overwhelming effect of a respiratory infection, I was unable to ride, but George Durbridge took the ride and reported as follows.

David D.

Yesterday's ride was a resounding success, in a small way. The only riders were Reg, Ivan and me, and we had apologies from you, Alf and Sandra. It was cool and breezy, but dry, so we set off as usual. At Royal Park we met nobody, so we carried on as though nothing had happened. At Victoria Harbour we conferred about the weather, and decided to omit the loop from the Yarra to Port Melbourne. So we had morning tea at Mad Duck and set off up the south bank to the Morell Bridge, around the MCG and back to Rushall. Paths fairly quiet, no rain, 14 miles, 22 ½ km.

G.Durbridge

<h3>EDITOR'S ENDNOTE</h3>
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I hope you enjoy the new look Wobbly as I now have Office 365 and new Imac. I am still learning about layout and word wrap but you may like the larger pictures. This edition is a mammoth 19 pages but we are not printing copies so I guess it does not matter. In spite of some cancellations, we had some significant rides and well written reports. Thanks to our reporters and also for the photos.