

WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



MULLUM MULLUM CREEK TRAIL WITH TRAIN 1 FEBRUARY

Six of us for the day and the weather expected to be excellent for a bicycle ride.
A slight change to the ride plan with Metro trains putting on bus replacements from Blackburn.
So, a shorter train trip and a longer ride but morning tea at Blackburn Lake.



Our extra ride from Blackburn station allowed an emergency stop at a Kebab shop for a rider without lunch.

Back on plan - we turned off at Heatherdale and joined the Eastlink/Mullum Mullum trails, near Schwerholt Cottage.

The trails' boardwalks and bridges were covered with dry leaves, so potentially slippery but we got through with no issues. However, coming to a halt at a road crossing the rider next to me lost his footing and sunk slowly sideways onto the grass – nothing hurt but pride.



We returned via the Mullum Mullum and Main Yarra Trails. Turning off at Eaglemont, we had to negotiate a big hill to get to an ice-cream shop in Ivanhoe for afternoon tea.
No mechanicals or punctures. For a 53km ride it was a relaxed and pleasant chatty day, maybe except for that hill.

Report by Sue

MERRI-BEK SHIMMIES 6 FEBRUARY

This ride was a natural follow on from the 35km Darebin Shimmies, one we've done previously. The City of Merri-bek has more listed bike routes than Darebin, but they are of varying standards and not all of them are shimmies.

There's a numbering system, trail markers on some and a map available online, which is a bit out of date.

There are now 13 bike routes that we know of, with one added since the map was produced. We just happened to have 13 riders, and what a happy bunch they were. There'd been a message from Mandy that she'd got stuck in traffic and might be five minutes late, but she made it with seconds to spare after a supreme effort riding from her parked car to Jika Jika. No, she didn't park the car in the traffic jam on the Chandler Highway.

I had plotted this adventure online, managing to include bits of 12 of the routes, but when pre-running it I decided Linda Street, Coburg (part of the #5 East-West Link route), was a bit steep and narrow heading east and so reversed the direction of the ride. This is where I did something you should not do – I got cooked doing a second recce on the warm previous Saturday and didn't finish it – in direct contravention of the DBUG rider leaders' manual.

A ride like this has lots of turns and stops and I might have thrown in a few extras along the way due to my lack of familiarity with the streets in the reverse direction, but I did promise to include a list of the routes in the order we travelled them (for those on the ride who may have been a bit disoriented??) so here goes. First there was a bit of #2 Merri Creek Trail, then west on #8 Glenlyon Road, Brunswick East-West Route (catchy title) and north on #3 East Brunswick Shimmy, then east and north back on #2 Merri Creek Trail to morning tea at Coburg Lake.



Pam S was going to leave us here but decided to soldier on for a bit longer as we were going to be heading south, after a bit of #1 Upfield Shared Path northwards to get to Orvieto Road and the #12 Merlynston to Pascoe Vale East West Route. Throw in a bit of the Coburg North Linear Park, which does not score a number, more of #1 Upfield Shared, the aforementioned #5, #4 West Brunswick Shimmy and #9 Moonee Ponds Creek Trail to eventually have lunch at a now sunny Austin Crescent Reserve.

Jopie was waiting for us there after ducking away to buy a spoon, having forgotten to bring such a utensil for his rather solid repast. Sue took the opportunity to tighten her sinking seat post. Lunch over, we went up #11 Glenroy to Moonee Ponds Trail (more commonly known in this section as Westbreen Creek), another bit of #12, #13 Glenroy to Coburg Link, some #7 O'Hea Street Shared Path and finally some more of the busy and narrow #1 Upfield.

Afternoon tea had been insisted upon, so we headed to Acustico next to the Upfield trail on Union Street, and we had eight volunteers, some of whom appeared to now be desperate for their first coffee of the day. Go figure. The interior was a rather strange mix of recycled timber, pallets and retro furniture but the service was quick and they let us pay individually without getting grumpy.

Shedding riders along the way, we cruised part of the Capital City Trail, which Merri-bek labels #6, having completely avoided the Ring Road Trail, which they call #10. Special thanks to Ian S for escorting me back to Jika Jika. I never would have found it. Strava said 48km, up eight on the advertised figure thanks to those pesky wrong turns.

Report by Wolter

100 STEPS OF FEDERATION 8 FEBRUARY

Seven riders: Sue, Ian, Ed, James, David, Wolter and Andrew gathered at Jika Jika for the day's ride. We set off along South Crescent and into Westgarth Street where we met George on his way to Jika Jika for a 9:30 start.

Now a group of eight, we continued along Westgarth Street across the Merri Creek and onto Capital City Trail which we followed to Flemington Bridge. We joined the Moonee Ponds Trail and followed it to Dynon Road. Here we had to leave the Moonee Ponds Trail as Footscray Road was closed to cyclists in the westerly direction. We left Dynon Road at Moreland Street and made our way to Hyde Street which we took to Yarraville Gardens, our morning tea stop.

After morning tea we continued down Hyde Street and onto the Bay Trail to Williamstown. After following Nelson Place and Battery Road it was back onto the Bay Trail. We passed Williamstown Beach and Jawbone Reserve before arriving at Maddox Road. It was then onto Kororoit Creek and across the ford at Altona Road to Altona Foreshore. After leaving Altona Foreshore it was a short ride past the old explosives store and across Laverton Creek to our lunch stop at 100 steps.



After lunch we retraced our steps to Maddox Road, which we followed towards Newport Lakes. David left us as we crossed the railway line to get the train home from Newport Station. We continued on through Newport Lakes, across the freeway, up Stony Creek to Austin Crescent and into Anderson Street. At Yarraville Station we turned left into Birmingham Street which we followed to Somerville Road, after crossing under Somerville Road it was onto Pentland Parade. This took us to Albert Street, after passing Footscray High School we turned onto Pilgrim Street which took us under the railway line and back to Hyde street. From here we headed to Dynon Road stopping at the Milking Station Cafe for afternoon tea.



Ed left us before, and George after afternoon tea. We followed Dynon Road to Lloyd Street, then onto Arden Street and Queensberry Street to Swanston Street. I had done a reconnaissance the week before and there were no detours Swanston Street. Well, today most of the top end of of was closed off. After some adventuring in various streets we eventually got to College Crescent via Cardigan and Keppel Streets. From College Crescent it was into Princes Park Drive and then Garton Street to the Inner Circle Path. We finished the ride here, each going their separate ways to home.

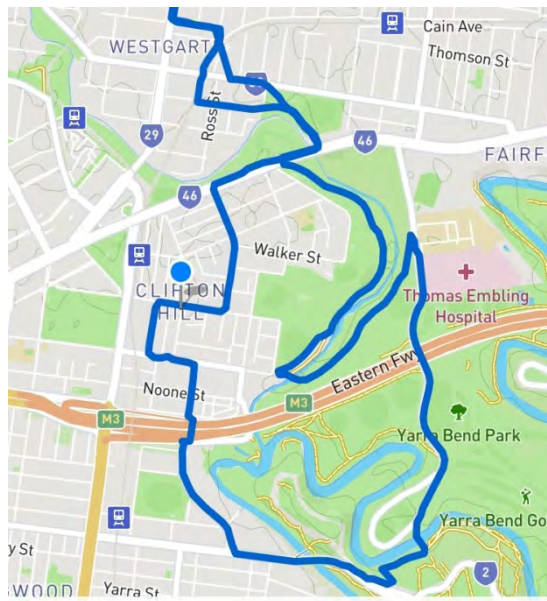
Report by Andrew

THE NOT ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE AND ST KILDA BOTANICAL GARDENS RIDE 13 FEBRUARY

It had been advised the day before that the ride would be shortened to morning tea and return due to the hot weather forecast. It was about 7:30 am on the morning of the ride when Nola called to advise that she could not lead the ride and I agreed to lead.

At a couple of minutes to 9:00am I put the first aid kit back in the locker as no one had showed up. Right on 9:00 Roberta showed up and we were chatting about what to do for about 5 minutes when Ed showed up. Ed suggested an even shorter ride than the Royal Botanic Gardens. It was agreed to head to the Studley Park Boathouse for morning tea. We went via Merri Creek Trail to Dights Falls, Main Yarra Trail to Melbourne Polytechnic and then the path following Yarra Bend Road to Studley Park. Roberta graciously paid for morning tea and we had a long chat.

We then had to tackle the steepish climb up to Studley Park Road where Roberta headed east to home and Ed and I headed West to home. The ride was about 10km.



Report by Ian S

HURSTBRIDGE 15 FEBRUARY

Ian H and George were sitting under the veranda at Jika Jika when I arrived at 9.00, George had forgotten the later start. It was a while before other riders arrived and close to 9.30 we were joined by Susan, Michael, James and Kathleen. Seven set off and were quickly joined by Wolter and David E. We gathered Pam S at Alphington Station making ten in all, a good turn-out for a Thursday. Some riders expressed appreciation for the later start.

We rode along the Yarra Trail by the river, now dry and more enjoyable than the Boulevard.



We reached Possum Park without incident though there was only one table completely free, the others being occupied by groups of one or two.

Wolter rode ahead to get a photo of the group in motion.



Pam left us after morning tea and we continued to the Eltham North playground. Here we had two adjacent tables and a pleasant lunch. Michael was approached by a woman needing advice on selling a second hand but expensive bike. Facebook was advised.

George left to take the train from Eltham and the rest of us carried on to Hurstbridge.

Kathleen had not ridden this trail before and enjoyed the ride with few other riders or pedestrians.

We arrived at Hurstbridge around 1.15 and went to the French Lettuce (not to be confused with the Lettuce Inn opposite which is the greengrocer).



The French Lettuce was formerly the Post Office café. In spite of an alluring selection of cakes and pastries, it was almost empty. We took up the bench on the veranda in front and enjoyed iced coffees, other coffee or chocolate with fruit tarts, vanilla slice and so forth.

The group caught the 2 pm train back to Westgarth and I headed home. About 40 km.

Report by David M

CAPITAL CITY TRAIL – COMO AND BURNLEY GARDENS 20 FEBRUARY



On a lovely morning for riding 14 riders turned up at Jika Jika for some riding with a bit of walking included, as opposed to the usual activity of riding. On setting off the PTV helped as the boom gates were down near Westgarth Station allowing easy access to the route to the west and around the Capital City Trail until regrouping near the zoo. We then headed towards the city and observed the half-finished new bicycle bridges near Dynon Road and also Footscray Road.

We rode along Southbank and through the Alexandra and Victoria Gardens before heading up to the Observatory and walking into the Botanic Gardens to the western lawn near the old oak tree for morning tea and a decent chat. After a good break we walked around to the next gate before heading down the hill on Anderson Avenue and reconnecting with the Main Yarra Trail and heading to Como House and gardens with a brief walk before checking out the kitchen gardens and flowers.

We were soon back on the bikes and I heard a commotion behind as Nola found the narrow sandy path a challenge and started heading down the steep slope towards a large jump off retaining wall. Luckily she managed to stop not far off the path. This reminded me of a famous verse.

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that sought his own abode, That perched above the Dead Man's Creek, beside the mountain road. He turned the cycle down the hill and mounted for the fray, But ere he'd gone a dozen yards it bolted clean away. It left the track, and through the trees, just like a silver streak, It whistled down the awful slope towards the Dead Man's Creek.

It shaved a stump by half an inch, it dodged a big white-box: The very wallaroos in fright went scrambling up the rocks, The wombats hiding in their caves dug deeper underground, As Mulga Bill, as white as chalk, sat tight to every bound. It struck a stone and gave a spring that cleared a fallen tree, It raced beside a precipice as close as close could be; And then as Mulga Bill let out one last despairing shriek It made a leap of twenty feet into the Dead Man's Creek.'

Source Mulga Bill's Bicycle by A B (Banjo) Patterson

Luckily there was no Dead Man's Creek at the bottom of the slope.

After this excitement we rode on to the Kevin Bartlett reserve near Burnley College for lunch, only to find the shelter occupied so we sat on the ground for lunch with a very friendly magpie eyeing off the tucker and serenading us with its famous warble from a branch just above Ian's head. The next excitement was to beat gravity and get up and back on the bikes for a short ride to Burnley and more walking around the gardens.



Colin indicated that his grandmother had attended Burnley with Edna Walling a famous landscape designer.

(<https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/search-discover/explore-collections-theme/plants-gardens/garden-design-landscape-architecture/edna>).

After Burnley we rode around the Yarra to Abbotsford and walked through the Clarke Street gates of the Abbotsford Convent and briefly saw the gardens before stopping for afternoon refreshments and icecream. After more chitchat we headed back to Jika Jika to finish the circuit. Ian S was the only rider to complete the circuit as others headed off at some time along the way to retreat from the hot afternoon sun.

Ride distance 37 km

Report by Ed

SANDRINGHAM TO SEAFORD WETLANDS 22 FEBRUARY

Due to the forecast extreme temperature, and in line with the Darebin BUG guidelines, the official ride for this day was cancelled.

CHERRY LAKE 27 FEBRUARY

A small group of 7 riders turned out on a relatively cold morning on a day where 30 degrees was forecast for late afternoon. Unfortunately, on the Inner Circle Rail Trail, near the Old North Carlton Railway Station, Sue and Glenys somehow managed to come together and fall off their bikes. Sue came off the worst and after a rest in the shade decided it would be best to leave the ride and return home. Glenys felt able to continue on the ride. It was agreed that the ride would detour to take Sue home. Sue led so she could set the pace and headed for Park Street to get to the Upfield Share Path.

Due to poor communication Robin, Glenys and Jon finished up staying on the Inner Circle Trail instead of turning off to Park Street with Sue, Steve, Ian H and myself. With some phone calls the group managed to reconnect at Jewel Railway Station after getting Sue home. Time to head to Yarraville Gardens for morning tea via the Capital City Trail and the now reopened Footscray Road bike path. Sue messaged that doctor had advised no signs of concussion but soft tissue injuries. Next stop, lunch at Cherry Lake via Hyde Street and Bay Trail. There was discussion at lunch about whether the lake is natural. Google to the rescue - *Cherry Lake, formally the Altona Swamp was named after Robert Cherry who was a local farmer and landowner in the late 1800's. In the 1970's the basin was created to help prevent Altona from flooding.*

After lunch it was back to the Bay Trail, Maddox Street, Newport Station underpass, Hall Street past Spotswood Station along Simcock Avenue to afternoon tea at the Footscray Milking Station. It was quite comfortable sitting outside and the coffee drinkers were impressed with the coffee.

I decided the return route would be via the path on east side Maribyrnong River to Dynon Road to avoid the hill on the more usual route via Kensington. All did not go smoothly however. At the first traffic lights on Dynon Road we realised Ian H and Jon were not with us. Glenys headed for Macaulay Station while we worked out what was going on. By the time we made contact on the phone Ian H and Jon were near the Kensington Stock Yards so it was agreed each group would make its own way home. Unplanned we did meet up again near the Zoo and continued on the Inner Circle Trail to complete the ride.

Lesson Learnt: I need to be more diligent about regrouping at turns.

Report by Ian S

SUNSHINE AND KOROROIT CREEK 29 FEBRUARY

Six riders set off from Jika Jika headed for the Kororoit Creek Path in Sunshine and Altona. Riders were Ian H, David, John, Colin and Ed with James leading. The start of the day was fairly normal along the Moonee Ponds Creek trail and then through the Kensington Saleyards before an early morning tea at Footscray Park across the river from Flemington Racecourse. We doubled back a little to Footscray Station and then followed the north side of the railway line to Sunshine Station and then headed downstream along Kororoit Creek. The bike path now goes across the old bluestone bridge over Kororoit Creek, continues along the east bank of the creek and goes under the Geelong Freeway. There are several dog/kangaroo/human statues along the path.

We turned east at McArthurs Road and then went along several side streets to Newport Lakes for lunch. The temperature was ideal and it was overcast all morning. We spoke to a bloke at lunch who was concerned about seeing snakes near the BBQs at lunch. We did not see any snakes today. The sun came out over lunch. As we crossed the Freeway at Muir Street Ed noticed some graffiti on the outside to the bridge over the freeway and we pondered the difficulty of creating the graffiti since the bridge is well boxed up to deter activity like this.

Afternoon tea was at the Milking Station in Footscray where the conversation turned to the strange behaviour we have discovered in researching family history. A fairly easy 53 km back to Jika Jika.

Report by James