

WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



CRAIGIEBURN 4 JUNE

9 riders gathered at Jika Jika on what looked a promising morning, weather wise. Riding along we were joined by Sue near the Zoo and then met Roger at Kensington Station. Both had sent text messages stating their intentions. The timing was good as we didn't have to wait long for the train to Craigieburn. The ride from Jika Jika to Kensington Station was about 8.5km (Strava).

On arrival at Craigieburn Station we were joined by George who had caught an earlier train from another station.

After a brief discussion about which route to take we set off and arrived at Malcolm Creek Linear Park for morning tea. The tranquillity was disturbed by the mowing and whipper snipping going on.



After morning tea we proceeded to the start of the Galada-Tamboore Pathway. The air was a bit brisk and we were happy to keep moving at a reasonable pace. Numerous rabbits and a few Kangaroos were sighted as we rode along. There were also some other riders, mostly going in the opposite direction, and an illegal motorbike(?), music blaring, roared past giving the tail end riders a fright.

We arrived for lunch at Whittlesea Public Gardens where the toilets are fully operational and there is still work being carried out on play/recreation areas.



After lunch we continued on to the Western Ring Road Trail. At the turn off to the Merri Creek Trail the leader decided to continue on. George left the group to take the Merri Creek Trail and head home.

The remainder, now 11, continued on to the Darebin Creek Trail heading south. The afternoon tea stop was Artiga Specialty Coffee where 5 riders decided to continue along the Trail and make their way home. The remaining 6 enjoyed coffee, hot chocolate and croissants.

After refreshments we managed to get our legs moving and continued on our way. Riders departed the group at various points and the leader, me, was the only one to return to Jika Jika.

The second and main part of the ride was approx. 44.5km, making a total of approx. 53km

A good day's riding with no incidents apart from the fact that my rear mud guard broke but remained attached and rattled somewhat.

Report by Colin

YAN YEAN 6 JUNE

Eight riders met at Jika Jika on a cold but still morning on 6/6/24. Jon, Sue, Jopie, Roger, Michael, Ian H and George set off right on 9:30 am bound for Merri Station. James was the leader. We just missed the 9:36 am train but only had a few minutes to wait for the next train to Mernda. It was still cold but there was no wind as we started the ride half an hour later. Bridge Inn Road was part closed for widening east of the station but this was not a problem.

A short flat ride to Yan Yean Reservoir for morning tea, with a view of the water in the dam with misty hills in the background. We doubled back to the streets of Laurimar aka Doreen and after a small hill rode around several of the small lakes before going back to Mernda Station and picking up the bike path to South Morang Station.



It was past our usual lunchtime by now and there were a couple of questions to the leader of how soon would we get to lunch? A short ride through a linear park and we arrived at Redleap Park in Mill Park for lunch. Then we rode along a new section of the Yan Yean Pipe Trail and joined the Darebin Creek Trail back to Jika Jika. George left us at the ring road. It was too late to have coffee at Artiga Speciality Coffee on the trail in Thornbury. There was no wind during the day.

Perhaps the next time we do this ride, we will start the ride at 9:00 am at Merri Station.

About 54 km; my odometer has a dodgy connection.

Report by James

YARRA & ANNIVERSARY CIRCUIT 11 JUNE

The forecast was shitty with rain and strong winds forecast, so it was little surprise that only 3 of us, Roger, Jon and me turned up, and I only turned up because I had agreed to lead a ride when Ian S was unable to lead his Mordialloc Loop ride.

As it turned out, we had a great ride. Not a drop of rain till lunch when it briefly deluged as we dryly had lunch in the shelter at Riversdale Park (the one just north of Riversdale Road). Then only a few inconsequential spits on the way home. So all of you of little faith who believe BOM forecasts, you missed a good ride.

We had a great tail wind as we rocketed down the Merri & Yarra & Gardiners Creek Trails and the Anniversary Trail seemed somewhat sheltered as the NW headwind didn't seem too bad. We included Hedgeley Dene in both directions and a loop of the Malvern Central Gardens. Roger bailed out at Riversdale Station as the sky was looking a bit dire at that stage. No dramas or other incidents today. Total distance was about 40km so a good ride for a dodgy forecast with rain shelters at both morning tea (Kevin Bartlett Reserve) & lunch.

This would be a good easy ride for a new leader to lead with the whole ride covered by the Booroondara TravelSmart map.

Report by Jopie

HEATHERDALE TO FRANKSTON 13 JUNE

Six met up at Richmond Station, Ian, Ed, Michael, Sue, Jon and Roger, to head for Heatherdale to commence our odyssey.

Once more under low gloomy moist clouds we headed a short distance to a small park for MT, less Roger, who decided to return after realising he didn't have his rain strides in case of precipitation. The kitchen sink which includes every bike part known to man didn't include this most vital piece of kit.

We negotiated a detour at Croydon due to sky rail works and on beginning the Tarralla Trail I found a tiny piece of glass had let my tyre down. Luckily gun puncture practitioner Michael came to the rescue while we leaned on our bikes offering sage advice.

We continued onto the Dandenong Creek Trail until we reached Jells Park for lunch without any rain, although it had been threatening.



Following the Dandy Trail, again without rain - sorry Roger - we followed hither and thither until the weary four sat down at a cafe near the Dandenong Station. The cafe was a hit with delicious coffee and sweets.

From Richmond Station we left Ed and Sue near the MCG leaving Michael to guide Jon and I through the back streets of Clifton Hill, familiar to him from having lived there previously.

60km or so.

Report by Ian H

CHERRY LAKE 18 JUNE

I checked the weather on my phone as I was eating breakfast at 8.15. It was 4 degrees but felt like 3.

Surely there would be no-one that keen to ride in the cold. I was hoping I would be able to return home to a warm house rather than brave a ride in the cold. But there were 10 keen riders at Jika Jika at 9.30. Luckily it was now 7 degrees and there was no cold wind or rain. So off we went.

All went well, we were setting a fast pace to try to keep warm, before we lost Kathleen and Colin at the Dynon Road turn off on the Moonee Ponds Creek trail. My phone rang to alert me of the mishap, and I suddenly realised that there was just Roger and I on Dynon Road. Rode back to where the group were waiting and our two missing riders finally joined us. Morning tea was had at Yarraville Park before we headed across the Rifle Range to Cherry Lake.

Rode back around the Altona foreshore past the old Williamston Racecourse. Roger caught the train from Newport and Andrew and Steve departed when we stopped for afternoon tea at Pango. Sue and George left us at Royal Park and the remainder rode on to Westgarth.

A brisk ride of 57 kms with the odd ray of sunshine, but the temperature only got to 12 degrees. We were all somewhat bemused by the rider who rode past in the early morning on the Moonee Ponds trail in just a singlet and shorts!

Report by Glenys

LA TROBE LINK 20 JUNE

This was supposed to be my Ferny/Dandy/Blind Creeks ride, with bonus feature of the recently reopened (June 15) trail through Stamford Park, Rowville, complete with stunning stormwater retardation treatment, but the Level Crossing Removal Authority had other ideas.

Despite the massive disappointment this caused, seven people still turned up at Jika Jika.

The weather was sunny but cold enough for Ed to be sporting my old Ground Effect Draft Dodger jacket. I'd left mine in the van, which may have been a mistake. We departed up the Merri Creek Trail with me having forgotten to switch to the small ring on the front sprocket, so I was soon in trouble for going too fast.

James decided to skip the climb to Broadhurst Avenue and met us at Edwardes Lake for morning tea, having risked his life on Newlands Road. Pam St. also met us there so that she could enjoy the beguiling conversation for which Darebin BUG members are famous.

Leaving Pam St and James to make their way home, Ed ditched the jacket and we continued towards lunch, enjoying the wonderful new pedestrian level crossing near the elevated Keon Park Station, which opened the next day with suitable complaints from very-nearby apartment block residents because it doesn't have decent sound barriers.

The shared path along Johnson Street was sporting battle damage but, hopefully, when they've finished the station car park, we'll be able to ride our normal route or under the station to J.C. Bonath Reserve. La Trobe University was pretty quiet, as a mark of respect for our lunch stop or, possibly, because they had exams happening.



The run home down the Banyule Creek Trail/River Gum Walk was uneventful and no one's bike got stolen at Bean Counter, where we had afternoon tea. Lots of new bits possible for this ride next year with a potential reduction in distance.

Let's hope North East Link doesn't do horrible things to our route.

Report by Wolter

IVANHOE & CANTERBURY 25 JUNE

After a week of bitterly cold weather we were luckily enough to score a beautiful day. Consequently we had 12 takers for our ride. It wasn't long before Michael scored a puncture and headed home so now we were 11 and that is how it stayed. We wandered along a devious route that I had mapped out through Yarra Bend, Ivanhoe, Kew, Balwyn, Canterbury, and Hawthorn which, due to the topography of those suburbs, did mean a few hills. The 3 electric bikes gave no complaints whilst the 8 muscle powered cyclists only grumbled a bit, I think good-naturedly and not too loudly. There were several comments to the effect of "I never knew these places/parks existed".

Of note were the little kindergarten troupe we had to stop for on the river path, several dogs to dodge or stop for, lots of big impressive old houses in wealthier areas, and the fact that the loo near our lunch spot in the Canterbury Gardens was closed for painting when we most needed it. Luckily for those not too desperate it reopened before we left the scene.

Afternoon coffee was at "Frankie Says" overlooking the Yarra in North Richmond which I can heartily recommend. I am not a coffee connoisseur, but the ambience is superb.



A good day with great weather and no accidents or other incidents bar one flat tyre.

Report by Jopie

FEDERATION TRAIL 27 JUNE

For the last ride in June the weather was perfect. Even with an early start of 9am it was a clear blue sky, a pleasant temperature and, even more important for cyclists, no wind when seven riders gathered at Jika Jika. We set off to North Melbourne station and made every green light until the last one before we met up with two more keen riders (Sue & Michael) at the station and gathered Roger who was patiently waiting at Footscray Station.

The ride from Werribee Station along the river towards the Geelong Freeway is one of the hidden gems of Melbourne. There is a lot of lovely vegetation along the river before we emerged up a hill to ride along the side of the noisy freeway. The morning tea stop was beside the Soldiers Reserve playground just near Werribee Secondary College. After the rest I managed to take the wrong route near Sneydes Road and realised after about a kilometre that we were heading back towards Werribee, while riding into a reasonably strong headwind. We eventually changed course and made it back to the trail near Hoppers Crossing and were then blessed with a tail wind so the riding became much easier.

It was very pleasant riding heading east with the tailwind and we rode over a couple of relatively new massive bike bridges over some busy roads before reaching the Brooklyn Reserve where we stopped for lunch. The area is relatively new and there were plenty of seats under cover and toilets nearby.

After lunch the ride was through the back streets of Brooklyn, Altona, North Kingsville, Yarraville and Seddon before emerging in Footscray and stopping at the Footscray Milking Station café and just in time for last drinks before closure.



The route back was along Dynon Road, Arden Street and then through Royal Park before heading back to Jika Jika.

Along the way various riders peeled off so that it was a tiny group that completed the circuit of about 55km.

Report by Ed