

WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog

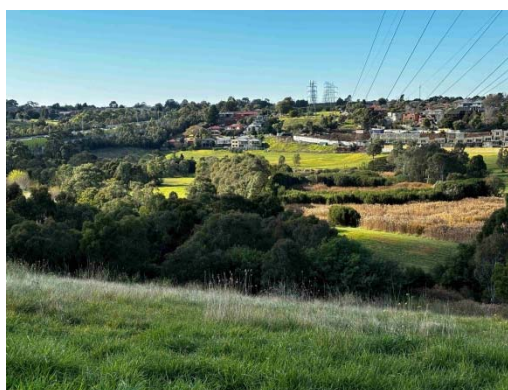


WESTMEADOWS WITH VIEWS 2 JULY

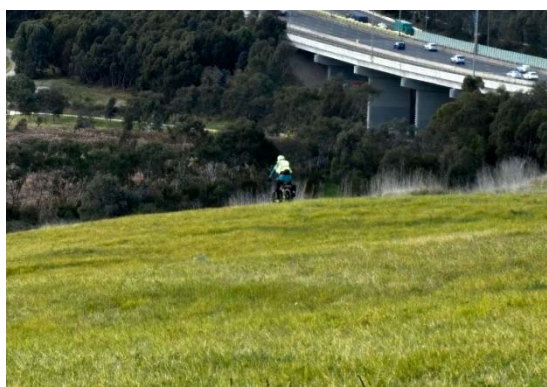
It was a lovely sunny, winter's morning of five degrees when riders gathered for the day's ride. We headed off along Westgarth Street and Merri Parade to Capital City/Inner Circle Trail which we followed to Princes Park.

At Princes Park we turned onto the Upfield Path and headed towards Brunswick. At Victoria Street we turned left and followed it towards Melville Road. Just before Melville Road we turned right and then left onto Hope Street. Hope Street took us on a quick downhill ride to the Moonee Ponds Path which we joined and took north towards Westmeadows.

We stopped for morning tea at Montgomery Park. After morning tea we rejoined the path at Vanberg Street and continued on our way. We had a brief stop at Boeing Reserve before arriving at the junction with the Western Ring road Path. Rather than continue up the valley on the Moonee Ponds Path we turned left on the Ring Road Path and climbed from the valley floor to the top to admire the views up and down the valley.



We crossed a pedestrian bridge over the Ring Road and followed the upper valley rim towards Westmeadows. We had climbed up to the top of the valley on a path that went diagonally across the slope, after about 500 metres we came to a path that basically went straight down the slope back to the Moonee Ponds Path, no prizes for guessing who hooned off down this slope!



We turned onto Carrick Drive, passed Gladstone Views Primary School and rejoined the path at Carrick Reserve. From here it was a short ride to the lunch stop at Westmeadows.



After lunch we followed the Moonee Ponds Path back to the flood retaining wall at Gowanbrae and turned onto back streets to get to Jacana Station thereby avoiding climbing the much steeper climb on the Ring Road Path.

We crossed over the railway line at Jacana Station and followed the path to Morley Street, near the turn to Jack Roper Reserve, where we left the path and followed back streets to Box Forest Road and on to the Upfield Path. We stopped for coffee at the Lux Foundry Cafe in Hope Street.



After coffee the remaining riders dispersed in all directions to head home.

Report by Andrew

RIDERS' CHOICE RIDE 4 JULY

Five riders, Sue, David, Roger, Michael and Colin, gathered at Jika Jika on a cold, foggy morning. Sue's suggestion of a ride along the Main Yarra Trail to Beasleys Nursery for lunch, and return by much the same route, was heartily endorsed by all. So with chilly fingers we set off. A minor detour was required to avoid a road closure along South Crescent, but otherwise the ride proceeded smoothly. There were others out on the paths including joggers, dog walkers, and other riders.

We arrived at Possum Hollow without incident for morning tea where Roger activated one of the electric bar-b-ques in an attempt to warm his hands, no helmet was placed on it! While there the Sun made a feeble effort to break through, to no avail, we did not see the Sun for the rest of the ride!

The ride continued along, passing through Westerfolds Park and under Fitzsimons Lane where it was noticed that a kayak/canoe event was in progress. Shortly after this David and Roger left the group to make their way to Eltham Station and home, the cold weather being a discouragement.



The remaining three pressed on to Beasleys Nursery for an early lunch stop.

The return trip went smoothly with the sighting of a fox in Candlebark Park which crossed the path in front of us but did not seem to be concerned about us. Shortly before entering Westerfolds Park we stopped briefly to watch those in the kayak/canoe group swimming in the river after negotiating the rapids, apparently this was part of the exercise.

An enjoyable, if cold, ride through some nice scenery.

Approximately 52km.

Report by Colin

STEELE CREEK TRAIL 9 JULY

Hoping for some steadfast riders, eight members set off once again in despondent gloomy weather and also light rain. Just once can I lead a ride under fair skies and hit the trail without trepidation and impending rain. (shouldn't complain after a dry 2 months for our gardens)

We left the Merri Creek Trail heading for Merlynston Station and the Westbreen Creek area only to find our morning tea spot too wet to sit. Sue suggested a shelter at Austin Crescent Reserve a little further on where we huddled together on the only table under shelter.

From then on the rain became heavy as we rode along the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail until Boeing Reserve where we crossed Melrose Drive onto the Western Ring Road path finally meeting the Steele Creek path to the Maribynong River trail for lunch. Lunch under shelter provided blessed relief from the downpour.



Heads down we flew home avoiding the afternoon tea pit stop jettisoning riders along the way hoping nobody drowned. Performance metrics were off the chart. 60km.

Report by Ian H

JIKA JIKA TO FRANKSTON 11 JULY

The day before the ride I received an email from Sue indicating that there may be galeforce northerly winds on the day of the ride so an email was sent out to riders indicating that there would be a change and the ride would start at Jika Jika and ride to Frankston. After the previous Tuesday ride where all riders were drenched no one wanted to get wet again, however Roger told us that the forecast was for rain at 1.30 in the afternoon at Tullamarine Airport. Lucky that we were going a long way away from the airport.

We set off and headed off with George at the tail, and rode around the soccer ground at Clifton Hill before riding to Wellington Street and all the way to the end, then past the MCG and Tennis Centre where surprisingly Roger left the ride. We finally reached the Copenhagen lane on St Kilda Road and then turned off beside the new Anzac Station towards Albert Park. Once on the racetrack we zoomed along with a strong tailwind then headed towards the Bay Trail. One of the early weather reports stated that there were wind gusts up to 78km/h on the bay so when the wind was behind us riding was easy. There was one section of 50m on Canterbury Road into the headwind and all riders slowed drastically, but on the bay trail we hardly had to pedal so riding was pleasurable.

Morning tea was at Elwood next to the Sailing Club where we were sheltered from the chilly wind. While there Ian tried on a number of other riders wind protection jackets to see what size to order and was surprised to find he needed an extra-large. We will have to wait and see if he turns up in the Phantom, Afterburner, Draft dodger or will he be more at home in the Hoodwink, all jackets from Ground Effect.

Back on the bikes and more easy pedalling south. Occasionally we had to use some exertion to pedal up a bit of a small rise before more easy flat or slightly downhill riding. We stopped for lunch at the Mordialloc playground just before 12.



George left us after his snack as he had another engagement, so we rode south without a tail.

When we reached the Patterson River the trail was soft and boggy and hard riding for those with thin tyres, then it was blocked so we deviated to the road before passing Carrum Station where James jumped on the train while the rest of us kept heading south along the path beside the railway line.

When we turned towards the Kananook Creek Trail the path was blocked again so more diversions before we rode the rest on the way beside the creek and finally reached Frankston.



A view of the bay from Frankston

Gayle and Graham jumped on the first train and headed for home while the rest of us searched for a coffee shop. There aren't as many coffee shops in Frankston as in the Northern suburbs but we eventually found the Laughing Lark Café where the yoyo bikkies were a hit with the riders. When riding to the station we noticed a lot of police around. There were about 5 at the station and about 6 protective service officers also. All the riders surprisingly obeyed all the signs and rules so no one was picked up.

The train ride back to Richmond took about 68 minutes, then on the way back north to Jika Jika David peeled off at Jolimont, Sue and Michael headed off at Albert Street, and Ed left in Clifton Hill leaving only Ian and Jon riding into the strong northerly to complete the circuit of about 60km and finishing at about 4.30 and with not a drop of rain in sight until later that night.

Report by Ed

PLENTY RIVER TRAIL REVERSED

16 JULY

The forecast was awful with 5-15mm of rain forecast, but it turned out to be fake news. Four of us turned up anyway despite the dire forecast and we had a good ride with absolutely zero rain. Sometimes you just have to look out the window and ignore the forecast. Riding the Plenty Trail northwards rather than our normal southwards certainly made it look different. Highlights of the ride included a loop ride to gawk at the mansions in Lower Plenty, several of which were up for sale, the major works on the North East Link where the Ring Road meets the Greensborough Bypass, Ian's flat tyre, me forgetting my spoon to eat lunch and having to improvise and finally getting to the Artiga Cafe on the Darebin Trail in time to have relaxed coffees & hot chocolates. It's a ride I'll put on again in the hope of a better forecast and a few more takers

Report by Jopie

WATTLE PARK

18 JULY

Eight riders for the day.

After lots of rain in the previous days it meant that the Yarra River was much higher than usual. I had checked the Vic Emergency – Incidents and Warnings website and thought we would be ok going along the Capital City trail. We got quite a spectacular sight as we rode around the curved path that runs just downstream from Dights Falls. The path was clear but the water was close to the edge and was really surging around the bend of the river.

A bit further along we stopped to look at about a dozen or so Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos that were feeding in the trees above the river. Lovely to see and unusual to see them so close to the city.

We stopped at a recently renovated playground/picnic area off the Gardiners Creek trail just past Glenferrie Road for our morning break. The sun had come out, but clothing multi layers remained on.



New toilets caused some confusion when they would not open when it looked like they should. A maintenance worker who just happened to be there got cross questioned.

After our sunny break we continued on the Gardiners Creek Trail to the Ferndale Trail turning off at that point. Working our way through and past Ashburton Station we took a short cut to get back onto the Gardiners Creek path.

At Deakin University we turned off to take advantage of the traffic lights on Elgar Road and tarmac up to the top of the Wattle Park hill. Cutting across the park we stopped for our lunch at the picnic/playground area. Trams still unrenovated.

After lunch and continuing my aim of crossing Elgar Road with traffic lights we rode down the hill on the gravel path to Elgar/Riversdale Roads and crossed at the lights. We then rode through the back streets back to the Gardiners Creek Trail and onwards to Box Hill.

Roger left us at Box Hill to go to the station and the rest of us rode downhill to the Koonung Trail. The works along the freeway and parklands/shared path have changed some areas to be almost unrecognisable. We stopped at the Chocolate shop for refreshments then on back to Westgarth.

All our bikes were very muddy but the showers held off and we had generally fine weather. Good for the season.

Another good ride. Approx. 52km

Report by Sue

JACK ROPER RESERVE 23 JULY

16 riders turned up at Jika Jika on a day when strong northerly winds with mostly sunshine was forecast.

So we set off along South Crescent towards Darebin Parklands. Unfortunately we lost a rider due to a sore back (I think).

Riding north beside Darebin Creek the wind did not seem as strong as it might have been and the leader, that's me, was pushing the pace a bit fast for some of the group so the pace was trimmed to ensure we stayed within sight of each other and to conserve our energy.

We arrived at Norris Bank Parklands without incident for morning tea.

After morning tea we cycled on to the Metropolitan Ring Road (M80) trail and headed west.

While going along this trail the wind gusts were stronger, buffeting riders about a bit but without causing any accidents. We arrived at Jack Roper Reserve for lunch where riders left the group before and after lunch to attend to other matters.

After lunch it was back on our bikes leaving the Reserve at the south west corner to cross over the Metropolitan Ring Road (M80), travel through Robert Wallace Reserve and car park, along Bindi Street, Gowrie Street, May Street, Evell Street, Liston Road and Box Forest Road then on to the Upfield Shared Path to head south. With the wind now behind us the riding was a breeze!

Turning left at the Inner Circle Rail Trail we were heading towards home. A coffee stop was requested by some so we stopped at the café just before Nicholson Street. Some riders continued on leaving 10 to imbibe.

After the café stop we set off on the final leg of the ride with riders bidding farewell as we got closer to our destination. Just one made it back to Jika Jika to return the First Aid kit.

A very satisfying days ride of approximately 47km.

Sorry, but I completely forgot to take photos!

Report by Colin

AD HOC RIDE 25 JULY

A text message from Roger at 9.35am saying he was the only DBUG member to show meant that there was no group ride this day!

HURSTBRIDGE (TRAIN RETURN) 30 JULY

It was foggy in Watsonia as we rode to the station, cold and grey on arrival in Westgarth. The BOM said it would be sunny later, so 14 brave and rugged up DBUG members arrived at Jika Jika ready for the challenge. Jon agreed to be tail, so we set off along South Crescent towards Fairfield.

A couple of stops to regroup were taken at lights and at the start of the Boulevard, where Glenys pedalled on ahead, while she had momentum.

Once on the Yarra Trail, we dodged mud and puddles. Michael cleverly avoided a spill on the original wood side of the track. The birds were singing, and the kookaburras were laughing. The Yarra was a muddy brown and it felt like we were far away from suburbia in the forest of eucalypts and Cootamundra wattles – according to Robin these are the early wattles. We enjoyed our morning tea at Possum Park in Heidelberg where the sun first showed its face.



As we rode around the reeds of the Banyule Swamp and reached the lake, there was a picturesque mirror view across to the Banyule Homestead on the hill. More mud, soft ground and puddles to navigate along the track. In Westerfolds Park, I ran out of gears on the main hill, so walked up it. Sue informed me that a kangaroo had leapt across the path in front of her.

My chain came off riding up the hill in Candlebark Park, many thanks to Michael for his assistance. It was much easier to ride in the correct gear! We cycled through Eltham without incident and arrived for lunch at Edendale farm around 12.15. We all fitted in a shelter shed with open walls and comfortable seats, some of us even had the warm sun on our backs. The farm had pansies in tubs near us and those cute chickens with fluffy feet. Did we really notice one of our number changing into shorts before lunch? Can you solve this mystery?



Ken was enjoying this ride as he had not been up this way before. He and Ralph had their footy chat, while Glenys, Pam and I were reminiscing about school days. Pam told the funniest story about being allowed to invite boys to her 12th birthday party in West Coburg. Robert, a boy she was keen on, came to the party and they played spin the bottle. This caused some hilarity as the very same game was played by me at that age! Pam spun and the bottle faced Robert, so out into the passage they went. Much to Pam's chagrin, Robert said 'I don't want to kiss you. Can we stay out here and pretend for a couple of minutes??'

It took us under an hour to ride to Diamond Creek and then along the track to Hurstbridge over nine bridges. The magpies were still chortling, and a friendly rabbit watched us all sail past without

moving. One little hill towards the end proved a challenge and soon we were at our destination by 1.50pm. The next train was at 2pm, so Sue, Roger, Ken, Michel and Jon decided to catch that one, while the other nine of us opted for coffee and cake at the French Lettuce aka the old Post Office Café. We then caught the 2.40 train home after a lovely day's ride of 41km, thanks to Ian H for recording the distance.

Report by Nola