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WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



A Happy New Year to all our Riders

This year 2023 marks the 12th year of my editorship. Wobblies edited by Norm were not numbered and so the volume number starts with me. It is time for New Year's Resolutions, so I am resolving to retire before Volume 13. Both Ian S and Ed have done sterling work in the past filling in for my absences. I leave it to you all to decide how to select your new editor and when he/she starts. Please note that I will be overseas from 14 to 28 February and so will not acknowledge reports. Send them in and I will sort out everything when I get back.

BACK CREEK, BOX HILL AND DEAKIN UNIVERSITY 10 JANUARY

Lady luck was with us. Sandwiched between periods of horrible hot weather were 2 beautiful days, one of which was 10 January. Given the perfect day, it was surprising that we only had 5 riders, 3 hardcore DBuggers plus 2 guests from MBTC. Everyone else was down at Rosebud, Phillip island or Lorne?

The pace was quite fast with such a small group. After morning tea at Frogs Hollow we wended our way up leafy Back Creek and along the northern edge of Wattle Park to Deakin University, where we rode their scenic elevated walkways and went both under and over their big metal bridge over Gardiners Creek, which connects the 2 halves of the campus. We had to wheel our bikes through the big foyer which is the only access to the eastern end of said bridge. A few testing hills and we were soon at our lovely lunch spot overlooking the lake at Surrey Park at the possibly record early time of 11.30am!

After lunch was mostly downhill through Box Hill Central, Box Hill Park and down Bushy and Koonung Creek to the Chocolate Shop in Bulleen for afternoon tea, arriving at what I claim to be a record early time of 12.40pm. Tell me if anyone is challenging that claim! No injuries and the only thing approaching a drama was when my brake cable suddenly loosened. After my feeble efforts to fix it myself I had to call in the big guns i.e. Roger and he of course fixed it competently and expeditiously in his usual way.

I must apologise for short-changing the group. We only did 46km, not the advertised 50km. Maybe the 50km allowed for getting lost a few times. Everyone will receive a pro rata refund within 7 days

Jopie

SCOTCHMAN'S CREEK 12 JANUARY

We ride south on Wellington Street and towards the MCG. With the Australian Open starting soon there are some detours and we have to take a rather steep bridge to get across to Swan Sreet.

Morning fog forecast, the city looks very misty in the distance. Onwards to the Yarra pontoons on the Main Yarra Trail then the Gardiners Creek Trail. Lots of bike commuters in a hurry rushing past the seven of us.

It's quieter by the time we stop to break for morning tea. The weather is pleasantly cool and it's still overcast and misty.



AITKEN CREEK 17 JANUARY

Cancelled due to hot weather.

HURSTBRIDGE TO JIKA 19 JANUARY

It was a slightly later start to the summer ride program catching the train from Westgarth to Hurstbridge.

Riders arrived early for the 9.21 train but had to wait for the right train and some riders nearly got on the train to Macleod and then the Greensborough train before

Just past East Malvern station the Scotchman's Creek Trail begins. For a while we snake around next to yet another freeway until the parklands and water retaining basins begin.

All too soon we are in suburban streets and slowly going up Wheelers Hill. At the top we speed down the other side and into Jell's Park for our lunch.

The mist has burnt away and the sun is out and the day is heating up. Our return ride along the Dandenong Creek and Eastlink path takes us north to Heatherdale station. Ed leaves us there to continue to ride further with the other six of us catching the train back.

Another good ride. Distance approximately 53 km.

Report from Sue Hiscock

the right train came along. There were 11 riders so we dispersed along the platform so that the bikes would fit but in the end, I think we were the only passengers who made it all the way end of the line at Hurstbridge.

At Hurstbridge we met David who led us to the start of the trail. The first part of the new bike path to Diamond Creek is very lovely to ride. The path is away from the road and so is very peaceful and it also passes through lovely vegetation. Along the way we passed various walkers including one

intrepid electric skateboard rider who had a dog on the lead running behind him.

At Diamond Creek we stopped at the tramway café for refreshments and a chat. It was a cool morning and the weather was lovely for a ride after the hot 37 o C day Tuesday and then a cold and wet Wednesday.

From Diamond Creek we rode to Finns reserve where we stopped for lunch after a slight diversion in Eltham around the bridges what were washed away. The

After the lunch stop it was an uneventful ride back to Alphington Food Store for afternoon refreshments but a number of riders continued on home. After leaving the coffee stop various riders peeled off so only 2 made it back to Jika to complete the circuit.

GALADA TAMBOORE TRAIL RIDE 24 JANUARY

Eight riders set off from Westgarth a couple of minutes after 9am. On our way to Kensington Station, 8.5km according to Strava, we were joined by Sue. This part of the ride was uneventful.

The train trip to Craigieburn was uneventful, as it should be. The group, now numbering 9, headed northwest away from the railway station hoping to turn right into Hardy Avenue which would then take us to the roundabout and on to the bike paths. However, that plan was short lived as there are major works underway which meant we were forced to go to Craigieburn Road, head west and then find our way through the shopping centre car park to join the bike path north of where the roundabout was.

We continued north to Malcolm Creek Linear Park where we stopped for morning tea. The stress of getting through all the civil work in Craigieburn was too much for one rider, as can be seen in one of the following photos! Guess who?

maggies were keen on lunch and some pestered the riders for a feed.



Ride distance approximately 40 km and finished at about 3pm.

Ed





It was a very pleasant day for a ride with significant cloud cover, though there was the need for sun screen. Riding along the trail was quite easy going and we made good progress. The works at O'Herns Road, which in June 2021 had caused a significant detour, were now complete and we simply went through the underpass to the south side of O'Herns Road and continued along the path. Steve, who was coming from the south then joined us for the remainder of the ride. We made a brief stop at the small reserve which had been the morning tea stop in June 2021.

Continuing south along the trail we made a short stop at City of Whittlesea Public Gardens where new play equipment was being well used, but there were no toilets accessible.

AD HOC RIDE 26 JANUARY

The weather was very comfortable for a bicycle ride. Williamstown was the agreed destination.

We started as seven riders but by morning tea there were only four. Some riders had started with niggling injuries and unfortunately had to retire to the bench. The three had an early morning tea stop in a little park next to Racecourse Road near a lovely memorial dedicated to service men and women. The rest and something to eat



Pressing on south we crossed the Metropolitan Ring Road, here Graeme left us, and headed west to meet up with the Merri Creek Trail. Along the Merri Creek Trail we stopped at Coburg Lake for lunch at approximately 1.30pm.

From Coburg Lake it was a familiar ride with riders leaving the group at various points close to their homes. Roger, Ed and Colin finished the day at Phil's Bakehouse and Café.

Distance covered from Craigieburn Station to Westgarth was 39.4km (Strava). All up distance for both sections was 47.9km (Strava).

Another good ride with no accidents, injuries, punctures or mechanical failures!

Colin



apparently worked wonders and they went off home in their separate directions.

The remaining four of us did a reverse ride via Seddon and Newport Lakes to Williamstown. Passing through Cruickshank Park we stopped at the McNish 'Dinosaur Park' Reserve to have a look at the fabulous Dinosaur slide. Definitely a future morning tea stop.



ELWOOD CANAL 31 JANUARY

Nine riders met under the trees near Westgarth station. Ian S helped me line up the padlock to retrieve the first aid kit and after 'it's 9.05' from Ian H, it was time to set off. Sue and I were the only females today and George joined us at the High Street lights. With school now back we all noticed more traffic on the roads and on the bike path across to the back of the zoo.

While waiting for the rest of the group at Footscray Road, we could smell biscuits baking in Costco. We took the right side bridge across the Yarra to South Wharf and turned east towards Crown casino. After taking the light rail trail to Port Melbourne it was morning teatime at the rotunda. George rode ahead to buy a coffee and met us when we rode past.

We rode up the left side of the Elwood Canal and I asked the group if they wanted to return on the other side. When no one

At Williamstown beach there were lots of people as it was a Public Holiday and a lovely day. Luckily, we found an empty table in the park next to the Botanical Gardens to have our lunch.

Home was via the Bay Trail and Footscray Road path. Road building and overpasses still coming along but lots of progress looks to be made. For a change we rode from the Docklands up Latrobe Street and then Rathdowne/Canning Streets.

It was another good ride. Distance approximately 48 km.

Report from Sue Hiscock

commented, I asked Jopie to lead us to the St Kilda Botanical gardens for lunch. After a lap around Elsternwick Park, Jopie consulted his map and found a direct way to the gardens, avoiding the Nepean Highway.

Seated at our usual lunch tables, we noticed porta loos and a tray truck which had come to collect them. It even looked like the company they used in the movie 'Kenny' It seemed as though there had been an event in the gardens, as we spotted rows of chairs across the little lake.





Our entertainment was watching one man back the truck in and position it so he could put the porta loos on the back. He had obviously done this many times before and we were suitably impressed with this 'one man band'.

SATURDAY RIDES

7 January

Being the first ride of the month we decided to have a look at the elevated rail lines over the cycle paths on the Mernda and Upfield lines. Forecast was good, 30 deg., no rain and plenty of UV. At Rushall Station we had 14 riders come start time.

We headed from Rushall Station over the pedestrian bridge and took McLachlan Street, then followed the railway, as best we could. In Dalziel Lane one of our riders was having trouble with his bike and here 2



Our return trip through Albert Park revealed the beginning of the set up for the grand Prix in March. In the city, Sue bid us goodbye and at Birrarung Marr workers were dismantling temporary construction from the tennis, so a detour was taken. Ian S suggested we ride across some grass, to return to the bridge towards the MCG. Five more departed at Bedggood Café, while Paul, Ian S, David, and I enjoyed coffee before returning to Jika. A pleasant day's ride of 46km.

Report by Nola

riders left us. Just past Oakover Road the rail elevated and path went under the rail, this continued until Murray Road, then we went onto the old path beside the railway line, past Reservoir to Ruthven. Crossed High Street and took Broadhurst Avenue to the Merri Creek.



Our plan was to take our coffees at O'Hea Road Bakery but it has only been doing takeaways, no seated service, so we were advised. After consultation it was decided to take refreshments at Pentridge. We followed the Merri to Newlands Road and crossed into Pentridge. The establishment

14 January

Because the forecast involved a maximum temperature of 37 degrees, the start was brought forward to 8.30 am. The ride was scheduled to be the usual Port Melbourne run, but before we started, we agreed to cut out the loop south of the Yarra and to have coffee at the Botanic Gardens cafe.

Reg and Georgie, with Georgie's brother Manny, Ivan and George were at Rushall at 8.30. If anyone turned up there later, they haven't told us - we did have a few apologies. Sandra and Anne set out to meet us at Caps, having missed a message to meet us at the Botanic Gardens. (They were able to tell the crew at Caps that we wouldn't be coming, which was just as well, as their fridge had broken down.)

The first leg of the ride was pleasant, and not too hot. We arrived at the Morell Bridge, and walked our bikes into a throng at the Terrace cafe. Reg remarked that on a Tuesday, it's usually deserted. We found

we lobbed at, didn't sell hot food, some settled for what was offered while others searched for more acceptable food. Eventually we regrouped with 2 riders electing to continue their repass and make their own way home.

The remaining 10 riders crossed Sydney Road to O'Hea Street and continued down the Upfield Trail, passing under the trainline at Bell St and continuing to Moreland Rd. Just after Park St we joined the Inner Circle and about 5 riders arrived back at Rushall, the rest having dropped off as we neared their respective homes. A very pleasant ride a little shorter than usual.

David Downing

coffee, snacks and seats, and after a while Sandra and Anne found us, and took the sensible (but heartless) precaution of chaining their bikes to ours.

After coffee, we split up. Sandra and Anne returned to South Yarra and the original party headed back for what some call North Yarra. We ran into the only real setback of the day, which was that the path around the MCG had been closed off for the tennis. Who do these people think they are? We decided to avoid the humpback bridge just east of the MCG, instead riding along Swan Street to Punt Road, under the railway bridge and back along Brunton Avenue and through Yarra Park to Clarendon Street.

Then we rode without further incident back to Rushall, having covered about 24 km, some of the distance saved by not going to Port Melbourne being offset by our unexpected trip to Prahran. By that time, the heat had become obvious, and we thankfully went our various ways.

George Durbridge

21 January

Forecast 24 deg. no rain. This Saturday was to be our usual ride from Rushall Station to Royal Park, via Capital City Trail to Docklands then Westgate Park and coffee at Caps Port Melbourne, then return via Light Rail Trail, MCG and back to Rushall Station again. We had 8 riders at Rushall Station and picked up 1 more at Royal Park and another at Caps.

The ride down was very pleasant. We took refreshments at Caps and returned via the City, where 2 riders left us. The remaining 8 riders arrived back at Rushall, without further incident.

David Downing

28 January

In the light of a forecast of 35 deg., for this Saturday the ride started at 8.30 instead of the usual 9.30. We had 4 starters at Rushall Station and we picked up 3 more at Royal Park. It was expected that the temperature wouldn't get too hot until the ride was well over and at this hour of the morning the conditions were very pleasant.

Toilet stop at Docklands and onto Southbank where we were hit by strong gusting head wind, which became a cross wind on Lorimer Street. As we got to Westgate Park the wind disappeared as quick as it had arrived. At Caps we were

joined by 2 more riders and we all took refreshments.

Having regard to the forecast we didn't spend too much time dallying over our coffees and headed back. At the City we lost 6 riders and the remaining 3 riders made good time heading back to Rushall Station arriving at 11.45, when the temperature had reached 30 deg. A very pleasant no sweat ride.

David Downing