

# WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



## SATURDAY RIDING GROUP

**2 JUNE**

(This report came in after June WW was distributed)

Being the first ride of the month it was planned to ride the Anniversary Trail. Come 9.30 in steady rain, we had 5 starters but not an urge to venture out. So we drowned our sorrows over a cup of coffee. At about 10.30 the weather cleared and it was decided to ride to Port Melbourne and return by the shortest routes.

In brilliant sunshine, we headed down through Edinburgh Gardens, Napier Street, the MCG, and the Light Rail Trail to Port Melbourne. Here we had our next coffee and planned the return route.

The return ride took us along the Light Rail Trail again to the city but we then headed up Swanston Street, Queensberry Street and Canning Street to the Capital City Trail and back to Rushall.

Not our most interesting ride of the month but we got out, the weather relented and we enjoyed a lovely sunny ride.

Report from David D

## BRIMBANK PARK

**1 JULY**

The leader was dreaming. He turned up at Jika Jika at 8.50 and found no riders waiting before realizing that it was winter and the ride started at 9.30, so it was time to head off to Phil's for an early morning coffee.

By 9.30 eight riders were keen to tackle the ride back to Brimbank Park in the cool misty/drizzly conditions.

We headed off along the Capital City Trail and soon joined the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail for an event free ride up to the morning tea stop at Boeing Reserve where we found Franca and Bruce patiently waiting in the rotunda.

After a good chat we got back on the bikes and headed up Boeing Road and up the long hill under the Calder Freeway and onto the Western Ring Road bike path past Caterpillar and saw lots of junk along the Ring Road before eventually arriving at Brimbank Park. It was a quick ride down the big hill before pedalling on to the lunch stop at the southern edge of the park.

After lunch we joined the Maribyrnong River Trail and rode on the recently upgraded path and past lots of lovely redgum trees along the river. We stopped at rock ford across the river and Jopie tested out the wet rocks but wisely decided it would be too hard for the group with bicycles to cross over the river.



We did cross the river a couple more times on the ride and eventually headed up through the old Newmarket Saleyards for a stop at the Autumn Leaves café next to Newmarket Railway Station where Roger headed for the train. After a good chat, on the ride back various riders departed leaving only the two lads, Jon and Colin to complete the circuit of about 57 km. Luckily there was no rain on the ride.

Report by Ed

## **WATTLE PARK 3 JULY**

With the prediction of showers clearing during the morning the 5 riders who gathered at Jika Jika were pleased that there were no showers.

We made our way by a familiar route to the Anniversary Trail which we took to Riversdale Park Playground for morning tea. Here Pam St, who had missed us at the start, joined Roger, James, Sue, Ian H and myself.

Continuing on after morning tea we crossed the railway line at Hartwell Station and followed George Street to Toorak Road to rejoin the Anniversary Trail via Summerhill Road and Central Court, Roger left the group to catch a train at Ashburton Station and Pam St left to catch a train at Alamein Station.

The remaining 4 continued along Ashburn Grove and Markham Avenue to ride along the Gardiners Creek Trail heading east. While riding along this trail a fox was spotted between the fence and the creek. The leader missed a turn off Gardiners Creek Trail and was forced to take an alternative route to finally arrive safely at Wattle Park for lunch.

After lunch we set off down Alandale Street, Park Road, Boisdale Street and Broughton Road to Canterbury Road which we crossed before taking Balmoral Crescent and St Georges Avenue to cross Mont Albert Road to then go along Beresford Street and High Street to cross Whitehorse Road/Maroondah Highway. On the north side we proceeded along Laing Street, Victoria Crescent and Rostrevor Parade to Belmore Road. The last stretch up to Belmore Road was quite strenuous and required a breather before crossing Belmore Road.

Once across Belmore Road we took McColl Road, Williamson Road and Jackson Avenue to arrive at the Koonung Creek Trail.

Each time we ride along the Koonung there seems to be more land taken for the road works and more detours into residential areas. Thanks to Sue for her guidance as she had recently navigated the detours.

We decided to proceed on to the Alphington Food Store for refreshments before the final push for home with riders leaving as they got close to home.

An enjoyable day's ride with no rain, no accidents and minimum misdirection.

Approximately 46.5km.

Report by Colin

## **SATURDAY RIDING GROUP 5 JULY**

The riders the previous Saturday had decided that Williamstown was the popular choice for the 1st Saturday ride in July, provided the wind and sun were forecast to do the decent thing.

Come the Thursday before the 5th, the forecast was for 16 deg. and next to no wind, so Williamstown was it. Come Saturday 9.30, it was a very cold start and I only had 3 other riders at Rushall and I picked up one more at Royal Park, making 6 riders in all, including myself.

The sun was out if filtered a little by high cirrus clouds but it did add a degree of comfort.

We took our usual route, Flemington Bridge, Stubbs Street, under the Railway line, past the old Town Hall. Into the Cattle Yard Estate, my favourite section of the ride. From previous rides I knew the toilets at Yarraville Gardens were being renovated and the toilets near the Yacht Club at Williamstown had been destroyed by vandals, so I chose to ride about half a kilometre the other way to a playground that had 3 toilets for our toilet break but when we arrived only one was functioning but with so few riders, we weren't held up long.

Resuming the ride along the Maribyrnong we noticed work was progressing on the Yarraville Gardens toilet block. The sun was starting to struggle through and the ride was becoming more comfortable. When we got to the Williamstown Yacht Club we observed the public toilets had been completely restored. Well done Council!

Schwabs Gallery was our chosen coffee palace and sitting on the footpath in the sun was most pleasant. For our return ride, we were unsure what awaited us, from Footscray to the Moonee Ponds Trail. So we decided to play it as we found it. The ride to Footscray had now warmed up lifting our mood accordingly. Crossed over the Maribyrnong on the bike path, we were prevented from following the path to Dynon Road, so we decided to ride New Footscray Road and hope we could get through. The path was mostly the old path that followed the road but we were all amazed by the extent of the work that has been undertaken. Elevated roadways and what looks like suspended cycle paths, it was all very impressive and I look forward to the opening.

It turned into a very pleasant ride with lots of interest in the return ride. We got back about 2.15 pm.

### **WARNING**

We are all aware of the hazard of tram tracks, recently when returning toward the City along the Light Rail Trail at the back of the South Melbourne Tram Depot. One of our rider's wheels fell into the moveable points part of the track and bent his wheel rim, such that he had to remove his front brakes, in order to ride on the wobbly wheel. The wheel wasn't warped, it was bent and with rim brakes I don't feel it is recoverable.

### **PORT MELBOURNE, ST KILDA PIER, ALBERT PARK AND FITZROY GARDENS 8 JULY**

Victoria's BIG BUILD led to cancellation of the scheduled ride Belgrave to Dandenong. Fortunately on Friday I checked for Metro Planned Works. Belgrave line was fine but found that buses were replacing trains on the Cranbourne line. Would have been embarrassing to roll up at Dandenong Station after afternoon tea. As the weather forecast for Tuesday didn't look great especially in the afternoon, I decided on a shortish ride with scope for change depending on the weather.

Just as we were about to set off Barbara messaged that she was stuck mid station on a Mernda line train due to a police incident. We waited about 15 minutes but Barbara was still stuck so we set off taking Capital City Trail and Sandridge Trail to the bandstand at Port Melbourne. Some notable cycling improvements on the way were the widened path at the St Georges Road crossing and the new (open for about 3 months) bridge over Footscray Road. It was a bit breezy at morning tea. Jon headed home after morning tea.

Next up was the new St Kilda Pier where we looked at every sign to ascertain if it was ok to ride on the pier and found no signs so we rode out on the almost deserted pier. At the end of the pier there is extensive signage which indicates cycling is prohibited. We took the opportunity for a walk to explore the penguin viewing boardwalk.





As expected, no penguins due to the time. Some rode back along the pier and some walked in what was a very strong gusting side wind. It was agreed that the prudent option would be lunch at Albert Park Lake and then head back to Jika Jika via Moray Street, Birrarung Marr and Wellington Street with riders breaking off at convenient points for home. The ride was about 35 km.

Report by Ian S

## **BLACKBURN LAKE (REVERSED)**

### **10 JULY**

The weather forecast for the day was so dire that I thought no one else would turn up at Jika Jika. However, four other riders appeared. Were we keen riders or mad fools?

The ride was to Blackburn Lake but for a change in the reverse direction. Next to Chandler Highway, we were able to ride on the new shared path on the eastern-side footpath. Down through to Hays Paddock and onto the Kooyong Creek Trail. The freeway works continuing to carve bits off the parklands and adding in detours off the path.

Stopping at Elgar Park for our morning tea we caught a bit of sun but also a brief shower as we were ready to go again.

Up through the Bushy Creek path and backstreets to the Box Hill /Ringwood path. Slightly early for lunch we took a spin around Blackburn Lake before settling down for lunch.



After lunch we rode back to Jika Jika via the Gardiners Creek & Anniversary Trails. At Alamein Station Roger left to get on the train. The rest of us stopped at a Hartwell café for hot drinks and sweet treats before heading on back to Jika Jika.

Considering the BOM forecast for the day we were lucky to get some short sunny spells and only intermittent light showers.

Another good ride. Approx. 53km back to Jika Jika

Report by Sue

## **WOLLERT, EPPING NORTH AND EDGARS CREEK**

### **15 JULY**

The evening before the ride I learnt that a train derailment at Clifton Hill had closed the Mernda line to Reservoir. This was inconvenient as we were to catch the train from Merri Station to Epping. Texts and emails flew around and we arranged to still meet at Merri at the same time and ride the extra 7km to Reservoir. To compensate distance wise I took a much more direct route back from our afternoon loo stop at Edwardes Lake so that the total distance was much the same as the advertised one. The more direct route was the north-south shimmy shown on the Darebin Travelsmart map and it worked well.

We had 10 riders, 7 riding to Reservoir and 3 joining at Epping. Roger unfortunately decided that due to impossible logistics and some range anxiety he would dip out on this one. The weather was cold, not even making it to 13, so we stayed rugged up all day. We copped one brief shower in the afternoon that wasn't forecast. A brief summary of the ride would be lots of creek valleys & drainage lines, concrete bike paths through subdivision parklands, lots of connecting streets and lots of nice trees. No punctures, accidents or other dramas and once again the first aid kit, thankfully was unused.

Report by Jopie

## **SUNSHINE AND KOROROIT CREEK TRAILS LOOP 17 JULY**

Despite the poor weather forecast in the lead up to this ride, conditions were not dire enough to call it off nor dampen the enthusiasm of the six participants. We (Sue, Pam, Ian H, Ed and Jon) hurtled west along the Capital City Trail to morning tea near the toilet block on the Maribyrnong River opposite Flemington Racecourse. As you can see from the image below it was too cold to take even helmets off at this juncture!



Pam headed home and we continued westward towards Sunshine and the Kororoit Creek. Before we knew it we had arrived at Newport Lakes for lunch. Afternoon tea soon followed at the Milking Station in Footscray and a few light showers accompanied us home along the Maribyrnong River and back along the Capital City Trail. The usual people peeled off at the usual places and Ian H kindly returned the 1st aid kit to Jika Jika so I didn't even make it to the official finish. Thanks for coming!

Report by Gael

## **LETTER TO THE AGE 20 JULY**

Re “[All e-bikes should be registered same as motorcycles: coroner](#)”, 20/7.

Over 20 years ago, after retirement, I started riding regularly with a bicycle users' group. Normally, around 12 of us ride about 40-60 kilometres around Melbourne's bike trails. We ride on roads only when necessary and to the minimum.

About 15 years ago, one or two of our older members bought e-bikes and extended their riding days into their 80s. After my 70th birthday, I had my bike converted to an e-bike. I have to pedal before power cuts in, and it cuts out at 25km/h. It provides a much-needed boost to ride up hills and helps to keep up with the group.

At present, nearly half of our riders have legal electric bikes, some converted, some purpose-built. Some riders are well past 80. Power assistance enables us to keep exercising as pedalling is still required. Accidents are rare.

The recent fatality involving an illegal electric bike has prompted the suggestion that all e-bikes should be registered, insured and presumably riders licensed. This will put an end to the riding days for people like myself. I strongly urge that the current law be enforced to control more powerful machines, and that legal e-bike riders be left alone.

**David Maunders, Hurstbridge**

## **CRAIGIEBURN & BROADMEADOWS VALLEY – RIDE/TRAIN/RIDE 22 JULY**

The weather looked threatening and after a dry start the rain settled in with us arriving at Pascoe Vale Station fairly wet! With much hope that the Train to Craigieburn might see us pass through the cold front, however we arrived in heavy wind and rain sheltering for m/t, finding a dry spot in Craigieburn Gardens. Everyone bravely was happy to continue and we set off via the Broadmeadows Valley Trail. It's a pleasant trail! Lunch at the Adelaide Boulevard Playground, Gowanbrae. This was a great spot and good rain shelter!



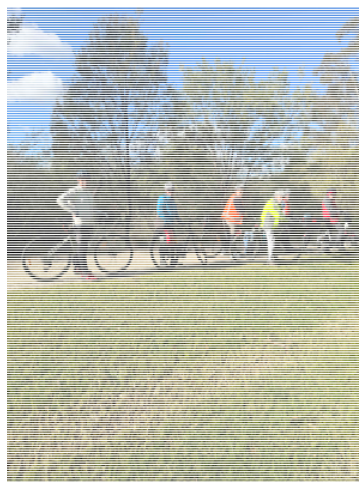
Continued back via the Merri Creek Trail with the rain easing through Northcote! Certainly an adventurous day!

Report by Jon

## **HEATHERDALE TO DANDENONG 24 JULY**

From different directions 7 of us gathered at Ringwood Station to travel to Heatherdale to commence our odyssey. A short ride on the Mullum Mullum trail led us to Sherbrooke Park for morning tea in the pleasant winter sunshine.

The end of the trail led us through streets passing across Croydon to the Tarralla path ending at Canterbury Rd, where we crossed over to hit the Dandenong Creek Trail leading us to lunch at Jells Park.



*This photo does not copy to pdf clearly but I left it in anyway*

After sitting in the sunshine we followed The Dandenong Creek Trail following the Dandenong Creek all the way to The Princess Highway and Dandenong Station close by, taking some of us to Richmond Station and the rest to the city to go home.

On such a beautiful winters day we managed 60km or so.

Report by Ian H

## **RIDERS CHOICE – ROSSTOWN TRAIL**

### **29 JULY**

This Tuesday's ride was a riders' choice, so a bit of discussion and agreement before we could ride away. The winning suggestion on the day was to ride to the Rosstown trail in Carnegie, Glenhuntly, etc coming back on the Bay trail.

For winter the weather forecast was good, sunny with light winds. We stopped at Riversdale Park on the Anniversary trail for our morning tea. We left the Anniversary Trail at East Malvern and rode through to Hughesdale Station and the Djerring Trail. Turning towards the city we rode along until Caulfield, turning onto Queens Avenue next to Caulfield Racecourse. Queens Avenue has a newish shared path and is very pleasant to ride on. A shared path continues past Glenhuntly Station and then a turn off to EE Gunn Reserve where we had our lunch.



*This photo does not copy to pdf clearly but I left it in anyway*

That got us onto the Rosstown Trail and through to Elsternwick.

To return we rode along next to the Elwood Canal, taking the Bay Trail through to Port Melbourne. A couple of riders left us along the way but the remaining four of us ended up sitting in the sun at South on Johnston Café in Collingwood.

Another good ride. Approx. 50km back to Jika Jika

Report from Sue

## **RIDERS CHOICE**

### **31 JULY**

It was great to be able to ride again having missed a month due to buses replacing trains on the Hurstbridge line. Only four male riders appeared: Roger, George, Vangel and myself.

Roger suggested we celebrate the return of trains by riding to Eltham and coming back on the train. This allowed me to ride home to Hurstbridge along the Diamond Creek Trail.

All four of us were electrically powered so we rode at a steady pace. We had a discussion about the proposals to register all electric bikes and for Metro to ban train travel with electric bikes. George commented that it may never happen so let us hope he is right. For many of us this would put an end to many of our riding options.

I had a letter printed in *The Age* on this subject. (See copy earlier in WW)

We stopped for morning tea at Possum Park. Temperature was up to 11 degrees by then with some sun. There were few pre-schoolers around, in all likelihood put off by the cold.



*We found we could fit four into a selfie!*

We continued on into Westerfolds Park. Roger stated his need for a kangaroo photo. There were only three around but that seemed to be enough.



We continued to Eltham and had lunch by the playground close to the new toilets. From there it was only a couple of minutes to the station where three train back and I rode a further 12km to Hurstbridge.

Report by David M

Is cycling more efficient than walking? Do you understand why pedalling feels so much easier than pounding the pavement? The answer lies in the elegant biomechanics of how our bodies interact with this two-wheeled machine. This is the subject of this recent article from "The Conversation". How elegant are your biomechanics? Find out from their online newsletter ...

[theconversation.com/cycling-can-be-4-times-more-efficient-than-walking-a-biomechanics-expert-explains-why](http://theconversation.com/cycling-can-be-4-times-more-efficient-than-walking-a-biomechanics-expert-explains-why)

(This above link will need to be typed into a web browser as pdfs don't support Ctrl+Click actions)  
It might help you to cope better with hills, especially on Jopie's rides!