

WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



SATURDAY RIDING GROUP 2 AUGUST

After limited discussions the previous Saturday, it was decided to ride to Macleod and return by the Main Yarra Trail. The forecast was not too bad, with a cold start building up to 15 deg, and no rain. Come start time, the sun was shining weakly through high cloud and we had 9 starters at Rushall Station.

Heading along South Crescent, we picked up another rider at Northcote, bringing our number up to 10. Along Wingrove Street to Darebin Parklands where we had our toilet stop and another rider joined us, now 11. As we moved on the sun shone through and started to warm us, perhaps only psychologically but it was very pleasant. Good progress to La Trobe Uni. But as usual we got a little lost among the bendy paths at the Uni, by heading in the general direction, we knew. We found ourselves on Forensic Drive and Waiora Road. Just a short ride or for some of us a frenetic swoop, down the hill, into the Macleod shopping centre.

We picked our coffee spot, placed our orders and conversed. It must have been their rush hour, as coffees and food trickled out of the kitchen but eventually all orders were fulfilled.

After a protracted refreshment break, we headed off. Bus services were replacing trains from Macleod, so no early exits by train were available.

We resumed our ride. Having ridden this ride, fairly recently, we knew our way round to cross Lower Plenty Road at the pedestrian bridge. This put us on the River Gum Walk, which I find very attractive with gentle undulations through attractive open bush land. Ending at Banksia Street and where we join the Main Yarra Trail. This part of the ride was handled without too much trouble, most topped the golf links hill, in their stride. Chandler Hwy, crossed and riders trickled away with 4 of us arriving back at Rushall at about 2.15 pm. After having traveling about 33kms and temperature about 15 deg.

Report by David D

HURSTBRIDGE 5 AUGUST

The sun was shining for our ride out to Hurstbridge and someone noted it was 10 degrees.

Quite a group was waiting as I arrived at Jika Jika. Franca and Bruce had returned from their WA trip, while Mary and Michael came for their first ride after their travels in France. Lovely to see Jan and Vangel join us again. Steve agreed to go tail as 13 of us headed towards Fairfield. At Station Street, we were joined by Jon, making our group 14.

Our first drink stop was at the beginning of The Boulevard, then we changed gears for the steady rise up the hill. We rejoined the Main Yarra Trail after the Eaglemont Tennis club. While it was great to hear the birds and the flowing river, we mainly concentrated on dodging the many puddles from the previous night's rain. Soon we could hear the traffic and before long it was morning tea at Possum Park.



Several people availed themselves of the coffees and hot chocolates served by the café, while others brought out their thermoses with warm drinks. Mary chatted with Ken about his Scandinavian holiday, as she had once lived in Sweden for a while.

We continued on the Main Yarra Trail around the Banyule swamp, where Sue told me later, she had spotted quite a mob of kangaroos. I had missed them, being too busy dodging puddles again. I did point out the old Banyule homestead to Mary. It certainly makes a majestic view from its hilltop position above the swamp.

Approaching Bonds Road, a large school group was riding towards us so we gave them right of way, regrouping across the road and up the hill. The next section comprised several down and up hills requiring gear changes, concentration and extra effort. We paused at the top of the last one in Westerfolds Park to catch our breath and have a drink, then sailed down for the next km and stopped at the toilets.

The ride into Eltham was pleasant with lorikeets flying past and magpies singing. On arrival at Edendale farm, there were a couple of large school groups, including one occupying our usual lunch spot. So, we walked our bikes back to the track, crossed the bridge and found picnic tables at Eltham North Adventure playground. Last week Steve and Ian had kept our small group amused, especially when Steve commented on Ian's eyebrows.

I told Sue that I think Ian's had them trimmed since last week. Sure enough, as Ian hardly looks in the mirror [so he tells us], he had Ailsa trim them.

Our afternoon ride to Diamond Creek, Wattle Glen and finally Hurstbridge took under an hour. Some members had never ridden this last 7km across 9 bridges of the Diamond Creek.

A late wrong turn by your truly resulted in a turn around and back track, with Sue leading the way to the station. Unfortunately, the 1.20 train left as we arrived. Seven of us elected to have coffee at the French Lettuce, while the others waited at the station. As the next train was at 2pm, they were still on the station when we arrived. We spread out for the train trip home, while Ken rode to Eltham and caught a train from there. I left my gloves on the train – thanks to Sue and Wolter for collecting them. A good day's ride of 40km.

Report by Nola

BRIGHTON BEACH 7 AUGUST

We started the day in lovely winter sunshine, albeit very cold after a cloudless night. Leaving Jika Jika we followed Westgarth Street and Merri Parade to the Capital City Trail. At Flemington Bridge we joined the Moonee Ponds Trail and headed towards Footscray Road. Arriving at Footscray Road we turned left towards the city, crossed the new green bridge and on towards Harbour Esplanade and Docklands. At the river we crossed Webb Bridge to South Wharf Promenade. Soon we turned off South Wharf Promenade and travelled beside Lorimer Street, under City Link and behind Jeff's Shed to Normanby Avenue. After a short ride along Normanby Avenue we reached the path beside the light rail tracks which we followed to Beacon Cove. Morning tea was at our usual spot on Port Melbourne Beach, the Port Melbourne Band Rotunda.



After morning tea we head off along Beaconsfield Parade towards St Kilda Beach. We had a brief stop here to watch the skydivers descending towards Elwood.



On our way again we rode past Elwood Beach, Middle Brighton Baths and Denny Street Beach. Our lunch stop was Green Point, where rather than sit in the picnic shelter we made the most of the sun and the city view by sitting at picnic tables.



After lunch we retraced our steps to Cowderoy Street, where we turned right towards Albert Park Lake. After crossing Canterbury Road we entered Albert Park Lake Reserve and followed the Western Bike Path to MSAC, we crossed Aughtie Drive, passed behind Lakeside stadium, and crossed Albert Road to Moray Street. From Moray Street we turned onto Queensbridge Road and after arriving at the Casino onto Southbank Promenade. We stayed on Southbank Promenade for only a short while before turning onto Southbank Boulevard. After crossing St Kilda Road we followed Linlithgow Avenue to The Tan. We followed The Tan to Anderson Street, where we turned left, crossed Alexandra Avenue and Morell Bridge to Goschs Paddock. From here we made our way to Swan Street. After crossing Swan Street we made our way through the tennis centre complex, past the MCG to Clarendon Street.

We rode along Clarendon Street, across Victoria Parade and into the lanes and small streets leading to afternoon tea at *South of Johnston*.

Following afternoon tea it was a short ride to Wellington Street, which we followed towards Northcote, riders departing for home along the way.

Ride distance 50 km.

Report by Andrew

JELLS PARK 12 AUGUST

Our trip to Jells Park started early at Westgarth Station. Nola and Jon were already on the train when it arrived. Michael, Mary, Ian H, Bruce and Franca got on the train with me. We met Colin at Jolimont and then Roger and Ed at Richmond. I was hoping to get the 9:13 am train to Ringwood since it was an express. When I got to the platform the train was due in only two minutes but we all caught the express.

From Ringwood we rode east and found the level crossing had been replaced. When we arrived at Dandenong Creek we turned east and had morning tea and a toilet break at the Marie Wallace Park that only added about 3 km of riding.



From there it was a pleasant and easy ride along Dandenong Creek to Jells Park South for lunch. It was a moderately cold day with a northerly wind so the trip south to Jells Park was pretty easy. After lunch as we passed Chesterfield Farm we turned into the wind. The ride up hill with a headwind along the Freeway was challenging until the turn off to the Blind Creek Trail. There was less protection from the wind along this path than I expected.

We stopped briefly at the Tim Neville Arboretum before returning to the rail trail. Some of us had coffee at a small shop on the east side of Boronia Station while we waited for the 2pm train.

Colin and Ian decided to keep riding. Some riders stayed on the train when I got off at Richmond with Jon, Michael and Mary. The showers that were promised by the Bureau were not a problem. There was some brief drizzle while we were on the train coming home and a tiny amount after I left Richmond. About 48 km starting and finishing at Jika Jika. This ride has a very low amount of on road riding. There was a small amount crossing Hoddle Street to Richmond Station, a short run along Bedford Road at Ringwood Station and another short section at Boronia.

Report by James

WARRANDYTE – POUND BEND RESERVE 14 AUGUST

First time ride, and with a truly delightful day we started off on the other side of the Westgarth Station from normal, to catch the train to Eltham. We rode over to the Main Yarra Trail & onto Pettys Orchard café for morning drinks and a few apple slices. It was fairly busy with 3 bike groups there.



Then onto Beasleys Nursery via the Mullum Mullum Trail. Then the hill climbing began with a large hill to traverse over to Pound Bend State Park. The hill descending into the park is also a steep descent down to the river.



Lunch in the park by the river was certainly delightful! However we had to return back over the hill but from a steeper climb! Fortunately there are some quiet back streets! Then back to Jika Jika via the normal Yarra Trail.

Report by Jon

WILLIAMSTOWN 19 AUGUST

13 riders gathered at Jika Jika for the start of a familiar ride. The sun was out and it promised to be a superb day for a ride.

We took the familiar route along the Inner Circle Rail trail, picking 2 more riders along the way. Then it was along the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail to make our way to Footscray Road where we admired the construction which looked to be nearing completion. Morning tea was at Yarraville Gardens.

The ride along Bay Trail West was pleasant as we cruised along enjoying the water views and the wonderfully pleasant weather.

As we arrived at the lunch spot early I decided to continue on further before turning back to stop at the barbeque at Williamstown Beach for lunch.

Once lunch was completed we returned by the same route as far as Yarraville Gardens where we continued along Hyde Street towards Footscray Station and then stopping at Footscray Milking Station for refreshments.

The final stages of the ride followed Maribyrnong River, through Kensington and back along the Capital City Trail to Jaka Jaka.

All in all a truly relaxed ride on a glorious day! Ride distance just under 50km.

Report by Colin

WESTMEADOWS WITH VIEWS 21 AUGUST

12 keen riders arrived at Jaka Jaka on a cold but sunny morning. We welcomed Rob, a new rider.

We headed off on the Capital City Trail and followed a new route to the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail that involved a bit of rough surface, but everyone survived.

Much to some riders surprise we went past Boeing Reserve and stopped at Adelaide Boulevard Playground for morning tea.



Carrying on heading north on the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail to the Ring Road then up to Gladstone Park to enjoy the views. On to Westmeadows Reserve for an early lunch where we admired an early summer sun bather in the middle of the oval!

Heading back south on the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail we avoided the Jacana hill and took some back streets to Jacana Station. We headed off the Ring Road path to join the Upfield Path and stopped to have afternoon tea at Merlynston.

Riders slowly peeled off as we headed back to Jaka Jaka with just Wolter and Ian left in the end.

I did enjoy the banter between Wolter and Ian re the ever changing supermarkets in Fairfield.

We also bumped into Ed heading the other way!

Report by Graham

KEW BOULEVARD & CAPITAL CITY TRAIL 26 AUGUST

The ride for 26 August was thwarted twice. Firstly by PTV doing works on the Frankston line making the programmed Braeside & Watergardens ride impossible. Secondly, by the weather. The replacement ride to Caroline Springs & Kororoit Creek was not suitable or viable with a forecast of 3-20mm of rain and howling winds. So I opted for a shorter non train ride with options for bailing out to a station if the weather became too horrid.

As it turned out, the forecast on the day improved to 0-10mm rain but still super windy. The actual weather turned out to be no significant rain but we did cop the howling winds.

As expected, only a small bunch, 4 to be precise, Jopie, Roger, Ken & Colin, to be even more precise, turned up. And the wind blew. To our advantage as we barrelled down Kew Boulevard and along the Yarra till we headed west when it was more sideways and then in Docklands where twice we copped the wind tunnel effect as we headed straight into a monstrous northerly funnelling between tall buildings so that some of us had to get off and push our bikes. The rest of the ride was more sheltered and more manageable. Morning tea was at a table in a noisy spot south of the river and lunch was in Royal Park.

In summary, about 35km, no punctures or accidents, home before 1pm and windy as hell.

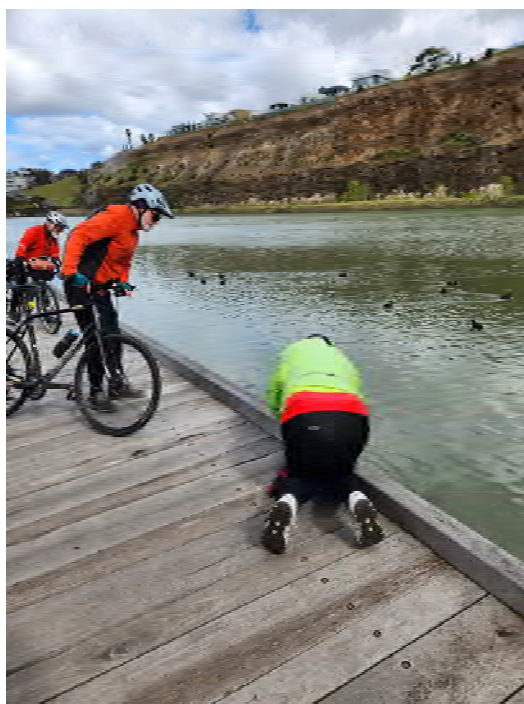
Report by Jopie

STEELE CREEK TRAIL 28 AUGUST

It was a miserable forecast a few days before the ride, indicating frequent showers and rain but on the morning of the ride it was cool and overcast with a light breeze blowing. Seven riders set off from Jika Jika towards the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail, with 4 riders having some extra power to help them along. It was also the last ride for Franca and Bruce before they headed off to the Northern hemisphere for another winter. Along the way Franca realized that she has forgotten her water bottle so noble Bruce headed back home up the Upfield path to find it and catch up at the morning tea stop.

The riding was pleasant and not far from Essendon airport we met Harry walking with his bike, so he said he would join us for morning tea at Boeing Reserve. On arrival, the rotunda was full with a walking group so we stopped by the nearby Strathmore Heights Cricket club picnic tables for a welcome chat and catch up with Harry.

After the break, George left to head home while the rest rode along the Western Ring Road until we passed under the Calder Freeway then did a sharp turn to find the start of the Steele Creek Trail. We stopped for lunch at Valley Lake after a brief scenic ride around the lake over the rough planks, and then attempted to solve the problems of the world and the implications of the current administration in the USA and the effect on Australia. During the discussion a gust of wind blew David's lunch snack wrapper into the water, so it was interesting watching him try to retrieve it without going for a swim. Lucky for him he succeeded.



After lunch we continued along the lovely Steel Creek Trail with lots of wattles in flower, and soon joined the Maribyrnong Trail and rode past the Angler's Tavern to stop outside Newmarket Station for some refreshment. It was here that David & Roger headed off to the train, Franca and Bruce headed home, while Ian and Ed had coffee at Autumn Leaves Café. While heading back to Jika Jika Ian headed off to get more spice for in his life at the Indian shop in Nicholson Street leaving one lone cyclist to continue towards Jika Jika and complete the 44km ride by 2.45. The rain came down at 3pm.

PS

Magpie season is coming soon, and look how the magpies are preparing?



Report by Ed

ARTWORK UPDATE

Some of you may remember the 19 June ride when we stopped at the George Pepperell Pavilion in Glen Iris Park beside Gardiners Creek. Then we saw an artist at work on the water fountain. Here are images of the completed work, very impressive.

