

WOBBLY WHEELS

Darebin BUG Mid-week Riders' Blog



ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS AND ST KILDA BOTANIC GARDENS 4 NOVEMBER

Despite the forecast of rain I was pleasantly surprised to find a total of 10 riders at Jika Jika. There had been a lot of rain earlier in the morning, but it had all cleared by the time I left home. We had to cross the Merri Creek at High Street, because the low bridge on the bike path nearby was closed due to the high level in the creek. Perhaps because it was Cup Day there were many joggers along the Yarra Trail. It did rain lightly just after the Walmer Street Bridge and we stopped to put on rain gear. By the time everyone had changed, had a chat a few minutes later the rain had stopped. The rain held off and we stopped for morning tea at the Royal Botanical Gardens and sat with a view of the lake. Riding along the tan and Southbank Boulevard we went along the path to Station Pier where two cruise ships were parked/docked. We noticed that there were not many people on the foreshore and beach at St Kilda. We rode along a short section of the Elwood Canal and then picked up Tennyson Street to approach the St Kilda Botanic Gardens from the south. Ed and I stopped to look at the roses which were very nice but were suffering from the recent heavy rains. Lunch was nearby at the usual spot where we were entertained by a young man who alleged he was a bike mechanic and spent a fair bit of time looking at a few of our bikes and telling us many facts about them. We went back to the Bay Trail and rode to the city via Albert Park Lake and Moray Street. At one point on the lake there were many black swans with grey fluffy cygnets. Sue and Roger left us in the city and we pressed on to coffee at South of Johnston where we sat outside under a large umbrella which mostly kept the light rain off us.



Distance back to Jika Jika was about 46 km.

Report by James

ROSSTOWN TRAIL 6 NOVEMBER

From the Anniversary Trail ten of us unpacked our drinks and snacks at Riversdale Reserve for morning tea. Leaving Pam behind we headed for Hughesdale Station and the Djerring Trail. Following the railway stations Murrumbeena and Carnegie all the way to Royal Avenue, passing Glen Huntley Station and finally EE Gunn Reserve for lunch.



After lunch we piloted ourselves along the leafy backstreets to Elsternwick, crossing the Nepean Highway to the nearby Elwood Canal and the Bay Trail. We crossed the city to the Fitzroy Gardens for afternoon tea which was a relief after the gusty headwinds.

Riders dropped off along the ride home leaving just me to drop off the sacred green bag to Jika Jika.

Congrats to our new rider Kate.

55kms

Report by Ian H

AXEDALE TO BENDIGO 11 NOVEMBER

With a few of our regular riders unwell or recovering from surgery, plus a few apologies, only three DBUG members, Ian S, Roger and Michael made the early start from Melbourne in rain for the trip to Axedale. Ralph and I had stayed with his brother and sister-in-law in Huntly for 3 nights, so it was only 25 minutes to Axedale on a cool morning. We were surprised to see the others had already arrived. Michael was changing into bike gear, while Ian and Roger discovered the coffee shop. I was glad for my beanie and gloves as the wind was certainly cool.

Setting off through the back streets of Axedale, Ian stopped suddenly, remembering he had left his lunch in the car. We waited for him in the sun. Ralph led with me on tail to our first stop at Axedale station for a photo.



We decided it was too early for morning tea, so we rode on through the forest up the gentle inclines, listening to the magpies singing. It felt like a crosswind, with a touch of headwind, so we eagerly anticipated our tail wind return. A new toilet block with shaded picnic tables, greeted us at Longlea for our morning tea stop. We watched fancy cars in the paddock across the road and wondered if it was a yard sale.

Ralph led off again and I spied a mob of kangaroos on a paddock as we cycled past.

After a long gradual climb when it took me a while to catch up, the men decided I should set the pace instead, being on a manual bike. This seemed to work better and Michael and I were able to chat as we rode. I noticed rabbits, black cows with a splash of white, wildflowers, colourful parrots and a goat or two. We managed to cross the McIvor Highway during a break in traffic and then it was travelling through the industrial area that began in Junortown. Quite a few road crossings later, we rode under the rail bridge and out to the main road north, which eventually becomes the Midland Highway. Here a better crossing is needed with lights for us cyclists.

From here it was only two km to the Botanical gardens, where we had lunch in the picnic shelter, which was built in 1901. Arriving at midday we timed our break well.



The original bird aviary has now been replaced by an impressive new native garden. Even though we had warmed up while riding and the sun was out, it was still cool as we left 40 minutes later, so our warm gear stayed put. The return trip was much quicker, though Michael did spot a 'murder of crows', making a big racket as they flew off through the trees. I did call him to stop so I could take off my fleecy jacket as I was finally warming up. Back at Axedale, Ian and Roger headed off towards Kyneton, while Michael, Ralph and I enjoyed a cuppa and cake at Gaffney's in Heathcote. Many thanks to Ian, Roger and Michael for supporting our ride. We enjoyed a good day's ride of 48.6km according to Roger.

Report by Nola

FRANKSTON 13 NOVEMBER

At 8.56 as the train approached there was a query, was this the right train as it was earlier than scheduled. Six riders decided to jump on and head to Jolimont then to Richmond Station where we met Roger and then caught the train to Frankston.

Morning tea was beside the foreshore before heading off along the Kanonook creek walking track for a couple of kilometers and then crossing the Nepean Highway, luckily not busy when we were there. The leader then spotted a trail along the creek and decided to take this option only to find that it was a bit rough for riding. Lots of roots, many seed cones from pine trees, and a sandy base, then a set of steps to negotiate. After this we abandoned the trail and headed back to the road to head towards the main bike path that went from Frankston to Caulfield. This involved riding on the busy road for about 1km then trying to get onto the bike path. Along the way we ended up in the wrong lane and one of the 4wd cars gave Kate a blast with their horn. Phew. We all made it to the more peaceful bike path.

A couple of kilometres along the track we had to divert again due to roadworks near the path. So we headed down busy Railway Parade before finding the bike path again and riding to Carrum on the bike path. We then headed off along the Patterson River to the Long Beach Track path then past the Edithvale and Rosedale Golf clubs towards Mordialloc where we stopped for lunch overlooking the ocean.

After lunch it was onto the Bay Trail where we encountered a couple of strong headwinds along the way. Near Hampton we noticed a helicopter taking off from the beach then going out to sea and hovering for about 15 minutes. It was too far out to see what was happening so there was much speculation amongst the riders.

Roger headed off at Brighton Beach to catch the train while the rest of us pedaled on. We headed past St Kilda beach and past the black water being pumped to improve access for the marina but didn't notice any strong smells as had been reported in the press. At Southbank Sue headed off home while the reminder headed to South of Johnston for arvo tea, coffee, milkshake, and Ian left to head home.



Remaing riders at arvo tea

After the stop and chat we headed off back to Jika Jika.
Ride distance approximately 60 km and approximately 370m elevation

Report by Ed

FERNY/DANDY/BLIND CREEKS 18 NOVEMBER

My recce for this one revealed that another section of the shared path through the Stamford Park housing estate/wetland/stormwater retardation basin was finished and apparently open, although some of the street names were still just names on Google Maps. I was pretty excited about being able to take the group along 'Hazel Way' before the street was even show on Google and I managed to tell several people who were prepared to listen!

With Nola already on board the Hurstbridge Line train, we had a good run in to Jolimont and across to Richmond Station, with some discovering the closure of Total Rush Cycles, a premium-brand dealer, as we went past. Ed and Roger were on Platform 9 and we managed to catch a slightly earlier limited-express train to Upper Ferntree Gully, so that was a win.

With Bob on tail, we were soon at morning tea in Wally Tew Reserve, named after a former City of Knox councilor, where the new "accessible" pavilion was more accessible than we'd like, with no furniture at all. It was cold and a fireplace would have been nice in the old shelter.



The temperature continued to fluctuate, so that it seemed like it went down as soon as we took layers off. The run down the smooth Ferny Creek Trail was uneventful and we made it to Stamford Park only to discover that Hazel Way was closed again while the contractors attended to landscaping.

It was back to the old route, which involves some quiet streets before using the two-way service lane on Wellington Road to get to the Eastlink Trail.

Lunch was set for Jells Park, with the thought that Bob could buy food there, but he'd brought his own this time. Joining the Blind Creek Trail after lunch there was some idle chat about the source of the lines of dark blue-grey/black soil in the former clay quarry, conveniently close to North East Link. Was it acid-sulphate material fresh from the tunnel being used "for rehabilitation projects rather than disposal near the Dandenong Valley Parklands"? What would Al know anyway?

After the quarries and tip sites, Blind Creek assumes a more natural course that we followed to the Tim Neville Arboretum, named after a former Knox chief executive. Think I'm starting to see a pattern here.



On the Belgrave Rail Trail, we made it to Bayswater Station with only minutes to spare and only Steve managed to get on board the train. Most of us continued to Ringwood in time for the next one before stopping for coffees at South of Johnston in Collingwood on the way home.

Report by Wolter

CRANBOURNE BOTANIC GARDENS 20 NOVEMBER

Under cloudy skies 5 riders assembled at Westgarth Station and 3 more were waiting at Richmond.

It was an uneventful train ride to Cranbourne. The new trains are a noticeably smoother and quieter ride. After a short ride to the Cranbourne Gardens, it was time for morning tea at the Stringybark Picnic Area. After morning tea Roger minded the bikes while the rest of the group took a short walk on the Manna Bushland Track. It was then onto the Wyles Creek Track to the Woodlands Picnic Area for lunch. There were lots of primary school students having a great time.

It was then a short ride to the visitor centre and time for an hour or so stroll through the Australia Garden with Roger again offering to mind the bikes. There was lots of spring colour. Everybody got back together for afternoon tea at the café sitting in the sun.



It was then back on the bikes taking the back way out of the Gardens onto Bollarto Road. After negotiating a tricky bollard set up, we headed to Lynbrook Railway Station via a winding path in the powerline reserve, a section of rail trail and then some quiet streets and bike paths.

With 20 minutes between trains, we waited about 15 minutes for the next train to take us to Richmond.

Overall the weather for the day was pleasant with a very little sprinkle around lunch and a mix of sunshine and cloudy.

On the train Roger educated us all about the bike facilities on the middle 3 carriages of the 7-carriage train with Velcro straps to stabilise the bikes.

From Richmond station riders headed of home in various directions.

Report by Ian S

BRIGHTON BEACH 25 NOVEMBER

A late Spring Day which promised 25C meant that I wore shorts for the first time since much earlier in the year. A few other DBUG members had similar thoughts, while others sported long pants and jackets. Ten riders arrived at Jika Jika ready for the day, including Pam Si, who was warmly welcomed back. I informed the group that we would have two more women joining us at morning tea, being Mandy and Robin. Ken kindly offered to be tail.

We set off at 9.30, riding into a headwind towards Princes Park, and regrouped after the zoo, then headed down the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail to Docklands. Ed showed me where the newish bike/walking tunnel overpass took us across Footscray Road, as we rode south towards the Yarra. After crossing the river, we cycled around South Wharf, past Polly Woodside, where we noticed a school group about to board.

Soon we followed the Light Rail Trail to Beacon Cove and turned left onto the Bay Trail, arriving at the nearby rotunda to find Robin and Mandy enjoying their coffees. With Roger, George, Michael, Ed, Ralph, Bob, Ken, Pam, Kathleen and me, this made 12 of us for the trip to Brighton beach.

Our morning break is always full of lively discussion as we catch up on each other's news of the week.

There was a surprising number of people of all ages on the various beaches as we rode past and some of us commented that there must be a lot of 'sickies' today. Also a few brave people were in the water, while most were sunning themselves on the sand. It was a little windy, more a crosswind – this fortunately became a tail wind on our return. Arriving at Brighton Beach just prior to midday, one group sat on the grass in the shade, while 7 of us chose a picnic table in the sun.



Later we bid farewell to George who was catching the train, and to Mandy who had parked her car nearby much earlier and ridden north to Beacon Cove. This time even more community members were at the beach and it was slow, careful riding, especially through St Kilda.

It was sunny riding via the Grand Prix track where we spotted some swans and their cygnets on the grass. Before long we were on Moray Street and soon after, Roger left for Southern Cross Station. The rest of us cycled carefully again across the Yarra and past Flinders Street station, as it was busy with late lunch crowds. Our final stop was South of Johnston for a restorative coffee or tea. Robin and I chose iced lattes, while others opted for chai lattes. Again, lots of great socializing.



From here, the group gradually dispersed towards home. At Jika Jika, only Pam, Ralph and I remained. A lovely day's ride of 49km.

Report by Nola

KOROROIT CREEK/SUNSHINE LOOP (REVERSE) 27 NOVEMBER

Mostly the forecasted rain had passed during the night. However, most of us waiting at Jika Jika were looking at the dark clouds and the BOM and thinking about raingear. One rider who normally always has his jacket came without.

Ten riders for the day and we took off to Kensington and the Stockyard Route. At the river we rode along the east side of the Maribyrnong turning onto the bridge into Footscray. The entrance to the new veloway still fenced off but hopeful with painted markings on the path.

Our morning tea stop was at McNish 'Dinosaur Park' Reserve just next to Stony Creek. I weaved the group through the side streets of Seddon and Yarraville on our way there.

We had had a slight drizzle of rain but very slight. Our next section was across the West Gate Freeway on the Muir Street bridge. (now renamed but I missed the new name marked on the overpass).

Working through the Altona North streets I almost missed the turnoff at McIntosh Road as a lot of traffic calming street furniture has been built. We had hit a strong headwind as we rode west so finally turning off onto the Kororoit Creek path at Barnes Road was a relief. The creek path was very pleasant with hardly any peds or other bikes.



We continued on the creek path towards Buckingham Reserve in Sunshine West for our lunch. Sunny skies for a while as we sat having our lunch. Continuing on the creek path we turned off to Sunshine Railway Station. David M and Roger left us there and the rest of us rode along the trainline path to Footscray. We stopped at the café Footscray Milking Station for an afternoon break.

It was a good day for a bike ride and good company. Approx. 53km back to Jika Jika

Report by Sue

For next Magpie season!

Information about a Magpie-proof helmet in Bicycle Network resources.

(You will need to type the following link into a web browser to access details)

<https://bicyclenetwork.com.au/tips-resources/product-reviews/pieproof/>