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**WOBBLY WHEELS**  
**Darebin BUG Riders' Blog**



Good news from Ian S. His hip operation on Thursday May 28 went well, lasting about 4 hours. He returned to his room at about 8.30pm and is being well looked after by a great nurse who warmed his coffee and toast this morning, Friday May 29! He will be in Melbourne Private Hospital until about Tuesday June 2, then a couple of weeks in Donvale Rehab Hospital. We all wish Ian a good recovery and look forward to seeing him rejoin DBUG rides, if and when allowed.

A reminder to all that free public transport finishes at the end of May. The good news is that fares will be half for the remainder of the year! Make sure your Myki is topped up!

### **YOUR SPARE PARTS NEEDED**

If you are clearing out your shed and have spare bike parts, the Jika Jika Community House is interested.

They are building up a service to help low-income people to get a bike and start riding.

You can contact them on 9482-5100 or email [office@jikajika.org.au](mailto:office@jikajika.org.au)

Many thanks

Jan McC

### **SATURDAY RIDE GROUP**

#### **2 MAY**

My Outlook program threw a tantrum and refuse to work when I tried to send out the advice on the proposed ride. After resets and retries communications were restored and several copies of the advice were sent to each recipient.

Forecast was pretty good with a maximum of 24 degrees and no rain.

The ride was to Williamstown and return. There being plenty of options to shorten the ride, by taking a train, for those who may feel the need.

Come start time it was pretty cold and we only had 4 starters at Rushall Station, we picked up 2 more at Royal Park, making 6 in number.

We took our usual route down Stubbs Street to the Kensington Cattle Yard Estate and over the bridge to the Footscray side of the Maribynong River. Looks like new toilets behind the Footscray Warf area. I regret I didn't check them out. On to the new bit of path to take us to the top of Yarraville Gardens and along Hyde Street.

At Science Works we were joined by 4 riders from Stonnington, who had come across on the ferry. Pressing on to Williamstown, we had our first toilet stop at the block near the boat club. We took coffees out the back at Schwabs Galley. It was very pleasant in the enclosed sunny area.

Having had our fill, we headed back. At Footscray we took the Dixon Velloway to Moonee Ponds Creek where the Stonnington contingent left us. Two riders left at Royal Park and the remainder arrived back at Rushall.

Report by David D

## **RUFFEY CREEK TRAIL**

**5 MAY**

A cool but dry day saw 14 riders depart for the short ride to MT at Possum Hollow where the shop was open and it was totally buzzing with folks young and old.

Jon and Jan C (Wolter's neighbour) left us here.

An uneventful trip to the gorgeous Ruffey Creek and Lake for lunch.



The decision was made to have our post-ride coffee at Hahndorf's Chocolates because 'the milkshakes were too good to pass up'. On the return home, the backmarkers took a slightly different route, resulting in some confusion but all sort of re-grouped at the usual Heidleberg Road crossing back to Alphington.

Report by Bob

## **AD HOC RIDERS CHOICE**

**7 MAY**

The forecast for the day was diabolic with up to 15mm of rain spread over the time the ride would have taken place.

Even Roger was an absentee, which doesn't usually happen unless he is recuperating!

However, one brave soul did turn up and his report is here for all to admire!

### **Wet Solo Ride 7 May**

After a reasonably dry train ride, it rained hard from Clifton Hill to Jika Jika. After ten minutes the rain ceased and sun emerged, but I remained alone. Still no fellow riders arrived so I set off alone at 9.35. I only reached Fairfield before the rain started again and I had to put on waterproofs again. I rode on to Ivanhoe Station and after a few minutes got a train to Eltham. I rode on to the Diamond Creek Trail with rain continuing. It did leave off after Diamond Creek but started again before Hurstbridge. I arrived home for lunch after 25 km riding.

Report by David M

## **TAYLORS AND UPPER STEELE CREEKS**

### **12 MAY**

What a perfect weather day. Pleasantly cool with some left over fog first off, becoming sunny for the rest of the day with a top of 23 and no wind.

We had 18 riders at different times but never all at once. 14 left Jika Jika, but Bob made less than half a km before retiring due to a flat tire. Now 13, 3 joined at Parkville Station and George joined at Watergardens making 17 for most of the ride. 12 remained at afternoon coffee in Edgewater and then the usual steady attrition as we approached the end of the ride. The only mechanical apart from Bob's tyre was when Robin's battery went on strike just before lunch but miraculously recovered after a good rest and some serious peddling by Robin. There were a few hills of course with a few grumbles coming from the back but they were of course dutifully ignored. Both morning tea and lunch were somewhat late due to a lack of toilets at any earlier likely lunch spots and the occasional pleading enquiries as to when and even if we would ever get to said feeding stops were also dutifully ignored. In compensation, afternoon coffee was less than 6km from lunch, although we did have to accept takeaway cups due to nearness to closing time. There were also a couple of navigational missteps but they only added in one km plus a short but nasty climb but we won't dwell on those.

The compensating highlights however were the new bits never before done on a Bug ride: the upper section of Steele Creek upstream of the Ring Road, the Keilor Botanical Gardens, and the fabulous views over Valley Lake from the high route around it.

All in all a beaut, if sometimes hilly ride, with a mostly happy group on a beautiful sunny day and to the best of my knowledge we didn't lose anyone.

Report by Jopie

## **HEDGELEY DENE GARDENS**

### **14 MAY**

The Autumn weather continued to be kind as 11 riders gathered at Jika Jika for today's ride.

Heading by the usual route to Darebin Parkland we picked up one more rider. All then headed down the Darebin Creek Trail to cross Kilby Road and make our way to Anniversary Trail which we continued on to Frog Hollow for morning tea. There was a comment that the setting here was no longer suitable as the seating did not lend itself to mingling and chatting.

After morning tea we continued on, turning east onto Gardiners Creek Trail. This trail we took as far as Dunlop Street where we turned off to cross over the railway line at Darling Station. On the other side we crossed Malvern Road, headed along Darling Road for a short distance before turning into Brunel Street which we continued on to Burke Road which we crossed to enter Central Park. As we were early for lunch we rode around part of the park and spent some time admiring the plants in The Conservatory.

After that brief stop we again crossed Burke Road and took Kardella Street to Hedgeley Dene Gardens where we stopped for lunch. It was still early but no one seemed to mind sitting in the glorious sunshine.





After lunch David D left to make it back in time for an appointment while the remaining riders headed north-east to cross Malvern Road and take Stanley Street and Allenby Avenue before crossing under the railway line and M1 to be back on Gardiners Creek Trail which we followed to join the Main Yarra Trail to head towards home.

Along the way a number of riders left so it was a small group that stopped for refreshments at Abbotsford Convent Precinct.

A superb day for a ride of about 41km with no mishaps.

Report by Colin

## **CHERRY LAKE 19 MAY**

14 riders gathered at Jika Jika for the ride to Cherry Lake. It was a cold start with a forecast threatening some light rain.

We were met at Royal Park station by David S and a little while later we picked up Bruce and Franca at Flemington Bridge.

For a few riders it was their first ride along the Dixon Veloway that starts near the Big Wheel and runs above Footscray Road to just before the Maribyrnong River. From there it's a short run alongside the river and a part of the Freeway to the elevated crossing of Hyde Street and into Yarraville Gardens for morning tea.

Then it was the usual ride to Williamstown where we noticed the cold headwind. Just after Point Gellibrand a light rain started. It eased off by the time we stopped at Williamstown Beach.

In bright sunshine we rode around Cherry Lake and stopped for lunch at the pavilion on the south side of the lake.



There was a rather large black swan that joined us for lunch. He or she did some gentle honking and made enquiries of us all to see if there was any food in the offing. Eventually the swan found a few pieces of food under the tables.

After lunch we did the loop of the Altona Coastal Park where I recall that Phar Lap ran his last race in Australia. Riding north along Maddox Road we saw the new rail overpass. One of the traffic directors would not let us turn right immediately after the rail line. He was also critical of one of our riders. A short trip later around the block and we were back on the usual path to Newport Station where Roger left us. We rode along Hall Street and on the new path along the north side of Stony Creek before our early arrival at the Milking Station for coffee. There was no rain and we happily sat outside for coffee.

The trip back to Jika Jika was the usual one through the Kensington Sale Yards.

Total distance to and from Jika Jika was about 54 km.

Report by James

## **PETTYS ORCHARD CAFÉ, TEMPLESTOWE FOR LUNCH 21 MAY**

Weather was overcast but a pleasant riding temperature.

This is a first time ride but along the regular tracks.

Heading out from Jika Jika we went through Kew and in returning through Ivanhoe.

We basically followed along the Main Yarra Trail and return with morning tea at Possum Hollow in the Warringal Parklands.



We had lunch at the cafe with a good selection of food while some others brought their own. The distance was around 45km and relatively flat which made for a shorter day.

Report by Jon

## **NOLA'S RIDE - BUNDOORA AND SPRINGTHORPE 26 MAY**

A couple of days before the ride I was asked if I could lead this ride as Nola was unable to lead it. I looked at the description and then asked Wolter for help and if he had any idea where the ride went, ie where is Springthorpe? He sent me a copy of a ride but in the interim I had mapped out a route, but when I tried to do a reconnaissance ride I made a mistake and ended up riding through Rosanna and not Bundoora and Springthorpe, so more planning was required.

On Tuesday it was a lovely morning for a ride, slightly foggy and overcast with a pleasant temperature and no wind. Perfect for riding. Twelve riders, including new rider Steve on his second ride, set off from Jika Jika towards Reservoir via St Georges Road, and along the way more riders joined like pied piper. First Robin, then Graham and finally Vangel and Carolyn joined the ride at Preston. We only went a short distance before our first stop for a cuppa at Robinson Park, near Reservoir station but had to wipe down and dry the tables and seats after the overnight rain. Luckily a couple of experienced riders had bought along some foam protection to avoid a wet seat.

We soon headed north along Cheddar Road and Dalton Road to the Ring Road then onto the Darebin Creek trail north. It was a relief to get away from the cars and traffic and ride past lots of lovely old redgum trees along the Henderson Road Drain Linear Reserve and then we looped back to the south past the Epping Skate Park where a couple of riders were lucky to avoid being caught up by breathalyser operation nearby. We passed under the Mernda railway line and admired an ancient river redgum tree and soon after reached the Mill Park All Abilities Play Space where we stopped for lunch, but no one tried any of the nearby activities.



After lunch we stopped in at the Mill Park Leisure Centre to use their facilities, then headed through Findon Reserve before coming back and riding along McKimmies Rd and then over the Ring Road and into a few hills around Watsonia North. This is where the swearing under one's breath and the red faces started to emerge. I had a number of comments along the line, that Nola would not have chosen this route. Poor Robin and Roger had problems with the ebikes and the motor cutting out, so the hills were particularly hard and we had a couple of rests to allow them to cool down rest and recover. Roger was even riding his replacement e-mountain bike because he had worn out the rims of his normal bike from using the brakes to stop his heavy bike with all his tools.

We soon passed the Telfer Reserve at 1.30pm. This was the listed lunch stop so riders were happy that we had an earlier lunch stop. We then headed through the Gresswell Habitat Link and past the Strathallan Golf club where one of the riders went off the edge of the boardwalk and luckily landed on soft grass with no major damage recorded. We then rode through Springthorpe then Latrobe Uni and back onto the Darebin Creek Trail for a welcome rest and stimulants like coffee at Artiga before heading back to Jika Jika. Along the way people peeled off to head home so only Colin and I completed the circuit.

In spite of the hills most riders seemed to enjoy the ride.

Ride stats: Distance about 50 km, Average speed 15 km/h, Elevation 305m

Report by Ed

## WOODLANDS HISTORIC PARK 28 MAY

Nine crack riders set off under a gloomy sky and headed for Newmarket Station to catch the train to Jacana.



From here we rode to Westmeadows Reserve to fortify ourselves for the impending gravel adventure. Over morning tea there were snatches of humour amongst the rigorous intellectual discussions or should I pull the other one?

After the previous day's rainfall we hoped that there wasn't mud amongst the treacherous shifting gravel experienced before. With good fortune the hazardous condition didn't eventuate and we had a clear run to Woodlands for lunch. We even met the elusive Harry, new to some of us. He comes and goes like the Phantom, familiar to most older riders - are there any other kind?



We retraced the route to Westmeadows, crossed over Jacana Station to Western Ring Road Path for a short while to head for Box Forest Road and the Upfield Line. From here we stopped for coffee at Merlynston well satisfied at nearing the end of the ride.

Back along Upfield the two Davids left at Brunswick, leaving us to follow Park Street to the Capital City Trail where we peeled off along the way home.

52.4 km

Report by Ian H

For those wondering about the awful mess along the Eastern Fwy, here's what it is supposed to look like in a few years' time, with the Chandler Hwy Bridge in the foreground, the inbound busway bridge in the middle and the Yarra Bend Road bridge beyond that. Next to the busway on the right is the new shared path running under a new Chandler Hwy off-ramp and on towards the city. There will be a shared bridge across the Yarra River, to use instead of the Pipe Bridge at Fairfield Boathouse, before the trail goes through Yarra Bend Park near the netball courts (work on this has started). There'll finally be a shared-user underpass at Bulleen Road, an extra one at Burke Road so we can bypass the billabong, proper wide concrete path past the Kew Golf Club and an underpass at Belford Rd, bypassing that nasty climb.



## GREETINGS FROM DAREBIN BUG



The above was received by Ed from Norm A during a recent visit.  
Recognise anyone?