

BOROONDARA

Bicycle Users Group

Newsletter July 2011

Boroondara BUG meetings are normally held on the 2nd Thursday of each month except January. Our next meeting is on Thursday 14th July. It will be held in the function room at the Elgin Inn, cnr Burwood Rd and Elgin St, Hawthorn (Melway 45 B10). Optional dinner at 6.30pm, meeting starts at 7.30pm.

The Boroondara BUG is a voluntary group working to promote the adoption of a safe and practical environment for utility and recreational cyclists in the City of Boroondara. We have close links with the City of Boroondara, Bicycle Victoria, and other local Bicycle Users Groups. Two of the positions on the Boroondara Bicycle Advisory Committee, which meets quarterly, are assigned to Boroondara BUG members.

Boroondara BUG has a website at <http://www.boroondarabug.org> that contains interesting material related to cycling, links to other cycle groups, recent Boroondara BUG Newsletters and breaking news. Our email address for communications to the BUG is boroondarabug@gmail.com

We also have a Yahoo Group: Send a blank email to: BoroondaraBug-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to receive notification when the latest monthly newsletter and rides supplement have been placed on the web site and details of our next meeting, and very occasional other important messages.

All articles in this newsletter are the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of any other members of Boroondara BUG. All rides publicised in the Rides Supplement are embarked upon at your own risk.

Features

Bruges to Paris by Bike and Barge, 30th April to 14th May 2011

Why bike and barge?

If you like the idea of cycling in Europe but you're a bit nervous about committing to riding every day from A to B, or perhaps your partner is less keen on cycling than you are, a bike and barge tour could be the answer. A great advantage, however keen on cycling you are, is that you don't have to pack and unpack your bags every day. To my knowledge the tour from Bruges to Paris, at a fortnight in length, is one of the longer bike and barge tours available.

The Barge

Fleur is a beautiful barge. Cut down from a larger vessel to just fit into the French locks, her interior was designed by her original, female owner with great attention to detail. The ten air-conditioned passenger cabins, though small, have ample storage space and comfortable bunks with excellent reading lights. The snug en-suite bathrooms also have plenty of shelves and hooks for your gear. The communal areas, inside dining and sitting areas, and outside deck, are all attractive and comfortably furnished. The greatest practical limitation of life on the barge is the difficulty of getting laundry done. The crew did one big lot of laundry for everyone midway through the cruise, but apart from that it was definitely smalls only.

The Bikes

When we joined the Fleur there was another delight in store. Not only was our barge a beauty, but there were our brand new bikes lined up ready for us. They were shiny red, sturdy hybrids exactly to my taste. Having provided our heights at the time we booked everyone got a bike to fit. They were equipped with luggage racks and heavy duty elastic straps, and in our cabins we found new, high quality panniers, one apiece, so carrying our gear was never a problem. A test ride round Bruges provided the opportunity to make the few minor adjustments necessary for complete comfort.

The crew

Of the four crew and two guides all but the hostess, La Donna, an American, were Dutch, but with the possible exception of the learning mate, they spoke excellent English. Reint, the Captain, was a charming and friendly man, though he left no doubt as to who was in charge. Nick, the learning mate, was young and shy but always helpful. Our chef Annalies, sporting a jaunty

plastic flower behind her ear, provided a mouth-watering description of exactly what she had prepared for our dinner each evening in charmingly accented English.

The guides

Roalie and Albert were the people with whom we spent the most time and they were both very competent at their work and gave every appearance of enjoying it and our company. Both were multi-lingual, and well-informed about the places we visited along the way. On their bikes they had large map boards that extended from their front handlebars on which they placed the large-scale, detailed cycling maps they used to navigate. Both were also equipped with GPS's which they used as backup on occasion. Navigation was not always simple as we rode from and to barge mooring points and also took in various attractions along the way, so we could not always follow the main cycling routes. Riding through forests, as we did on several occasions, also presents problems as star intersections, where eight tracks meet, abound.

The group

There were twenty passengers on board, eighteen of whom were Australians! As well as our party of six, there was a group of eight from Wangaratta, a couple from WA and a mother and daughter from Queensland. The other couple were Americans. All of us rode at least some of the time, and most of us rode every day except the rest days, twelve days in all. Those who spent whole days on the barge for various reasons found that it did pall after a while. The barge moves very slowly, especially when there are lots of locks. So I would not recommend this tour to complete non-cyclists.

The daily routine

Tea and coffee were available soon after 7am. Breakfasts at 8am were lavish, and we made our own sandwiches for lunch from the scrumptious breads, sliced cheeses, tomato, cucumber and cold meats provided. Large plastic lunch boxes were provided, as well as chocolate bars and fruit, and water bottles.

At around 9am we disembarked for the day's ride. Mostly this was before the barge set sail, but on a few occasions the barge sailed during breakfast and set us down along the way. A couple of times we disembarked while the Fleur was going up or down in a lock. The crew were well-drilled in the routine of hoisting bikes and passengers safely ashore in the quickest possible time. Some days the whole group rode together, but more often we split into two groups for a shorter and a longer ride – 30-45km versus 45-65km. Routes were chosen to take in various points of interest such as notable buildings, museums or historic sites, which were occasionally different for the two groups. Mostly we rode on quiet roads through sleepy villages or leafy forests, or on towpaths alongside rivers and canals. But on occasion we had stretches on busier roads which got the adrenaline pumping.

Most days there were coffee stops at bars during the morning, with lunch eaten in the open where possible, or on occasion in another bar. In Belgium and France tea and coffee can be bought in bars, or a refreshing beer or a glass of wine if you prefer, but food is not generally served. If there's a patisserie or boulangerie nearby you can buy food there and bring it to the bar, or you can eat your packed lunch. Often the ride finished with a leisurely coffee or beer in yet another bar while we waited for the Fleur to reach her mooring.

Dinners were three-course meals prepared with great care, and with local ingredients as far as possible. Each day Annalies rode off on her bicycle to fill her large panniers at the local markets. A few walks and card games took place after dinner but most of us were too tired for late nights after our very full days.

The sightseeing highlights

On our fourteen-day tour we saw a great deal of the Belgian countryside and that of the French region of Picardy. We observed all manner of agricultural activity, and village life, or more often the lack of it. Sadly many of the smaller villages are slowly dying. And although our route did not take in many famous tourist destinations, almost every day there were several particular points of interest too. Here are just some that stand out in my memory.

Architectural gems included the wonderfully diverse city of Ghent complete with castle in the main street; the magnificent old town hall and cloth market at Oudenaarde, as well as the church there which has been cunningly divided in two by glass doors – the newer gothic section being reserved for summer use and the older, Romanesque section, which is easier to heat, for winter use; and the remains of the beautiful old Abbey of Vaucelles.

The area we rode through was of course the scene of much fighting in World War I and we saw numerous war cemeteries and monuments to the various forces involved, as well as the museum in the Armistice Clearing at Rethonde, featuring a train carriage similar to that in which the armistice was signed. For those of us with a particular interest in WW I, on the rest day at St Quentin, Roalie very kindly hired a minibus and drove us to Villers Brettoneux to see the school there funded by the State of Victoria with its excellent museum, and the Australian National Memorial.

A wonderful unexpected treat was the Musée Serge Ramond, a private museum dedicated to graffiti through the ages, of which the creator has painstakingly taken impressions. These are displayed with enormous flair in no less than 22 rooms. And of

course you can't travel in France without visiting a chateau. The Domaine de Chantilly with its extensive gardens and truly magnificent stables filled this requirement nicely.

On our last day of riding, as we approached Paris, we climbed to the high Terasse de St Germain where we had our morning coffee and enjoyed the stunning view of Paris it commands. After some rather hairy riding through the suburbs we arrived at La Défense, the Manhattan end of Paris, which I had never visited before and which is a total contrast to the old city. Here we climbed the vast steps for a view of the long avenue leading to the distant Arc de Triomphe.

The next day we all stayed on board the Fleur as she sailed up the Seine, under the bridges of Paris, to her mooring near the Place de la Bastille. Our last day was a free day in Paris, and the next morning we disembarked, a little forlornly, at 9am. There was general agreement that learning about and being a part of the river and canal traffic had been the greatest highlight of all.

The route

To the best of my knowledge the Fleur travelled via the River Schelde, St Quentin Canal, including the 3km long Riqueval Tunnel, Canal du Nord, River Oise and River Seine. (Note that information on the web site below does not include a detailed itinerary for the Fleur and the printed information we received was out of date in some respects.)

Overnight stops were: Bruges, Ghent, Oudenaarde, Tournai, Cambrai, Honnecourt, St Quentin (2 nights), Chauny, Compiègne, Creil, Conflans, Pont de Suresnes, Paris (2 nights) Some of these places may not appear in your atlas as they are, we were told, 'in the middle of nowhere'!

The Booking

The Fleur travels from Bruges to Paris in April – May, then back to Bruges in October, staying near Paris during the tourist season. Six of us were lucky enough to get places for the May voyage this year with less than a year's notice. The Fleur is often booked out 18 months ahead of time.

For more information see <http://www.tripsite.com/bike-boat/tours/bruges-to-paris-or-paris-to-bruges/>

We booked our trip through *Outdoor Travel* in Bright, see <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au/content/index.html>

Julia Blunden

Opinion

An Uphill Battle

Two roads I ride reasonably regularly are Greythorn Rd (Doncaster Rd up to Belmore Rd) and Mont Albert Rd (Balwyn Rd up to Union Rd)

Both roads have a dedicated bike lane. Both roads have hills/brows. Both roads permit cars to park in the bike lane, Neither road is wide enough for cyclist to ride outside the 'door zone' of a parked car without having to 'claim the lane'.

The consequence from my personal experiences is that many times motorists will not slow down and drive behind me until I have passed a parked car before the brow of hill but rather they take the risk to overtake and basically brush my handle bars, all the while risking collecting an unseen oncoming car.

At the risk of annoying a few residents or their visitors by asking them to walk a little way from their parked car to their front door, could "no parking in the bike lane" be instituted for an appropriate distance before the brows of the hills on these roads. Simply use the RED paint in the bike lane rather than the GREEN to denote the 'No Parking' section.

Walking from a parked car to a front door won't kill anyone but asking a cyclist to 'claim the line' prior to the brow of a hill can. Cyclists are the most vulnerable of road users and ride in a climate where many car drivers have a reluctance to recognise the cyclist's right to claim the lane and where a cyclist can be killed or, like me, be seriously injured and the driver only receives a fine as a deterrent.

Unlike in France where hitting a cyclist is a threat to the car driver, who is guilty (locked-up) until proven innocent, here cyclists, unlike other road users (cars, trucks, B doubles, buses, trams) are not seen as a threat to a car driver, hence not respected and consequently highly vulnerable.

Alan Tonkin

Trail Notes

Alternative Route to Brimbank Park

Just because the Maribyrnong River Trail is currently closed between Canning Reserve and Brimbank Park doesn't mean cyclists must forgo the pleasure of visiting the Park. With the opening of the Buckley St underpass it is now possible to use another route which is mostly off-road and very pleasant. It even takes you past a vineyard and olive grove – the Rose Creek Estate. Heading upstream along the Maribyrnong, through Essendon and into Essendon West, as you complete the zigzag section of the descent from the Lily Street lookout, instead of turning left and continuing downhill, go straight ahead through the underpass and turn left. Shortly, at the next track intersection, turn right onto the Steeles Creek Path. Follow this for about 2km to Valley Lake, a converted quarry. You'll know it by the figure up the ladder! Turn left here and follow Valley Lake Bvd round a loop to a roundabout. Turn left into Rachele Rd and then right into Noga Av. Follow this to the end then cross Milleara Rd at the lights. Follow the path on the right side of Keilor Park Dr across the rail line and the Western Ring Rd, then cross at the lights to the path alongside Dodds Rd. Turn right onto this to reach the main road and bike track down into the park.

Reference: Brimbank TravelSmart Map

Thanks to Malcolm Faul for devising this excellent route.

Events

Myrtleford Bike Muster

The first Myrtleford Bike Muster will take place over the first weekend of October - Friday September 30 through to Sunday October 2 and we'd like to invite you and your friends to come and join us.

The rides will run along the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and will be an excellent couple of days riding exploring the rail trail and the surrounding countryside. If you have never been before now is your excuse to visit and if you have been before now is your excuse to come back!

There will be other fun activities including a welcome trivia night on the Friday night, the wildly popular treasure hunt in and around the Myrtleford township on the Saturday afternoon and dinner and live music on Saturday night - and maybe a bit of dancing too!

You will need to book your accommodation with one of the local accommodation providers and there are plenty of options ranging from camping at the local caravan park right through to motel and bed & breakfast accommodation. Download the Myrtleford Accommodation guide from the Bike Muster website or contact the Myrtleford Visitor Information centre: Ph: 03 5752 1044; Fax: 03 5752 1355; Email: info@myrtlefordvic.com.au ;Web: www.visitalpinevictoria.com.au

So, what's included in your Myrtleford Bike Muster Registration fee?

Your registration fee includes:

- Souvenir Myrtleford Bike Muster t-shirt
- Welcome trivia night on Friday night at the Savoy Club in Myrtleford
- Lunch on both Saturday & Sunday
- Treasure hunt on Saturday afternoon
- Dinner and entertainment on Saturday night

Being the first year in Myrtleford places are limited and we encourage you to register early to avoid missing out... registration is now open and can be completed online: Myrtleford Bike Muster Registration

If you would like more information or have any questions, shoot me an email: info@bikemuster.com.au or visit our website: www.bikemuster.com.au

Peter Scott, Myrtleford Bike Muster, www.bikemuster.com.au; 0419 227 152

Boroondara News

Opening of Markham Link and Warrigal Rd Underpass

The official opening of Stages 2 and 3 of the Gardiners Creek Trail connection project (Markham Reserve, Warrigal Rd underpass, bridge and paths) will be on **Tuesday August 9th at 2.30pm**. It will be held on site in Markham Victory Reserve in the vicinity of Warrigal Road.

It will be a simple opening with speeches, ribbon cutting, plaque unveiling, possible federal and state government representation, local government representation and afternoon tea. Boroondara, Monash and Stonnington Mayors and ward councillors are definite attendees. It would be good to see a large turnout of grateful cyclists at this event.

Possible Incorporation of Boroondara Bicycle Users Group

At our June meeting it was decided that a vote would be taken on whether or not the BUG should incorporate. However this vote will be deferred until the August meeting as all members must be given 21 days' notice of the vote.

For those members who would like to know more about incorporation before deciding on their own position the following web site has all the relevant information. Consumer Affairs, Incorporated Associations:

<http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/CA256EB5000644CE/page/Incorporated+associations?OpenDocument&1=85-Incorporated+associations~&2=~&3=~>

The issue was also discussed in the April newsletter.

Minutes of Boroondara BUG Meeting, Monday 9th June 2011

Elgin Inn, Hawthorn

Attendance and Apologies

Present: Glennys Jones, Julia Blunden, Peter Campbell, Graham Ellis, Phil Crohn (Chair), Gordon Macmillan

Apologies: Ken Morrison, Graeme Stone, Malcolm Faul, David Leong, John Parker

Correspondence:

In

Letter from Council re 2011-12 Boroondara Annual Community Development Grants (7/4/11)

Letter from Minister for Public Transport; Minister for Roads re bicycle route naming and signing standards (12/4/11) – **Julia B agreed to scan this and send it to those who have been attending the Combined BUGs meetings.**

Letter from Council re Annual Community and Business Networking Event (28/4/11)

Letter from Council re Boroondara Community on Board 2010-11 (20/5/11)

Out

Matters Arising:

- Golfers Choice and Urban Bush Path:** Glennys J reported that she has had a response from the Stonnington Sustainable Transport Officer saying that VicRoads will not fund a shared path along Warrigal Rd, but this was never an expectation. Graham E has raised the issue at Holmesglen but to no avail as yet. Glennys showed a photo of the new path associated with the Warrigal Rd underpass which provides good access to this footpath.
- East – West link: Peter C reported that Boroondara was left out of the recent study of usage of VicTrack land. He will pursue this matter with MP Robert Clark.** Peter reported that the Lighter Footprints organization is also pushing for the link and asking that Council provide funds to get it started. **Peter will develop a DL flyer to promote the project.** He will liaise with David Hall a Whitehorse Cyclists member who was involved in preparing a similar flyer to promote the Box Hill to Ringwood Rail Trail.
- Stockland Toorong Village Development:** Glennys J reported that she had obtained plans for Stage 3 from Stockland. Whilst stage 1 is now complete, Stockland have not commenced marketing Stage 2 and their planned access path is not scheduled until Stage 3. Stockland could not provide any estimated date for completion of the access path. It appears that the completion date for the project could be many years away and the proposed bike link, shown in stage 3, looks very

unsatisfactory. **Glennys offered to draft a letter to Terry Mulder**, who has identified himself as the Minister for Cycling, and this will be cc'd to the Planning Minister. **Graeme S is still pursuing this with the Coles BUG.**

4. **Gasworks Site Redevelopment:** Glennys J reported that work is continuing on the site. This will be an agenda item at the June BAC meeting.
5. **Hays Paddock Plan:** Julia B reported that she has heard nothing since the last meeting in February and has had no response to a query about the minutes of this meeting. **Julia agreed to follow up with a phone call to Parks and Gardens.**
6. **Belford Rd Underpass:** Nothing to report. This will be an agenda item at the June BAC meeting.
7. **Warrigal Rd Underpass:** Glennys J showed photos of the work to date. The footbridge and the links to the shared paths and footpaths either side all look good. Works should be completed within a couple of weeks.
8. **Possible Formation of Stonnington BUG:** Hedley F was not present at the meeting and had not supplied a report.
9. **Treasurer and Membership Secretary Roles; BBUG Contacts:** Malcolm F has offered to take on the Treasurer's role. **Julia B agreed to contact Malcolm and check that he is also willing to act as Membership Secretary and to have his contact details included in the newsletter.** Peter C agreed to be listed as a BBUG media contact. The suggestion was made that an old mobile phone could be used as a BBUG phone which could then be redirected to other numbers. No decision was made on this.
10. **Darebin – Yarra Link:** Julia B reported that the Community Coalition had met the previous Monday with Cheryl Nagel from Parks Victoria. Cheryl has accepted a new position within PV so will no longer be involved with this project. Unfortunately the Project Officer working on the link was unavailable to attend this meeting. Work on the link is proceeding slowly. Stage 1 to Sparks Reserve is expected to be finished by the end of next summer and a grand opening is planned for this. A project brief has been prepared for the design of Stage 2, through to Boroondara, and this will go to tender. Funding has not yet been allocated for this stage. Stage 3 is the link from Alphington to the trail.
11. **Anniversary Trail – Gap at Camberwell High:** Graham E had nothing new to report. This will be an agenda item at the June BAC

New Business

1. **Local Law - Protection of Council Assets and Control of Building Sites:** Glennys J pointed out the need for this law to specify bike paths and suggested that a BUG submission may be needed. **Glennys agreed to forward this to Chris Hui as a BAC agenda item.** It was also suggested that this is a wider issue and could be an agenda item at the next Combined BUGs meeting.
2. **Wellington St Bike Lanes – Problems during school drop-off and pick-up times:** Julia B reported that she had a call from the *Progress Leader* who are doing a story on this in response to a call from a reader. It was agreed that it is worth reporting this to Council although it is really a VicRoads issue.
3. **Incorporation:** It was decided that a vote will be taken at our next meeting on whether the BUG should be incorporated or not. Members can read more about this issue in the April newsletter and in the following fact sheet:
[http://www.pilch.org.au/Assets/Files/IncorporationDecisionFINAL\[1\].pdf](http://www.pilch.org.au/Assets/Files/IncorporationDecisionFINAL[1].pdf)
4. **Use of BUG Funds:** If the decision is made to incorporate funds will be required for this. Funds may also be required for the duplication of Peter C's leaflet on the East-West link.
5. **Meeting with Cr Jack Wegman:** Cr Wegman is unavailable on BUG meeting nights due to another commitment. However he has indicated that he is willing to meet with BUG members at another mutually convenient time. Peter C, Glennys J and Julia B all indicated their willingness to attend such a meeting. When John P returns from his trip he will also be asked and **Julia B will circulate some suggested times to interested parties.**
6. **Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting, Friday 17th June:** **Peter C, Glennys J and Julia B indicated their intention to attend.** Suggested agenda items have already been forwarded to Chris Hui.
7. **Next meeting:** Thursday 14th July

Notes by Julia Blunden

Contacts for Rides

There are many BUGs, clubs and other organisations, several of them local, which organise rides. Below are some of their contact details. A separate supplement contains details of many of their forthcoming rides.

Ashburton Riders Club

Contacts:

Tony Landsell - email: tony@diacher.com

Justin Murphy - email: murphjj@au1.ibm.com

website: <http://www.ashburtonridersclub.asn.au/>

Banyule BUG

email: banyuleBug@yahoo.com.au

website: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~banylbug/>

contacts: Richard phone: 9459 8648, or Les phone: 9459 2701

Boroondara Bushwalkers

contact Julia Blunden

phone: 9853 5095

email: jblunden@bigpond.com

website: www.keypoint.com.au/~bbwinc

Kew Neighbourhood Learning Centre Bike Riding Group

Contact: Robin Kendrick, phone: 9853 3126

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Cycling Group

contact Janet Bennett

email: janpeter@bigpond.net.au or COTA,

phone: 9654 4443

website:

http://www.cotavic.org.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/1006/cota_cycling_brochure_jul-dec_2007.pdf

Darebin BUG

Rides and Events Coordinator

Doug Morffew, phone: 9499 7325 (AH)

email: dougmorf@alphalink.com.au

Download the Darebin BUG rides flyer, with details of rides (Word doc)

website: www.darebinbug.org.au

Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre

Phone: 9890 2467

Email: info@surreyhillsnc.org.au

Website: www.surreyhillsnc.org.au

Boroondara BUG Contacts

Membership Secretary & Treasurer:

Malcolm Faul

Phone: 9853 1369

Email: malfaul@alphalink.com.au

Address: 38 Grove Rd, Hawthorn, 3122

Media Contact: Peter Campbell

Phone: 0409 417 504

Email: <http://greenlivingpedia.org>

Hawthorn Cycle Tours

contact Hawthorn Aquatic and Leisure Centre

phone: 9815 0988

email: lexbishop@bikerider.com

website: <http://www.geocities.com/perften/Hct.html>

Knox Bicycle Touring Club Incorporated

email: Mikeaatleisure@aol.com

website: home.vicnet.net.au/~knoxbike

Manningham BUG

email: seball@netlink.com.au, H.Edwards@bom.gov.au

website: www.vicnet.net.au/~mannbug

Maroondah Bushwalking Club

To obtain details of how to book on a walk and a copy of the current walks and activities program Contact information officers:

Sandra, phone: 9728 3833, Aileen, phone: 9876 1104

website: home.vicnet.net.au/~mbush/

Melbourne Bicycle Touring Club

email info@mbtc.org.au (Note that this email address doesn't get checked every day - so don't expect an immediate response!) website: mbtc.org.au

Whitehorse Cyclists

email: ejhopper@vicnet.net.au

website: <http://www.whitehorsecyclists.org.au/>

Finbar Neighbourhood House Rides

Contact Deb in the office on 9428 7668 or 0403 028 200

YHA

contacts: Ride Co-Ordinator Kathy

rides@yhacycling.org.au or mobile 0425-792 574

or Secretary Voula on secretary@yhacycling.org.au

website: www.yhacycling.org.au has free registration

Newsletter Editor & Minutes Secretary:

Julia Blunden

phone: 9853 5095

email: jblunden@bigpond.com

Boroondara Bicycle Users Group

Membership Application Form

Name _____

Address & Postcode _____

Phone (H) _____

Phone (M) _____

Phone (W) _____

Email _____

Member of Bicycle Victoria? Please circle: Yes / No

Membership requires a one-off payment of \$15 per household. Please send cheque (made out to Boroondara Bicycle Users Group) along with this form to:

Malcolm Faul

Phone: 9853 1369

Email: malfaul@alphalink.com.au

Address: 38 Grove Rd, Hawthorn, 3122