

BOROONDARA

Bicycle Users Group

Newsletter May 2012

Boroondara BUG meetings are normally held on the 2nd Thursday of each month except January. Our next meeting is on Thursday 10th May. It will be held in the function room at the Elgin Inn, corner 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 Network 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

Otago Central Rail Trail

There can't be too many places in our part of the world where you can ride for 150km through splendiferous scenery, on an excellent purpose-built trail, entirely off-road, and in fact only occasionally crossing a road or sighting any traffic. But this is precisely what New Zealand's Otago Central Rail Trail offers, and much more.

The old Otago Central Railway Line was constructed at the end of the nineteenth century and closed in the 1990s. The rail trail which has been established in its place is managed by the New Zealand Department of Conservation, and they do a splendid job. Although unsealed, it's of a very good standard. The old bridges and viaducts have been strengthened and equipped with sturdy balustrades. The tunnels too have been upgraded, but are unlit, so dismounting and torches are highly recommended in the longer ones. Although heavy rain had fallen just before we rode the trail there was little in the way of mud or puddles.

All the old stations are marked and a few station buildings remain, most notably at Ranfurly. Riders can buy a passport at the start of the trail and stamp it at each of the eighteen stations along the way. In addition many of the old corrugated iron gangers sheds, used by the workers constructing the line, have been retained and now house excellent information boards detailing local points of interest including flora and fauna in the area, as well as providing emergency shelter.

My group opted to use the services of one of the many companies offering supported tours. We chose Active Travel mainly because they organise tours on dates of one's own choosing. Like most of the tour companies, they offer transport to the start and from the end of the trail, daily transportation of baggage, bike hire including helmets and panniers, and booking of overnight accommodation including breakfasts. As our group numbered ten they also recommended booking for our dinners and did this for us. The trail is quite remote for the most part, and most of the settlements it passes through are small, some surviving mainly on the passing cyclist trade, so the range of accommodation and dining options is not great.

The trail runs between Clyde, 60km from Queenstown, to Middlemarch. The Taieri Gorge train connects Middlemarch, or Pukerangi a bit further down the line, with Dunedin. The trail can be ridden in either direction. Both ends are roughly 200m above sea-level and the trail rises to 618m at roughly its mid-point near Wedderburn, with only minor undulations along the

way and gradients that are always quite gradual. Most people take between three and five days to ride the trail but four days is the recommended minimum on the official web site. Our group chose to take five days in the expectation of doing a few side trips. In fact we found that with the slower pace dictated by the unsealed track and our heavy mountain bikes, with frequent photo and passport stamping stops, agreeable cafes and interesting information boards, we had less time to spare than we expected. We also found that, while navigation of the trail itself was very straightforward, the maps supplied did not provide enough detail to inspire confidence to leave the trail and take to the local roads.

Autumn and spring are the best times to ride the trail for all but the very hardy. We rode it in early March expecting mild autumn weather, but an early severe cold snap meant that temperatures were closer to those of a Melbourne winter. The upside of this was that at the start of our ride we were surrounded by snow-capped ranges, something we had not expected. The trail is for the most part quite exposed with trees few and far between, so extreme heat or cold could present serious problems, and wind can be an issue at any time of year.

On our first day, rather than riding the trail proper for the first section from Clyde to Alexandra, we opted to take the slightly longer, alternative route alongside the Clutha River. While we enjoyed the views of the rushing, milky aqua water of the river, the many steep ups and downs proved quite challenging as we were still getting the hang of the back-to-front gears on our hire bikes. We had been warned that Alexandra was the last town of any size until we reached Ranfurly late on day three, so we pedalled more extra kilometres to its far-flung supermarket to stock up on fruit and other necessities, as well as buying lunch and eating it in a local park. Our afternoon tea stop was at a charmingly rustic café at Chatto Creek. At Omakau we turned off the trail to ride to Ophir, via the historic Daniel O'Donnell suspension bridge, to Blacks Hotel, a lovely old art deco building, where we were staying the night, and eating dinner, a most convenient arrangement given that some of us didn't arrive until after 6pm!

After our first day's ride of approximately 40km, which had proved far more taxing than any of us expected, the ride got easier with each passing day. Gradually increasing temperatures also made for more pleasurable riding. Farm animals including many sheep, but also cattle, and early on day two deer, were a regular feature of the scenery. Highlights of day two included the Poolburn Gorge with its two tunnels, 230m and 200m long, and a spectacular viaduct. In the first and longer tunnel, which bends in the middle, one of our group had a close encounter with a jutting wall that could have benefitted from the application of some reflectors. Lauder provided a convenient morning coffee stop, while the historic Hays Engineering Works was our rather late lunch stop. At our day's destination of Oturehua, Gilchris Store, New Zealand's oldest continuously operating general store, provides a trip down memory lane for the mature aged. Our accommodation was not in the town itself but at Oturehua Lodge a few kilometres distant. Our host there collected us in his mini-van, drove us back to the Tavern for dinner, and again next morning to collect our bikes and continue along the trail. Dinner at the tavern proved delicious, as indeed were almost all our meals on this tour.

Day three, from Oturehua to Waipiata, took us across the 45th parallel twice as well as to the highest point on the trail. Shortly after this we reached Wedderburn with the large green goods shed which features in Grahame Sydney's painting, *July on the Maniototo*. Ranfurly, where we stopped for lunch, is a major highlight of the tour. The old station has been beautifully restored and now houses an information centre and museum relating to the trail and its previous life as a rail line. There's even a mock-up of an old train carriage where an interesting DVD recounting the history of the rail line and the trail may be viewed. There's also more choice of lunch options than at most places along the trail. Our accommodation for the night was at the Waipiata Motel and our dinner at the Waipiata Hotel. We assumed that the two businesses were connected but not so. The people at the hotel directed us to the motel some distance away, and discreetly disguised as a house, with no signage of any sort. As this was a Saturday night the hotel was very busy and we were told we would have a buffet in a private room. This proved to be extremely satisfactory, although the continental breakfast at the motel was rather less so.

Our destination on day four was Hyde. After another day of spectacular bridges, viaducts, tunnels and mountain ranges we arrived in time for a late lunch in the café attached to the hotel where we were staying. We were then shown to our rooms, some of which had been stables in a former life, as attested by the names on their doors: Mareburn and Fillyburn for two. Dinner was a thoroughly delightful affair at the old schoolhouse, which had been given a very stylish makeover. Ngaire Sutherland, proprietor of both the hotel and the old school house restaurant, entertained us between courses with the story of her purchase and renovation of both the hotel and the schoolhouse, and topped this off with the recitation of a very amusing poem about the misadventures of a couple of would-be trail riders.

Our final day's ride took us to the end of the trail at Middlemarch. Shortly after leaving Hyde we stopped to view the Hyde Rail Disaster Memorial, which commemorates a catastrophic derailment in 1943 in which 21 people were killed. For much of the day's ride the aptly named Rock and Pillar Range towered on our right. We had seen other cyclists at various points along the trail but their numbers became much greater in the last couple of days of the tour. When we reached Middlemarch at lunchtime we found the town abuzz with cyclists, some obviously in organised groups like our own but with different, less rugged bikes. The Velo Fait Cafe is well set up to cater to grubby touring cyclists wishing to return hired bikes, freshen up for the next stage of their travels, and do a bit of re-packing of gear. Once we'd done all this and bought some lunch it was time for our transfer to Pukerangi where we caught the Taieri Gorge train. This spectacular train trip, capped by the arrival at Dunedin's truly magnificent railway station, made the perfect finish to a most satisfying tour.

For further information about the Otago Central Rail Trail see:

<http://www.otagoctrail.co.nz/>

And for our tour company Active Travel see:

http://www.activetravel.co.nz/tours/index.php?region=central_otago&destination=otago_rail_trail&gclid=CPjqtJD5pq8CFShLpgodQj-DYA

Julia Blunden

Trail Notes

Closures on Ring Road Path

As part of the M80 Ring Road upgrade the Ophir Street pedestrian bridge will be reconstructed to accommodate the extra lanes being built on the M80 Ring Road.

From Monday 7 May, 2012, the pedestrian bridge will be CLOSED to the public as preparation works begin to dismantle it. A short detour will be available via Jack Roper Reserve and the Merlynston Creek path under M80 Ring Road. The bridge will gradually be rebuilt and this will take approximately six months.

On **Sunday 27 May, 2012**, the M80 Ring Road will be closed in both directions during the day between Pascoe Vale Road and Sydney Road to remove the bridge. Major delays are expected and motorists are advised to plan their journeys in advance and to seek alternative routes. More information will be published on the M80 Ring Road Upgrade website closer to the day. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Maria Williams | Community Relations Officer

M80 Ring Road Upgrade Inquiry Line | 1300 297 090

Fax | (03) 9289 4199

Email | community@tullasydney.com.au

Events and Activities

2102 ozhpv Challenge

The entry form for the 2102 ozhpv challenge is now available online. The ozhpv challenge is a series of cycle races (Sprint, Time Trial, Shopping Race, Road race, Slalom, Go to Whoa) designed to determine the best combination of bike and rider. Cycles can be any human powered vehicle (bike, trike, recumbent bike, streamliner) that meets basic safety requirements.

The event will be held in Wodonga on May 5 and 6. The webpage for the Challenge is at

<http://www.ozhpv.org.au/events/current-challenge/current-challenge.html> and the entry form for the Challenge is available from there.

To support the challenge, we've produced a poster to go up in bike shops, near velodromes and to be passed round at Bug Meetings. The poster is available in the files section of the Vic Bug Chat Yahooogroup, "Poster for 2012 ozhpv Challenge".

Steve Nurse on behalf of the ozhpv executive, Steve, Pete, Ken, George

Cycle Queensland 2012 – Citrus to Sea

Gayndah to Noosa

Saturday 8 to Sunday 16 September 2012 - *pedal away from the everyday*

Looking for a holiday with a difference? This two-wheel adventure holiday will take you through citrus fruit groves along some of Queensland's most spectacular coastline, and gives you the chance to meet some of Hervey Bay's world famous whales.

You don't need to worry about cooking meals, transporting luggage or navigating from town to town because all your needs are taken care of by our support crew. Each day we dish up three delicious, cyclist-sized meals and provide hot showers, entertainment, a place to relax, and much more. Cycle Queensland is all about having a good time – after all, you're on holidays.

Why do it? For some it's a challenge, for others it's an adventure but for many it's simple – life is better on a bike. Entries close **10 August 2012**. Enter before **1 June** and receive a free Scody event jersey.

Check www.cycleqld.bq.org.au for more information.

General News

New Darebin Bicycle Advisory Committee

As adjoining municipalities to Darebin, I wanted to let you know that we're setting up a Darebin Bicycle Advisory Committee (DBAC).

Council requested that we set this up and endorsed the proposed Terms of Reference and committee structure on the 16th April. We are now inviting expressions of interest from people who live, work or study in Darebin.

Expressions of Interest for the first round of meetings are due by 18 May 2012. Submissions after this date will be considered on merit by DBAC at future meetings. To access the Expression of Interest form and Terms of Reference for DBAC, and for more information, visit www.darebin.vic.gov.au/cycling, email che.sutherland@darebin.vic.gov.au or phone 8470 8665.

We are looking to open this new committee up to a wide audience, so if there are appropriate groups or individuals that would be able to pass this onto, please do. I have attached a summary of our promotion for this opportunity. If you have any questions about the new committee please let me know.

Che Sutherland, Sustainable Transport Officer, Phone: (03) 8470 8665

Boroondara News

Minutes of Boroondara BUG Meeting, Thursday 12th April 2012

Elgin Inn, Hawthorn

Attendance and Apologies

Present: Ken Morrison, John Parker, Peter Campbell (Chair), David Leong, Glennys Jones, Malcolm Faul, Gordon Macmillan, Julia Blunden, Graham Ellis, Heather Hall

Apologies: Alister Huth, Linda Rohrs, Betty Weeks

Correspondence:

- In**
- Copy of Josh Frydenberg's letter to Ted Baillieu re cycling infrastructure projects in Boroondara
 - Email from David Robinson thanking the BUG for the reinstatement of the GCT – Tooronga connecting path
 - Email from Tony Hardy re need for improvements on his bike route from Camberwell to the CBD
 - Email from James Maygothling re our failure to acknowledge recent Council works on the AT-YT link via Hyde Park on our web site
 - Various emails discussing arrangements for a meeting with Lighter Footprints to discuss the Hawthorn – Box Hill Trail

Out

- Nil

Joint Discussion with Lighter Footprints Group

Prior to the BUG meeting proper a joint discussion was held with the Lighter Footprints Group members on our proposed Hawthorn – Box Hill Trail. LF have decided to make this one of their projects for 2012. It was agreed that our two groups will work together in the hopes of providing some much needed momentum to the project. BBUG members were invited to attend a meeting organised by LF at which Ms Michaela Skett, Team Leader - Environmental Planning, City of Boroondara - ES&L, will be speaking about progress and priorities for 2012/13. LF expressed interest in attending one of our Bicycle Advisory Committee meetings.

Matters Arising:

1. **Urban Bush Path:** nil to report

2. **Stockland Tooronga Village Development – Access from GCT:** Glennys J reported that the access path is now in place, but that more work is required, specifically flaring of the connection with the GCT. Heather H added that improved access is needed for those riding south along Tororong Rd and wishing to use the new link to access the GCT.
3. **Gasworks Site Redevelopment and Toorak Rd Underpass:** nil to report.
4. **Belford Rd Underpass:** No report
5. **Possible Formation of Stonnington BUG:** No report.
6. **Darebin – Yarra Link:** Julia B reported that the Community Coalition had met with staff from the DSE, as they are taking the project over from Parks Victoria, although documentation was yet to be transferred. The CC was told that the entire project would cost \$30M, including \$15M for land acquisition. However DSE did agree to request extension of the three planning permits due to expire in early August. In correspondence received by the CC since this meeting the price for land acquisition has been requoted at \$1.5M, which is closer to earlier estimates. Documentation has now been transferred.
7. **New membership rules and payment methods.** Malcolm F reported that BUG funds are now in the order of \$3,300, with another \$300 due from the Super Tuesday bike count. He agreed to write a short note of thanks to the counters for inclusion in the next newsletter. Malcolm will now send e-mails to those who have indicated that they will become financial members. Such e-mail will include details of how to pay, which will preferably be either by cheque or EFT.
8. **Gardiners Creek High St Underpass:** Glennys J reported that we need to watch for any opportunities that arise to press for improvements here.
9. **Kooyongkoot Rd issues:** John P reported that, although the revised work was not exactly as he and Glennys J had recommended, it is certainly an improvement and will make the transition from the road to the GCT much safer than previously. John has written a letter of thanks for the works. Malcolm F queried whether the closure of Reserve Rd would prevent cyclists using this very suitable route to access the GCT. He offered to write a letter to Jim Hondrakis on the subject.
10. **Solway Bridge:** The official opening was held on Saturday 24 March and John P spoke on behalf of the BUG. It was agreed not to pursue the issue of the channel for wheeling bikes adjacent to the steps, which has been installed underneath the handrail and is thus unusable.
11. **Anniversary Trail/Outer Circle Audit:** Glennys J reported that the draft report of the second stage of the audit was a much more superficial document than that for the first stage, with visionary, long-term improvements largely lacking, even though some of these had been raised during the audit. Glennys has written a response along these lines.
12. **Bicycle Network Victoria workshop.** Hedley F (for Stonnington BUG) and Alister H (for Boroondara BUG) attended the meeting as representatives. Alister provided the following report by email.

BNV are focused on the October Council elections - they are going to ask prospective councillors their attitude toward 3 or 4 bike related projects in the municipality. The projects will come from: -

- Commuter
- School
- Recreation
- Parkiteer

BNV would like our input in July so all is ready to go in August.

When dealing with council and state government be consistent, focusing on a small number of projects. If the objectives keep changing or there are too many objectives it all becomes too hard.

13. **Boroondara Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting, Friday 23/3** Those who had attended this agreed that it was a less satisfactory meeting than usual, mainly as Jim Hondrakis was absent on LSL and less preparation had been done than usual. There was no mention of several issues that we have learned of since, notably the Critical Route Corridors, the Barnsbury Rd steps and the works at Hyde Park. No minutes have been forthcoming as yet. It was agreed that the issue of the Barnsbury Rd steps needs to be followed up. Even though DSE did the work it seems probable that Council had some knowledge of the works. (Who is doing this follow up?)
14. **Victorian BUGs Meeting, Wed 28/3:** Peter C reported that this was quite well attended despite a clash with a Yarra BAC meeting. Minutes for the meeting are now available on the new web site Peter has created for the group, entitled Victorian Cycling Network. Despite the group deciding not to adopt this name Peter will not change the web site name as the site will cater for a larger audience than VBUG.

New Business

1. **Critical Route Corridors:** John P reported that the one of main concern to the BUG is that running east – west through the northern part of the municipality. Although he has many reservations about the route shown he said he would not be writing a submission. No opportunity was offered for cyclist input, and this would require considerable time and effort to do effectively.
2. **Penalties for Dooring:** Glennys J urged those present to make submissions on this important issue. See April newsletter for more details.
3. **Yarra Bend and Environs:** There was some discussion of the continuing need for improvements to the Main Yarra Trail between the Chandler Hwy and the Pipe Bridge, however no action was decided on. David L pointed out that work on the path to the Royal Talbot Hospital has stalled since the change of government.

Next meeting: This is currently scheduled for Thursday 10th May

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 payment of \$15 per household which covers 3 years. 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