



Bicycle Users Group

Newsletter March 2012

Boroondara BUG meetings are normally held on the 2nd Thursday of each month except January. Our next meeting is on Thursday 8th March. 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.

Opinion

V/Line Still Letting Cyclists Down

Mid-January, between the high holiday season and the resumption of business as usual, should be the ideal time to take your cycling group to the country or the seaside for a change of pace. Both the trains and the roads should be less busy than usual I reckoned. My chosen route was from Marshall to Barwon Heads, then across to Queenscliff, and back to South Geelong via the Bellarine Rail Trail. The ride was a huge success, but the train travel was fraught to say the least.

Because my group is quite large we divided ourselves, six and eight, between two trains, both travelling from Southern Cross to Marshall in the morning, and returning from South Geelong in the afternoon. Both groups encountered negative attitudes ranging from mild disapproval to downright hostility on our various trains, even though all but one were less than half full. In one case we saw another cyclist put off the train to wait at Geelong for the next service, at least an hour later, and possibly much fuller as it was coming through from Warrnambool.

This is an issue that will not go away. On the one hand there are more and more recreational cycling groups forming in Melbourne, most dominated by retired people. On the other hand there are more and more attractive cycling destinations for them in country Victoria, as new rail trails and other bike paths come on stream. Many of the rail trails begin at towns with train services and this is the obvious and most environmentally friendly way for cyclists to access them. It seems like a match made in heaven, especially as the cyclists will normally be travelling against the peak flow – out to the country in the morning and back to the city late in the day – thus using space on the trains that would otherwise go to waste. For hospitality providers in country centres these cyclists will provide a real boost to business if only they can get there.

One thing V/Line could do right away to improve its service to cyclists is to provide much better information, both on its web site and in the form of a pamphlet. A friend who travelled recently in Britain brought back a copy of a pamphlet detailing exactly how many bike spaces are available on which trains and what the rules are on each of the services.

If you search on the V/Line web site under ‘bikes’ you’ll find only very vague and general information.

Bicycles can be carried free on V/Line trains, if there is space available.

Space for bikes is generally available on reserved, locomotive-hauled services, arriving or departing from Bairnsdale, Shepparton, Swan Hill or Warrnambool.

Space is limited on Sprinter and VLocity trains

The list of loco-hauled services provided is out of date and there are currently such services on more lines than those listed. Many people don't know how to identify loco-hauled services on the timetable. But even if they do how can they judge how many bike spaces are likely to be available on any given train?

An even better kept secret is the existence of D-vans. I could find no mention of them on the web site at all. But for those in the know they do provide a solution for groups of cyclists travelling to the country. My understanding, based largely on hearsay, is that your group should number at least ten, and you should contact the Group Travel Officer to book your van at least a week in advance. They're not luxurious and you may not get much help from the station staff with using them, but they do have lots of space – for twenty bikes or more. Night vision goggles and ocky straps help!

I understand that D-vans are to be attached regularly to some of the recently reinstated train services to Wodonga to provide access to the various rail trails that now connect with this line. However I could find no mention of this on the web site. Apart from publicising the D-vans, and making more information available about actual numbers of spaces on particular trains, there are several other things that can and should be done in the medium and longer terms.

A booking system for bikes on loco-hauled services would go a long way to avoiding situations like those we witnessed recently. Many cyclists can be flexible about when and where they travel and can choose train services with spaces available if only they can find out in advance which these are. If bookings on a particular loco-hauled service are particularly heavy a D-van could even be arranged by V/Line without a customer request. Now there's a utopian idea!

New trains could be designed, and old trains could be refitted, so that they allow more space to be made available for bikes when not required for passengers. Flip up seats are the obvious solution here and they are used very effectively on some of the Met trains.

Indeed VLocity trains already use this system to provide space for wheelchairs. Wheelchair users should certainly have priority, but in fact their numbers are very small compared with cyclists on the trains. Provision for wheelchairs is very generous on some of these trains and at times of unexpected heavy cyclist demand it would make sense to offer some of these spaces to cyclists on the condition that they vacate the train should the space be required for a wheelchair. I'm sure that the young woman left at Geelong would have been happy to accept such a condition.

V/Line staff vary in their approach to enforcing the rules, which they have clearly been briefed about, but which are a mystery to most of the cyclists attempting to board the trains. A few appear to take perverse pleasure in enforcing them, but most do so with varying degrees of discomfort, while a few are ready to turn a blind eye to transgressions. On our recent excursion one staff member photographed bikes intruding into the passageway, while another told the woman organising our larger group as they squeezed onto a loco-hauled train that she should have booked one of the completely unpublicised D-vans! Staff should not be put in the difficult position of refusing passage to cyclists for no defensible reason at all.

Many older people are taking up cycling as a way to maintain both physical and mental fitness. They are using trains for a number of reasons: it's more sociable, it saves money, and it minimises the impact of their activities on the environment. Surely these are trends to be encouraged.

My group thoroughly enjoyed their seaside ride and I'm sure we'll do it again next summer. However as one of them observed, it does cast a shadow over your enjoyment wondering if you're going to be left stranded far from home at the end of the ride.

Julia Blunden

Trail Notes

Ring Road Path Closures and Detours

In November 2011, The Alliance notified users about the shared user path temporary detour around a new work site on the south side of the M80 Ring Road, Altona bound at Gowanbrae. The new work site has been established and we've just opened a new entry gate from the Ring Road for construction vehicle access.

With regard to the SUP temporary detour, the realignment has been built, with one slight modification to the tie in from the temporary path back onto the old path. This was brought forward due to the steepness of the slope in the original plan and has allowed us to achieve a safer path for users. As mentioned previously, the path will be narrow and the corners will not be ideal

for fast riding. We again will encourage users to approach the site slowly and dismount if necessary. Concrete barriers will be placed along both sides of the detour path and there will be an entrance gate at each end for construction vehicles.

We are making some signs advising users of the temporary detour ahead and to dismount if necessary. These will be placed in advance of the detour at each end (x2 signs) and at each diversion point (x2 signs). The detour will be in place and ready for use by the end of this week. I have attached an updated alignment plan showing the only change (light blue line).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mathew Kamanis | Senior Communications Adviser, Tulla Sydney Alliance
Phone | 1300 297 090; Fax | (03) 9289 4199; Email | community@tullasydney.com.au

Events and Activities

Brisbane Bay Cycle Stay (Advertisement)

Inspired by Loirelife in France, Lou and John Carroll have set up their own cycling B&B, which they describe thus:

A unique travel experience centred around Brisbane, in south-east Queensland on the eastern coast of Australia - one of the great tourist destinations of the world. Home based - 200 metres from Moreton Bay, a beautiful body of water separated from the Pacific Ocean by two of the biggest sand islands in the world - and the key word for your stay is FLEXIBILITY.

Our main focus is on cycling – as much or as little as you choose - but if cycling is not for you, there are many more activities on offer (as you would expect in a world-class, sub-tropical tourist destination), and we will be happy to discuss these with you.

Imagine returning from a day's outing and beginning your evening on our balcony overlooking the bay and reminiscing about your adventures: then sampling sumptuous modern Australian cuisine, perhaps with a touch of Asia, accompanied by well chosen wine tastings. We will happily supply your meals but again, you have the option of self catering.

Full Details at www.brisbanebaycyclestay.com.au

General News

Monash Walking and Cycling Survey

On the 27th and 29th of February Monash City Council will be holding discussion meetings open to the public regarding the Cycling and Walking Strategy for the city of Monash. These are held in two different locations:

Monday, 27 February: 7 - 8.30pm at Clayton Community Centre

Wednesday, 29 February: 7 - 8.30pm at Monash Council Civic Centre

For more information go to <http://www.monash.vic.gov.au/feedback/cycling-in-monash.htm>

If you have filled out the online survey and requested that you would like to attend the project event then you should get a flyer this week from the Council. If you haven't had the chance to do the survey I would also encourage you to do this, you can access it at the above web address.

National Ride to School Day - Friday 23 March 2012

Ride to school day is a national event held in March each year. The day is about students learning how fun and easy it is to ride to school. This year over 1,050 schools around the country registered for the day, with over 140,000 students starting their school day by riding, scooting or walking! To sign up your school visit the [Ride2School website](#)

Ride2School Program

Bicycle Network Victoria's Ride2School program works with schools to help develop riding activities and to encourage more students to ride and walk more often. The Ride2School program has practical and tailored strategies, guidance and advice for every school. All schools can participate by registering on the [Ride2School website](#).

For further information:

- email: [Anna Haygreen](#), Sustainable Transport Officer
- phone: 9278 4542

Boroondara News

Meeting with Josh Frydenberg

On Monday 20th February four BBUG members, John Parker, Glennys Jones, Peter Campbell and Julia Blunden met with Josh Frydenberg, MHR for Kooyong, to discuss cycling infrastructure needed in his electorate, which covers much of Boroondara. We focussed on three key projects we would like to see go ahead. These are the Darebin-Yarra link, the Hawthorn to Box Hill Bike Trail (formerly referred to as the East – West Link) and the Belford Rd underpass for the Yarra Trail.

Josh gave us a very good hearing and showed a quick understanding of the issues. As a cyclist himself he clearly appreciated the merit of these projects. While we were with him he drafted a letter to Premier Ted Baillieu in support of all three projects which he undertook to send after carrying out some further checking on a few of our claims. We very much hope that Premier Baillieu is receptive to the views of his federal colleague.

Julia Blunden

Minutes of Boroondara BUG Meeting, Thursday 9th February 2012

Elgin Inn, Hawthorn

MINUTES

Attendance and Apologies

Present: Gordon Macmillan, Julia Blunden, John Parker, David Leong, Graeme Stone, Glennys Jones, Malcolm Faul, Ken Morrison (Chair), Betty Pearce

Apologies: Linda Rohrs, Peter Campbell

Correspondence:

In

Email from Stonnington Council re signs on golf course prohibiting cycling

Christmas card from Mayor Heinz Kreutz

Copy of email from Adrian Miller to Boroondara Council re poor condition of eastbound lane at the West end of Madeline Street (Welfare Parade end) in Glen Iris

Copy of email from Adam Houston to Stonnington Council re gap beside grate near Dunlop St crossing on GCT

Email from the Kew Recreation Centre Manager re bike parking – Graeme S to respond

Out

Nil

Matters Arising:

1. **Malvern Valley Golf Course:** John P reported that he has made a new contact who may help push for the Golfers Choice path to be opened up to cyclists.
2. **East – West link:** Peter C was not present to report on this.
3. **Stockland Tooronga Village Development – Access from GCT:** Glennys J reported that Coles has now acquired the remaining undeveloped land adjacent to the GCT, and that they have agreed to reinstate the temporary path on the east side of Tooronga Rd. Hopefully this will be in place by Easter. Those present thanked Glennys and Graeme S for the remarkable persistence they have shown on this issue and congratulated them on achieving this very satisfactory outcome.
4. **Gasworks Site Redevelopment and Toorak Rd Underpass:** Glennys J reported that construction work continues but without impact on the GCT as yet.
5. **Belford Rd Underpass:** Nothing new to report. Those present at the last Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting noted that the Doncaster Rail Proposal is something that needs to be watched in relation to this and to the trails generally, both to avoid adverse outcomes for cyclists and to identify opportunities for improved cycle routes.
6. **Possible Formation of Stonnington BUG:** Hedley F was not present at the meeting and had not sent a report.
7. **Darebin – Yarra Link:** Julia B reported that a number of meetings with bureaucrats and politicians are planned to push for this currently stalled project to proceed. Community Coalition members will meet with DSE staff on 21/2, and a

meeting with Kew MLA Andrew McIntosh is also being sought. BBUG members will meet with Kooyong MHR Josh Frydenberg on 20/2 and will raise this with him too. Boroondara Mayor Heinz Kreutz has written to the State Government in support of the link.

8. **Kooyongkoot Rd issues:** John P reported that work is being done to improve the link from the road to the GCT.
9. **Solway Bridge:** Work on the bridge has been finished and it was opened before Christmas. There are now only a few finishing touches needed to the approaches. The official opening is presumably now imminent. It was agreed that an open invitation should be extended to all cyclists to attend this. **Julia B** agreed to contact Anna Haygreen about this.
10. **Anniversary Trail Audit:** The report on this has now been completed and Glennys J and Julia B who participated in the audit have both emailed comments to Chris Hui. Julia B praised the report as being much more comprehensible than previous audit reports.
11. **BUG participation at the Ashburton Festival 26th February 2012:** Julia B reported that so far there have been only three volunteers, including herself, to help with the family bike ride from 9.30-11am. At least six are needed. Volunteers are also needed for valet bike parking all day. Anyone who can help should contact Julia, or Chris Hui direct.

New Business

1. **Formalising Membership and Possible Incorporation:** Malcolm F reported that he has now identified 32 people who are prepared to pay \$15 for 3 years BBUG membership. It was agreed that formalizing our membership list in the way is a worthwhile exercise in itself as it gives our organization greater credibility. In order to incorporate we need a president, as well as a treasurer and secretary which we currently have. It was agreed that a decision to incorporate may be made in the future if and when it seems advantageous to do so.
2. **BNV Workshop:** Jason den Hollander offered last year to run another BUG workshop in February. However as no-one has heard anything further it appears this is not happening.
3. **Combined BUGs Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 28/3. It was agreed that **Julia B** should go ahead and organize this at the same venue as previously.
4. **Meeting with Josh Frydenberg, MHR for Kooyong:** This has been arranged for 10am Monday 20/2 at his electoral office, 695 Burke Rd, Camberwell. Those attending will be **Julia B, John P, Glennys J and Peter C.**
5. **Boroondara Open Space Strategy:** Glennys J reported that she, Julia B and Phil Crohn attended a Council workshop on this at Ashburton. One of the most praiseworthy goals of the strategy is to beef up provisions for a developer contribution to open space of up to 5% of the land or its real value. **Julia B** circulated a draft BBUG submission prior to the meeting. She reported that she has already received several comments which she will act on and intends a major re-vamp of the submission in the light of discussion at the Council workshop. This will be circulated to BBUG members for approval.
6. **Arrangements for March Newsletter and Meeting during Julia B's Absence:** **Julia B** agreed to send out the March newsletter before she leaves on 28/2. It was agreed that the March meeting will go ahead. **Julia** will organize the room before she leaves. Volunteers will be needed to prepare the agenda prior to the meeting and take the minutes at the meeting.

Other Business

1. **Community Bike Ride:** Malcolm F reported that he and Graham Ellis had volunteered on behalf of BBUG to assist with a ride organized by Melbourne Water along a section of the GCT in January. Despite some confusion over dates the ride was a great success and the lunch provided excellent.
2. **Betty Pearce:** As this was Betty's first BBUG meeting she was invited to raise any issues. Betty said her number one concern is the disappearance of bike lanes at intersections just where you need them most!
3. **Boroondara Sustainability Festival:** The question of BBUG participation at this was raised. As yet the BUG has not been invited to share a stall, and as an unincorporated body we can't have our own. The view of those who have represented the BUG at such events in the past was that without a spot on a stall there is little hope of achieving any worthwhile publicity for the BUG.
4. **Proposed MacDonalds, Highfield Rd:** Glennys J reported that a MacDonalds has been proposed for the old service station site. Council has voted against this but the decision may be appealed at VCAT. Such a development could have adverse consequences for the bike lane.

Next meeting: This is currently scheduled for Thursday 8th March.

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: Mikeatleisure@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