

This Week with the Ghostriders



THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GHOSTRIDERS

What's News ?

A few weeks ago I was rummaging about in my bike shed when I made a somewhat surprising discovery. There, hiding sadly in the corner, languishing under a liberal layer of dust and cobwebs, was my HASA mountain bike. This had been my prized souvenir from our 2006 Great China Ride but for the last couple of years it had not seen the light of day. Both tyres were flat and the chain was as dry as the Sahara Desert. I must admit that I felt a little guilty as I thought back to that day in Kunming when 5 of us had excitedly chosen our precious China souvenirs from Miss Wu's Bike Shop.

I decided that it was time to resurrect the HASA from its hibernation and take it out on the trail again. After all, I had paid the princely sum of \$120 for it, so it owed me a few kilometers. The next hour was spent evicting the resident spiders, cleaning,

pumping up the tyres, oiling the chain and test riding around the front yard. I did not care that it probably weighed about 16 kg, the truth was that it really was fun to ride. The gears probably worked better than those on my regular Avanti and the low gears made hill climbing slow and easy. In for a penny in for a pound I thought, so proceeded to further add to the already prodigious weight by adding a rear rack and pannier. If I'm going to be slow I might as well be comfortable as well.

There was another line to my reasoning. With only a couple of months left before we depart for South America I felt I needed to get in some more practice on a mountain bike, since that is what we will be riding over there. Hence for the past three Thursday rides I have been rolling the Warburton Trail on the seat of my resurrected HASA. I will probably keep this up until after the South America ride when it

may well be relegated back into the darkest back corner of the shed for another couple of years.

In this newsletter I have some updates from **Glenda Wise** and **Bob Paterson**. You will also find an interesting article from **Eddie Barkla** (one of our Bendigo Cycling colleagues). After the recent road rage incident involving a motorist and cyclist it makes for challenging and thought provoking reading.

I would also like to remind all our riders about the forthcoming Beach Rd Ride to be held on **Sunday June 6th**. It has been a long time since we ventured down to the Mecca of Melbourne cycling and it would be fantastic to see a big turnout of Ghostriders to share the ride with us. See below for more information.

How About a Retro Ride ?

The AFL footballers have it, the Aussie cricketers have it, so why not the Ghostriders? For some time I have been thinking about running a "Retro Ride". What I am

I would encourage all our riders to come along and join in the fun on this ride as it really has something for everyone. Ross Bury will be the convenor and chief guide for this ride.

Sun June 20th—Mt St Leonards Training Walk

Everyone is invited to join in this challenging 15 km walk. Watch out for more information and starting time.

Sat July 3rd—RETRO RIDE

Jells Park to Carrum and back. Charity fundraiser ride.

Monday May 31st 2010

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thinking of is a designated ride where we all return to our cycling roots. The idea is that we would get your oldest bike (if you have one) and dress in the type of gear that you wore to your first ride. Old trackie dacks, jeans, T shirts, jumpers, tennis shoes?

The point would not only be to remind us how far we have come, but also to have a bit of a chuckle at the same time. I would also like to see this ride be used as a fundraiser for a nominated charity. Each rider would pay \$5 to be a part of it but any rider not entering into the retro spirit would pay double as a fine.

The date that I was thinking of for this ride would be **Sat July 3rd**. This has been set aside for a Jells Park to Carrum Ride. I would gladly welcome feedback and suggestions regarding this concept.

Coming Rides & Other News

Thursday June 3rd—Warby Trail Ride

Start at Woori Yallock at 12 noon or COGS at 1.00 pm or Woori Yallock at 1.40 pm. Since this is the first Thursday of the month, lunch will be in Warburton.

SUNDAY June 6th—Beach Rd Ride 9.00 am start

We will be starting from the end of North Rd at 9.00 am sharp and be riding down to Frankston and back. Road bikes preferred. It is a flattish ride but we will aim to keep a respectable speed (probably between 25 and 30 kph).

Thurs June 10th—Warby Trail Ride

Start at Woori Yallock at 12 noon or COGS at 1.00 pm or Woori Yallock at 1.40 pm.

Monday June 14th—Queens Birthday Ride—Inner City Bike Paths Route

This is a very popular ride which will show you some of Melbourne's best bike paths. There are a variety of start points so that you can adjust your total ride distance between 45km to 90 km. Best suited to mountain bikes or hybrids. Morning tea will be at Ivanhoe Golf Club and lunch at Fairfield Boat House.

Regular Thursday Ride Details

Each Thursday we conduct rides along the Warburton Trail. Visitors are always welcome to join us. There are several alternative start times and meeting points to choose from.

11.10 am Early Group—Meet at Woori Yallock and ride the full distance down to Lilydale before meeting the second group at COGS at 1.00 pm

12 noon Main Group—meet at Woori Yallock and ride to COGS at Mt Evelyn to start the return ride at 1.00 pm

1.00 pm COGS Group leave and ride as a combined group to Woori Yallock where we usually arrive at about 1.40 pm.

1.50 pm Woori Yallock all riders regroup for the ride to Milgrove where we stop for lunch before the ride back to your chosen start point.

In this way all riders can choose a starting time and ride distance to suit their level of bike fitness. On the leg between COGS and Milgrove we expect all riders to stay together as much as possible (ie no bolting).



But Wait—There's More.....

Glenda has now made it to the West Coast.

Yesterday I received an update from our intrepid cross country rider Glenda informing me that she had safely reached Freemantle. Apparently the weather has been sensational and in typical Glenda style, the rain always stays away until she is safely under cover. When I asked her what happens next she casually replied that her plan is now to ride back again in the opposite direction !

I put a challenge to her that, if she rode all the way back to Belgrave Heights, we would all line up in Mt Morton Rd outside her house to form a guard of honour. Let's just watch this story unfold in the weeks ahead.

Bob and Judy Patterson are currently in Canada spending a few weeks with their son. Apparently Bob is doing a lot of extreme mountain biking while he is there. He sent this picture to share with you.

John & Kerry Dawson are continuing their travels through the Middle East. The last I heard from them they were heading into Iran. The picture shows them asking for directions from a local herdsman.

Bob Andrews is currently trekking in the Kimberley area of Western Australia as part of his training for the forthcoming South America ride. He has reported that, due to unseasonal heavy rains, many of the rivers are flooded. He has been flown in by light plane to avoid the floods.

It is great to see so many of our riders out in the real world, experiencing life to the fullest. Adventures are all around you if you are just game enough to step out of the comfort zone and see what is waiting for you.

Thursday 27th May—In Which we all Arrive in a Thoroughly Feculent State.

The weather bureau had not exactly been very clear in their predictions. Just what exactly



does "a few showers" actually mean ? Cyclists need a lot clearer instructions in order to adequately prepare for a ride along the Warby Trail. Although the Warby Trail is not exactly Kakoda, it does offer widely differing conditions depending on the rainfall.

I took a look at the sky and noted that I couldn't see any. Sky that is! All I could see was a canopy of low lying dark clouds. Not so promising. In spite of that, I really felt like I needed a ride, so I dragged the overladen HASA out onto the back of the car, donned my wet weather jacket and headed off.

About half way to Woori Yallock the clouds burst and torrents of rain streamed down my windscreen. Somewhere in my imagination a small voice whispered "Turn back now while it is not too late". An-

other voice countered with "This is but a passing shower—the sun will break through soon". I chose to listen to the second voice and continued to Woori Yallock. The rain was still pouring and the car park was looking like Lake Eyre in a monsoon.

With no sign of any other riders I wobbled off towards Lilydale. A couple of minutes later the speedo stopped working because it was full of water. The mud and horse manure mixed into a sloppy amalgam which was soon liberally spraying itself into my face and up my backside. I tried to tell myself that life is meant to have ups and downs, Yins and Yangs or whatever you call it. Without days like this we would not appreciate those beautiful sunny days when riding the trail is like a stroll through the Garden of Eden.

I battled and slogged my way slowly up to COGS, passing Geoff James and Peter Booth in the process. Both of them were headed in the OPPOSITE direction.

Since I have made the decision to ride all the way to Lilydale each Thursday I continued over the top and down the other side before turning back and waiting at COGS. For a time it looked like I would be the only rider, but to my relief I was gradually joined by some of the other old pillars of the peloton.

I would like to say that by this time the skies had cleared, the birds were singing and the sun was shining. That, however would be gilding the lily, even more than I could honestly do. The rain had, however diminished from a torrent to a gentle drizzle. Perhaps at this point it is good to ride in the rain as it might help to wash some of the squalor from our backs as we ride.

By the time the peloton was complete we numbered about a dozen riders—not bad for such an inclement day. We even managed to maintain pelotonic discipline and thus ensure that the rider behind was blessed with a liberal spray of "unholy water" from our rear tyres.

I would have to admit that the trail was probably the wettest I have ever seen it. Surface water, manure and mud was everywhere (knicks, jackets, faces, helmets, bikes, etc—some even on the trail itself).

It was a relief to reach Milgrove Bakery and head for the warmth of the inside tables. I was not so sure if the proprietors were happy to see the filthy detritus that we left behind on their floors, chairs and tables.

On the way back to the cars we reminded each other how nice it will be to get home and have a nice hot shower.

And that is how we celebrated the last Autumnal ride for 2010. Next week we begin our winter rides.....



Some Thoughts to Ponder

Eddie Barkla is a great cycling friend of mine from Bendigo. He maintains a weekly newsletter to anyone interested in cycling and he has also made the long trip down to Melbourne to ride with the Ghostriders. In his latest newsletter he published a great article on anger management. I believe it has a great message for cyclists and motorists alike and I have reproduced it here for you to consider.

"He who angers you conquers you." ~Elizabeth Kenny

"Anger dwells only in the bosom of fools." ~Albert Einstein

"Anger blows out the lamp of the mind." ~Robert G. Ingersoll

"Anger is never without reason, but seldom with a good one." ~ Benjamin Franklin

"At the core of all anger is a need that is not being fulfilled." ~ Marshall B. Rosenberg

"Resentment is like taking poison and waiting for the other person to die." ~ Malachy McCourt

"Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret." ~ Ambrose Bierce

"If a small thing has the power to make you angry, does that not indicate something about your size?" ~ Sydney J. Harris

"If you do not wish to be prone to anger, do not feed the habit, give it nothing which may tend to its increase." ~ Epictetus 55AD - 135AD

It would seem hard to imagine that anyone of us missed the news this week of the incident down at Grovedale where a motorist vented his anger at the cyclists that made a rude finger gesture. Such a simple action that could have prompted such an angry response or was it? One thing we cannot be is the judge and jury of what did or did not actually take place out there on the road. But it would be fair to say that there were two angry people that both had their inner anger buttons flicked just one more aggressive than the other. The application of the old Chinese proverb - "two wrongs don't make a right" would seem appropriate.

Anger is not all bad and it is an

emotion we all have been programmed with, it is what is done with the anger that becomes to real issue. Feeling aggrieved that is allowed to be justified will become resentment and resentment at its worst will become anger if left unresolved. Bullies are angry people that don't have to physically abuse their victims it can well be emotional and through verbal bullying. To put it short and succinct anger is an unfulfilled need which is usually fuelled by the need for vengeance or as a result of being rejected as both are on the same line but with different outcomes and end of the spectrum. One erupts the other withdraws, one is anger being vented the other anger being suppressed. Other recognisable emotions that are anger related are things like - fits of rage, malice, jealousy, envy, brawling, slander, use of foul language, bitterness, wickedness, greed, deceit, arrogance and hostility, lack of respect.

Anger needs to be dealt with and well managed and knowing what is the underlying root cause is for us as individuals may well assist when we sense anger coming as a result of something that has offended us and the strategy of dealing with the rising emotion of choice. Angry cyclists are a slur on all cyclists with their actions out on the road in being a responsible shared road users. Their anger is usually veiled with a justification of being "the exercising of their rights" if ever questioned as to their behaviour.

There are many subtle things we can do as cyclists that can come across as arrogance and promote anger and resentment through intimidating other shared road users.

* Riding up the inside of motorist waiting at the lights that have their indicators on to make a left hand turn.

* Riding up the inside of motorist waiting at the lights and block their continued safe passage by filling up the lane in front of them.

* Riding close to cars in traffic when we are passing (but are aggrieved when the cars pass us at the same closeness).

* Balancing on the bike at the lights across the lane over the intersection lines for safe stopping.

* Riding on the white line of a bike lane closest to the traffic when we have the whole lane to ourselves.

* Giving out abuse and using hand gestures

* Failing to use lights to be safe in reduced light

Anger can be a dormant in the heart for many years, it is like a silent prison that needs no walls or chains as none of these will contain the anger when awakened when we least expect it.

Some may well justify being angry and channel the anger into the pedals of the bike and be a winner. The reality however can be pretty hollow as the anger is the winner if this is what you need to get the best out of the bike and miss enjoying the experience. Like most things in life we can continue to be part of the problem or make a choice that would indicate we are prepared to be part of the solution. If you are truly seeking to be free of anger then forgiveness is the only key to freedom of the demon of anger that will ride you in some shape or form all your life.

"Two things a man should never be angry at: what he can help, and what he cannot help." ~ Thomas Fuller.

"There was never an angry man that thought his anger unjust." ~ St. Francis De Sales.

Article reproduced from Bendigo Cycling Network Newsletter. My sincere thanks to Eddie Barkla.

A Word a Week

Some cruel people have looked at me in the past and accused me of riding while in a **farctate** state. Do you think this is true ?

Some Granny Humour

First person "My granny started riding at 97 years of age. She rides 20 km a day".

Second person "That's fantastic".

First Person "Not really, she's now so far away we have no idea where she is".

In the Sick Bay

Mal Bowmaker has suffered a recurrence of his back problem and will be off the bike for a few weeks. He is very eager to rejoin us on the trail as soon as possible.

"King Jon" Bate has recovered from his back problem but has now come down with the flu. Or could this just be an excuse to avoid the cold, wet weather ?

Henk Van Trojen is recovering from a fall on his road bike suffered last weekend. He has some serious bruising but the bike is in worse condition that he is.

We wish them all a speedy recovery.



Apparently this is NOT a trick photo—it really happened