

This Week with the Ghostriders



THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GHOSTRIDERS

What's News ?

What a difference three days makes. Last Thursday afternoon our brave riders endured one of the coldest and wettest days of the winter as we battled our way along the Warby Trail. In fact the weather was so bad that I was seriously wondering whether I would be the only one silly enough to turn up for the ride. As I sat in my car at Woori Yallock, looking out at the sodden skies, I was almost secretly hoping that on one else would turn up and thus give me the perfect excuse for heading back home, warm and dry in the comfort of my car.

When Connie pulled up next to me my potential escape clause had vanished and I had to pretend that I was really looking forward to getting covered in mud and filth from the trail. To my surprise we actually ended up with 11 hardy souls who threw wisdom and common sense out the window and completed the weekly ride. The Warby Trail actually stands up very well to heavy rainfall, but the continued deluge of the past few weeks has left large sections waterlogged

and somewhat slippery. I think that all of our riders are now really looking forward to the early advent of springtime and the welcome prospect of dryer trails and some warming rays from the sun.

Earlier in the week we held the inaugural Tuesday morning mountain bike ride. We had five riders participate and others have since told me that they plan to attend future Tuesday rides. The ride is approximately 30 km long and runs over a variety of surfaces between Emerald and Gembrook. There are a few challenging hills, including the climb from the bottom of the Cockatoo up Bailey Rd, that make this ride more difficult than the Warby Trail. Fortunately there is a good bakery in Gembrook. At this stage the plan is to run the Tuesday morning bike ride on the first Tuesday of each month.

On **Sunday 8th Aug** we returned to the Bay area to complete our **Bayside Bike Paths Ride**. Although the early morning in Emerald was freezing, the skies remained clear all day, ensuring that we had an abso-

lutely delightful ride. The ride started at the end of South Rd and followed the sealed bike paths all the way to Fisherman's Bend. In the twelve months since we last ventured down to this precinct it was encouraging to see the continued development of this bike path. In fact, this ride is so good I would thoroughly recommend it to our riders to try at any time of the year. We had a fantastic group of riders with the ladies actually outnumbering the men for once. I have included some pictures and a ride story later in this newsletter.

Next **Saturday 14th August** we will be holding our final training exercise for our 2010 South America Team members. This will take the form of an energetic and hilly bushwalk. We will be starting from the car park at St Luke's Anglican Church at 10.00 am. Although this is designated as a South America exercise, anyone else wanting a good workout is very welcome to join us for the day. That will be final time our team will be together before they depart for Peru in September.

On another note I would also like to welcome back **Bob and Judy Patterson** from their ex-

Monday Aug 9th 2010

Contact Details

- Contact Person: Dennis Dawson
- Email: ghostriders@netspace.net.au
- Web: www.warbyghostriders.com
- Mail Address: PO Box 196, Emerald, Vic 3782
- Phone: 5968 3307
- Mobile: 0419 106 324

tended stay in Canada. I am sure they have brought back a treasure trove of wonderful memories.

On the medical front, this week **John Bird** heads off to hospital to undergo a hip replacement. This will keep him off the bike for about 6 weeks. I am sure all our riders wish him a full and speedy recovery.

A couple of weeks later **Gerry Driessen** will also be going under the knife to also have a hip replacement to go along with his dual knee replacements. It seems the surgeon is making a new man of him.

Tuesday Morning Fitness Group

Each Tuesday you are invited to join us for a brisk and scenic walk around the tracks of Emerald. Each walk starts at 10 am and is finished soon after 11 am. On the first Tuesday of each month we have a bike ride, instead of a walk. For more details give me a call on 5968 3307.

Everyone is invited to participate.

Upcoming Rides & Activities

Tues Aug 10th—Tuesday Fitness Group

Walk starts at 10 am sharp.

Thurs Aug 12th—Warby Trail Ride

Start at Woori Yallock at 12 noon or COGS at 1.00 pm or Woori Yallock at 1.40 pm. I would like to challenge our riders to start earlier than usual and ride down to Lilydale to see the progress of the overpass construction over Maroon-dah Hwy.

Sat Aug 14th—South America Team—Final Training Walk

This will be our final training walk before departure. Start in Cockatoo at 10.00 am. Although this is a designated training walk for the Andes team, we invite everyone else to come along and enjoy a good workout.

Tues Aug 17th—Tuesday Fitness Group

Walk starts at 10 am sharp.

Thurs Aug 19th—Warby Trail Ride

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

Sun Aug 22nd—Poowong Circuit 10.00 am start

This is a long time favourite ride through delightful Gippsland rolling hills. The ride starts at Lang Lang and is approximately 75 km in length. Rated moderate, best for road bikes.

Tues Aug 24th—Tuesday Fitness Group

Walk starts at 10 am sharp.

Thurs Aug 26th—Warby Trail Ride

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

Tues Aug 31st—Tuesday Fitness Group

Walk starts at 10 am sharp.

Thurs Sep 2nd—Warby Trail Ride (First Ride of Springtime)

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

Sat Sep 4th—Special Weekend Ride—Details to be Announced

This will be our first weekend ride for Springtime, so we want it to be a celebration of the end of winter. Details are not finalised yet so watch out for updates.

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 re-group 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).

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Bayside Bike Paths Ride Sun Aug 8th

Peru might have Machu Picchu, England might have Stone Henge and Greece might have the Acropolis, but Melbourne has something even more mysterious and enigmatic than any of these—the ruins of the greatest Ferris Wheel in the Southern Hemisphere. For three weeks this monumental symbol of Victoria's plan to stage a Ferris Wheel led recovery, rotated proudly over the Docklands Precinct. While the wheel was turning, the turnstiles were steadily clicking off the dollars towards financial nirvana for the surrounding shopkeepers. For a short time it seemed like the government had devised a foolproof method of making money and keeping the citizens dizzy at the same time. Unfortunately the entire structure proved to be as flawed as the underlying philosophy. Cracks started to appear simultaneously in both the structure and the smiles of those who had dreamt up the whole plan in the first place.

Rather than risk the structure toppling over and causing mas-

sive destruction and loss of life, the authorities had no choice other than to dismantle it and leave the base behind as a monument to man's engineering ineptitude.

Thus, for the past three years or so, the towering steel supports have probed to the sky as an embarrassing reminder of what might have been. In some sought of strange macabre twist perhaps the sight of the Ferris Wheel ruin might become a tourist attraction in its own right. At the very least it does provide a prominent landmark from which to navigate towards the Docklands Shopping Precinct.

The aim of the Bayside Bike Paths Ride is to follow the bike paths along the perimeter of the bay from Brighton through to Docklands. This ride was introduced last year and was voted as a "most repeat". We met near the end of South Rd under a completely cloudless sky and I was encouraged to see a big turnout of the fairer sex for this ride. Bob Patterson was also back from his recent

extended holiday in Canada.

We all set off in high spirits but soon found our progress impeded by a consistent head wind which kept our speed down to about 18 kph. In spite of this we all thoroughly enjoyed the incredible scenery and the activity that was taking place all around us.

The path winds through Elwood and St Kilda before reaching Port Melbourne. In the past you were then forced to detour through back streets, but now the path continues all the way to Lorimer Street. From there a short section along deserted roads takes you back to the beachfront and the Docklands Precinct. From there you can pick up the path again and follow it all the way to the site of the Sacred Ferris Wheel Ruin.

There is a wide variety of food shops at the base of the sacred ruins and we chose to have lunch at the Coffee Club in delightful winter sunshine. The next hour or so was spent in animated conversation, enjoying the food and each other's company. Of course we took great comfort from the fact that we could look forward to a lovely tail wind all the way back to Brighton.



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The return ride was completed in much quicker time and by 2 pm we were all safely back at the cars, having had a thoroughly enjoyable ride. This really is a great ride that would be suitable to a wide range of cyclists and it can also be done at virtually any time of the year because of the ready availability of shelters and shops along the way.

We will certainly be adding this ride into our 2011 calendar and I would encourage all our readers to give it a go during the coming warmer summer months. Thanks to all those who participated and made it such a fun day.



Some of our riders exploring the shopping centre near the base of the Ferris Wheel Ruins. Note the delightful blue skies.



Exploring an alternate waterside route on the return ride. It was amazing just how quiet this area is at the weekends. There are kilometres of smooth waterfront paths to roll along.