



Banyule BUG Newsletter

May
2022

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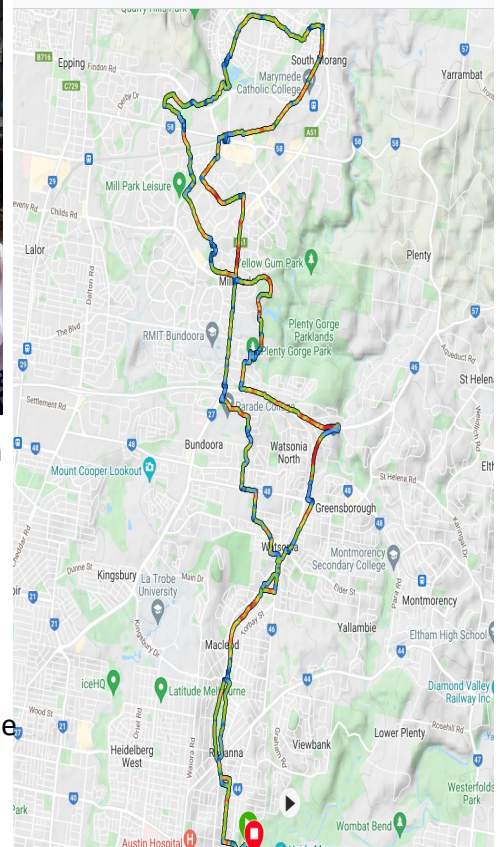
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Our thanks to the Office of Anthony Carbines MP, state member for Ivanhoe, for their support in providing the photocopying facilities for this newsletter.

It is safe to say that the greatest development in bicycles over the last few years has been the progress made in e-bikes. Battery storage of electricity has improved greatly. The efficiency and design of motors, at times, is a marvel of engineering. Added to this is the quality and material of frames, including light-weight aluminium to full carbon fibre. So, with all of this in mind, here is a link to an invention/development from India. Below are two stills from the movie of the inventor of this system demonstrating two of its qualities. This could be your next e-bike. Click the **"fire proof" image** to see the full video.



Of growing popularity are our very own Banyule BIG rides departing each Sunday at 0900 from Warringal Park. These rides are aimed for all levels of ability and are intended to be short (35k) not too strenuous rides. Such a ride from earlier this year was led by Cheryl C and was entitled - "Three Lakes Ride". This ride was well attended and took in (for some) trails seldom ridden. Well done Cheryl.



The route for this terrific ride was from Warringal Park to Uni Hill. Then following the Plenty Rd trail for a while turned left and headed for the Epping Rail Trail. From here, north once more to Mill Park Lakes and Mirrabucca Wetlands. Home followed a similar route. This was an attractive and not heart-breaking ride. Keep your eye out for any upcoming rides in the near future.

Here is a short video of our ride. Click the **three bikes image** to view the video.

Little Vic

Irene G from the Latte Group took part in the Little Vic and sent the following comments/pictures of her adventure.

Overall though the 3 days of riding included 2nd day Halls gap to Dunkeld 100 k, 3rd day different route back to Halls Gap 100 k & 4th day Halls Gap to Great Western 50 k (finish line)

Irene commented that the ride went well. The food was great and the organization efficient. However, crawling into a small dome tent for three nights took its toll. Below are some pics Irene took.



Here is a link to Bicycle Network's ["Little Vic ride"](#) – including a hills profile.

Really important dates for your diary.

Club AGM - Tuesday night 16th August

Informal dinner gatherings at Godfather's in Briar Hill Tuesdays - 10th May, 12th July, 13th Sep

Club annual dinner - Tuesday night 25th October

On a recent BUG ride through Fairfield, we came across this "Moggy" enjoying the afternoon sunshine near Alphington Station. He was very friendly and determined not to move as fifteen cyclists went around him. He had a tracking device on his collar.



Wheely interesting

An occasional series introducing you to Banyule BUG members

Meet Sharon and Justin

Who ride a tandem bike with the Lycra Group

Written by Justin



1. First bikes and your memories of early bike riding?

Neither Shaz nor I have many memories of riding a bike as kids, or specifically what type of bike we had. We rode, but only for necessity. And in Sharon's case, living rurally, she was much more often on horseback around Swan Hill rather than on a pushbike.

I was born and raised and lived only in Wangaratta for 47 years until moving to Melbourne in January of this year. I used to ride a bike to school on occasions and for activities on the weekend. Need, rather for the experience itself.

2. Current (or favourite) bikes?

We only have one current bike, and its name is "not Happy". This shouldn't be confused with "unhappy" as both Shaz and I are happy riding it. Our first tandem, bought back in 2018 was a cheap Polygon model which cost just \$950 delivered to our door in Wangaratta. It made us happy to ride together and the bike was named just that – Happy.

Happy took us on many tours, initially for a few days around the NE of Victoria, then from Hungary to Greece in 2019. We covered 1500km in that European trip, our first on a tandem and about our 12th all told since we first rode in Europe from Manchester (UK) to Rome in 2009.

Happy had issues though, including many broken spokes in Europe, and though we had the rear wheel replaced at one stage in Albania, we decided that we'd upgrade the wheel set when we returned to

Australia.

Ultimately we did that, and included a 14 internal gears Rohloff hub in the back wheel. The Rohloff has been amazing and we'd now never go permanently back to external gearing.

Then in 2020 amidst the global pandemic and unable to travel internationally, we decided we'd control our own future a bit and cycled around Australia. It took us, deliberately, exactly 6 months, leaving on 27 April and arriving home in Wangaratta on

26 October. We'd promised our newly adult daughter Jasmine that we'd be gone for a minimum of 6 months so she could get a proper feel for being responsible for a household.

We had all manner of terrific experiences, adventures and adversities as we completed 16,500km at an average speed of about 26k/h. A trip we'll never forget but also never do again, it could fill a book with treasured tales and thus I'll leave those stories for the morning chats at Petty's with the Lycra group on a Thursday.

Anyway, I've drifted along as oft I do, and haven't addressed the question you posed or explained how "not Happy" has come to be.

Happy broke down a few times on our trip around Oz, due mainly to a crappy single butted aluminium frame. So we decided that we'd upgrade the frame, but retain much of the good componentry that we had, including the wheels and Rohloff gearing.

Eventually struck a deal with a frame builder in the leafy outer north eastern fringe of Melbourne, and then also moved to Melbourne in January 2022 to be closer to our daughter who relocated to South Melbourne at the same time, and conveniently be close to where the new bike was being built.

Unfortunately, the bike build stalled when the builder, regrettably passed away. Shaz and I were hoping to leave for Europe at the end of May on the new bike, and suddenly that wasn't going to happen.

So we bought a new tandem, the same as our original Happy, but in a different, and strikingly impressive matt grey and orange colour scheme. Second hand, but very, very lightly used.

We braved the Melbourne train network and found ourselves in Narre Warren when, after the quick once



over with an eagle eye, I gleefully parted with \$550 in cash, and then Shaz and I commenced the 55km journey home to Rosanna.

Our cycle route took us to and through Lysterfield Park that day, along the fringe of Jells and then onto the East Link trail. A trail we were somewhat familiar with due to excursions that way for Parkruns on a Saturday morning, and a cheeky hash house harriers ride at one stage too.

We linked into the Koonung Creek Trail, headed east and admired the city views on a sparkling Autumn day, and then grumbled as we completed a gravel section of the Main Yarra Trail on our clean new bike bound for Heidelberg, and ultimately into Rosanna.

I diligently spent the following morning and afternoon changing over wheel sets, moving the Rohloff, swapping handlebar, grips and nicely broken in leather Brooks saddles. This bike was a beaut, and we were sure she'd get us through a few thousand kilometres until ultimately we'd worked out what to do about a new frame and bike build to take us on our ultimate journey – a 10 years, 200,000km trip around the world.

And so the following and fateful day we cycled “Happyish” for the first time, bound for the glitzy and glamorous opulence of Southbank and a dinner reservations with friends at Silks, in the Mongolian tent itself, no doubt.

And what “Happyish”? Well, because this Frankenstein build was a lovely hybrid of the Happy we had and the future bike we hoped to build. With Happy's original frame relegated to the annals of time, we couldn't continue to call this bike of that name. But with much DNA in place, there were certainly strong elements by which our beloved Happy remained. Thus “Happyish”, was fitting by all accounts.

So at Southbank we arrived and parked our bike against a stainless steel hoop in respect of the city rules, diligently locking her in place in a busy street traffic area for all to admire.

A delightful dinner did pass, with much merriment and mirth. Wine did flow to appease the parched throats and aid in digestion of 6 courses. Oh, the duck, the lobster, the crème brulee.

But of course, I have digressed again.

Out into the buzz of Melbourne town we went, bound for our lovely new companion and a wending 16km course home to Rosanna.

But on arrival at the anointed place, no Happyish was to be found. Might we, in our pleased state, have forgotten where we parked? Minds aflutter for a moment, we quickly realised that could not be.

Our newly beloved, gone. Taken. Bike-napped and whisked away by some fiend into the Melbourne night? Surely not.

Yet not a skerrick was left. Not a token memory or trinket of presence. Helmets, the cable lock, even a bungee cord, gone.

So, aghast with disdain I phoned the police line on 131 444 and reported this preposterous crime. During that 40 minutes or so, Shaz scoured the neighbourhood hoping that Happyish had been dumped nearby. No sign.

Like a punishment for crimes of which we are not aware, we necessarily boarded a train at Flinders Street, bound for Hurstbridge. We'd missed a train by less than 5 minutes and had to wait nearly an hour for the next.

Disembarking at Rosanna we walked 600m uphill to our lovely home and crashed into bed just after 3am. We'd been up since 5am and had, clearly, an amazing day. Ending with some adversity sure, but regardless we would not allow that experience to shape entirely our future memories of the day as a negative overall.

In all, it was a splendid day, and the company of close friends and family will always remind us of that.

But hark, waffle and wend and digress again, I have.

We waited two days and after a few emails to the local constabulary and a phone conversation with gave us little to increase our faith of a safe return, we knew that the future would wait for no one.

Essentially satisfied with the geometry of the cheap Polygon tandem, we purchased one of these online whilst concurrently striking a deal for a completely new bike to be built by Thorn in the UK.

Thorn could build a bike which suited us, should journey with us for our planned world trip, and provided the highest standards of British fit and engineering. The deal was done, and we are scheduled to collect



our new steed on the morning of 8 August, in Bridgwater, Somerset. Nestled in the eastern green of England's South West.

And so a long box did arrive at Hillside Street some 10 days later. And from that box did a new bike emerge; one without experience or character at this stage.

With no "Happy" DNA of any form to be added to bring experience and wisdom and an understanding of the joys and perils of a life filled with adventure, we could not fairly call this bike by a derivative of that name. It just was not Happy, in any possible way.

But what? Wait! "not Happy". Indeed, there it was. Any trials of trouble, mis agreements or concerns about a new name were gone. The answer had revealed itself.

And thus with joy in our hearts and the spirit of future adventure, Shaz and I have started a relationship with 'not Happy' that we expect will carry us meaningfully through the next 4 months as we make our way to the rendezvous in Somerset.

We promise to respect 'not Happy' and engage and appreciate all she does for us as a part of our short time together.

In the 15 years that we have been cycling for fitness and pleasure, Shaz and I have owned a variety of other bikes, both mountain and road. At one stage we had 11 bikes in the garage between us and daughter Jasmine. All we have right now, is 'not Happy'.

3. Favourite ride?

Thursday's Lycra ride loop of Yarra Trail, Koonung and Mullum trails is our only normal ride with the BUGs. We very much enjoy that ride.

We also like our commute route to the city from Rosanna – Darebin Creek Trail, Gooch Street, Victoria Rd, Heidelberg Road (and the city view as we cross Hoddle St), Wellington St, Clarendon Street, William Barak Bridge.

On a Tuesday, dare I admit it, we cycle with a group formed by cycle clothing manufacturer Marcello Bergamo. A 25km loop at faster speeds, ending with a coffee in Kew. We commute 10.5km each way along the Darebin Creek trail which is lovely.

4. Favourite café on a ride?

Petty's on the Thursday Lycra ride for sure, as the company is always first class, the coffee strong, and the vanilla slice of proportions that require even Shaz and I to share. And those that know us, know that we know how to eat.

We also really like Dimattina Coffee on Edwardes Street, Reservoir. Shaz and I spend time walking and running at the Edwardes Lake aths track and this café is nearby. It has the most delicious coffee for just \$2.50 per cup (porcelain, and served with water to the side in a real glass), and whilst the cakes and slices are humble compared to Petty's, they are reasonably priced and delicious.

5. Finish this sentence 'Banyule BUG fills our hearts with joy.'

6. What are some of your other interests?

Many, and would fill many more volumes in the book of life. But particularly, we now enjoy running and walking. Sharon ran 225km at the World Championships of 24 hour running in France 2010, to finish 6th in the world which was the most outstanding result by an Australian at any world champs at the time. Coupled with other amazing results in 2010 and at one time holding 45 age and open Australian ultra distance records, she was named 2010 World Female Ultra Athlete of the year by the international governing body.

My walking has seen me accrue 19 centurions, which is walking 100 miles (160.93km) in less than 24 hours in an official event. I hold a few records, but nothing like Shaz did. The most prolific Australian has 21 centurions, and I hope to surpass this in the European summer, 2022. It's the main focus of the first 5 months of our time over there this year.

We're cat lovers, believe that family is everything, and that close friendships easily come next. We don't begrudge anyone their material possessions, but we're personally glad that we've ditched the (at one time) four registered vehicles, massively oversized home, and walk in wardrobes that were bursting at the seams. Simplicity of "things" has increased the complexity of our understanding of what really matters. To us, at least. We also like board games. And computer games. And cooking. Reading. Learning.....

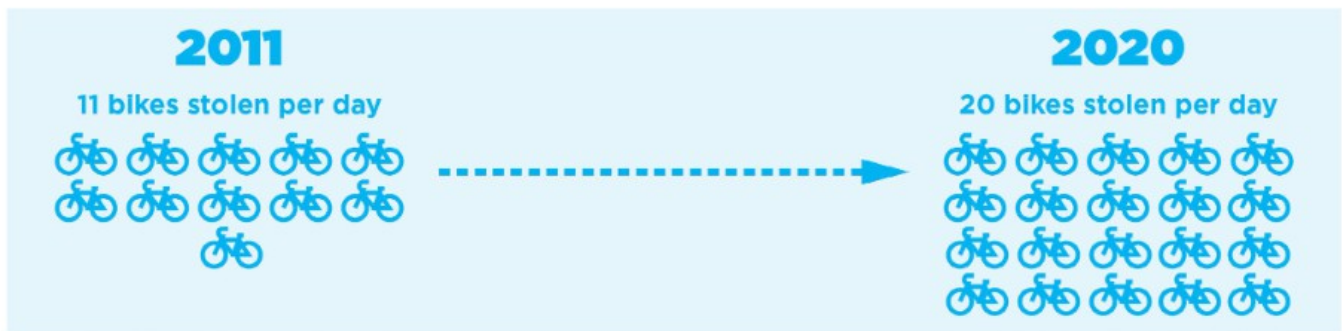
Bike Thefts in Victoria.

To all of us who love and cherish our bikes, this article from BN is well worth reading. Just click the image for full article.

How many bikes get stolen?

Bike thefts per year ►

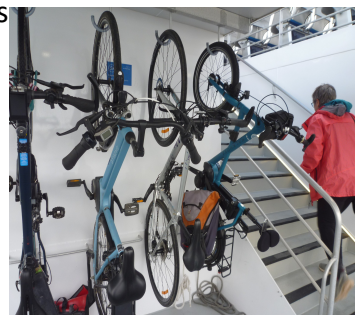
The number of bicycle thefts reported in Victoria has increased by **81.2 per cent** in the past 10 years. In 2011, 4,076 bikes were stolen, which is equivalent to 11 bicycles per day. A total of 7,385 bikes were stolen in 2020, an average of **20 per day** (below).



Portarlinton Ride



Hoping for good weather, around ten Banyule BUG riders lined up with the eager throng waiting to board the “Bellarine Express” for a trip across the Bay. The seas were calm, a gentle breeze blowing and hints of blue sky were evident as the Captain welcomed us on board. With our bikes safely stowed (I love nautical terms) the water jets increased in volume and we were off down the Yarra and out into the Bay. It is very interesting to see the Yarra Banks from the Yarra itself – a different perspective on things.



The trip from Dockland to Portarlinton takes about an hour and a half and so we were soon busy unloading or bikes to begin the ride. There were quite a few other bike riders who had made the trip also. Our plan was to ride from Portarlinton, along the foreshore trail to “Two Bays Lookout” ([Link Here](#)) near Swan Bay.

Riding along the foreshore is just spectacular. ([Link Here](#)) The trail follows the beach line all the way and is replete with stunning views. The trail seemingly ends at St Leonard, but a careful perusal found the, almost hidden, trail to “Two Bays Lookout”. This trail travels through salt marshes, tussocky scrub and is the last original (and only) remnant bushland on that peninsula. This part of the ride was over sandy tracks, packed gravel and boardwalks to finally emerge at the “lookout”. This was just “stunning”. From this very isolated spot could be viewed Port Phillip Bay and Swan Bay.

This was a most successful club ride and we all arrived back in Melbourne tired, but very satisfied that we had made the trip. Here are a few images from the day.



--- and, of course, no cycling trip is complete without a stop here. No, not the wine bar, but the coffee shop next door.

If you would like to see a plot of our ride ([Click here](#))



If you have not already done so, this article is well worth reading and (it) points to the enormous potential that e-bikes have for the Australian economy and personal wellbeing.

We Ride Australia ([Link](#))

New data on e-bike incentives released as historic NSW transport summit kicks off.

We Ride Australia Media Release – Thursday, 28 April 2022

Figures [released today](#) by We Ride Australia show that a Government incentive to get more people riding e-bikes would return up to \$3 for every \$1 invested.

The figures, based on data released by NSW Treasury and modelled by the independent Institute for Sensible Transport, identify the direct financial return of incentives that encourage uptake of e-bikes.....

In addition to the above article, the "We Ride Australia" ([Link](#)) website contains a treasure trove of cycling related information. Well worth a visit.

If any of you would like to read an affirmation of the value of cycling and its power to change lives, read the following article from ABC – online.

How a teacher's love of cycling and a nation-wide call for donations started Yarralin's first bike club ([Link](#))

"My job is to try get 80 per cent attendance, that's the goal, and these bikes are helping."

.... and further more.

From an Age article on 29 April 2022 at: <https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/from-pop-ups-to-permanent-bike-lanes-create-new-hurdles-as-city-gradually-refills-20220428-p5agrm.html?btis>

Planning firm Urbis last year analysed the impact of converting car-parking spaces into outdoor dining and bike-parking facilities in the cities of Melbourne, Yarra and Stonnington.

It found the users of one car space contributed an average of \$950 per day to the local shopping strip. With six bikes parked in the same area, an average of \$1700 was pumped into local shops, while outdoor dining contributed \$1660.

Alison Lee, a co-author of the study, said there was growing evidence from Melbourne and internationally that could help allay traders' concerns.

"Interestingly, retailers found extra numbers would flow into their stores when a thriving, vibrant atmosphere was created," she said.

Following the lead of global cities such as Paris, London, Milan and Bogota to encourage more cyclists and pedestrians, would, over time, likely result in the character of stores changing, Ms Lee said.

Victorian Budget 22/23: what's in it for bikes? (BN)

The Victorian Budget for the next fiscal year was revealed this week and bikes have made it into the budget papers, albeit modestly. ([Link](#))

More wins for Victorian rail trails

A number of rail trails across Victoria will see improvements and extra funding commitments this month.

[Rail Trails Australia](#) have reported on a number of exciting facelifts for the state's trails. ([Link](#))

Some Thankyous

Now, if this newsletter were a double feature movie, it would be at intermission. So before you rush out to the fridge and grab an Eskimo Pie, here are the shorts.

I want to thank all of those people who made contributions to this newsletter. As I receive each one, I read them carefully and am constantly impressed by the riding our cyclists do. The articles are always interesting and reveal a strong passion for our cycling activities.

Also, a group that generally goes unmentioned is our clubs committee. They work quietly in the background ensuring that our club functions as well as it does.

To our ride co-ordinators – a big thankyou. These are the people who produce the yearly ride list and ensure that the weekly rides take place and keep us informed of late changes or additions to the published schedules.

A special mention to our Secretary who makes sure we are kept up to date with all of the cycling related matters that might concern us as cyclists.

That's all from me (Ed.) Please enjoy the rest of the feature and think about your contribution for the next "Blockbuster".

As usual. Send your contributions to Allan Garbutt allang@bigpond.net.au

Great Ocean & Otway Classic Ride

Ride report by Randall

Dateline: Saturday, April 30th 2022

Where: Torquay Foreshore

What: Great Ocean & Otway Classic Ride. Three distances: 60km, 145km and 204km

Who: over 2,000 riders and 10 BUGs, 1 injured spectator and 2 in absentia.

Why: Let's go back to sometime in 2021

A few of us had registered for the 2021 event, but due to Covid it was cancelled and registrations were carried over to 2022. Discussions about the event grew interest, more people registered and before we knew it we had 13 BUGs going, 9 men, 4 ladies.

Our first thought, accommodation for the Friday and Saturday. It was agreed, the boys would find ours, the girls theirs.

An Internet search led us to find a home, for 9 people, 500mtrs from the start. Perfect. Equally, the girls also found a nice place.

Second thought: Dinner. Again a bit of "Googling" came up with the goods. Booked.

Friday dinner was at 4 Pines Brewing, undercover outdoor area which was fabulous. Ten of the group that arrived Friday enjoyed a fun night. Food was delicious but with a big day on the bike Saturday an early night was important. Not totally achieved. Close but "no cigar".



Unfortunately from the 13 riders only 10 would take to the Start line. John, recovering from Covid, Wayne, family reasons and Brett, a broken collarbone. All 3 were missed from the start line however Brett came along for the weekend as a spectator. This was much appreciated.

So that left 10 to tackle the ride. Bob, Cheryl, Jack, Joanna and Sally were tackling the 60km course.

Anna, Andrew, Jacques, Laurie and myself were taking on the 145km course.

The 204km course, not a lot of love coming from the BUGs. "We be sensible"!



Given the beautiful morning and location a group picture of Jacques, myself, Laurie and Andrew was a "no brainer". Shortly after we were joined by Anna. Of course another pic was needed.



The 145km group was about to head to the start line for a 7:45 start after which we would spend the next 5 to 6 hours "riding a bike". What could possibly go wrong apart from crashing, flat tyre, saddle sores, not eating or drinking enough or Oddly we didn't think about any of these.

Around an hour later the 60km group was scheduled to leave.

Joanna, Sally, Bob, Cheryl and Jacks bike were excited for the adventure ahead.



With the same headwind, same stress of riding in a peloton the 60km ride is still a challenge with a vertical metre gain nearly 500VM.

It was an awesome effort by our 5 BUGs that took on this ride.

With brother Brett sidelined it was only natural that he had time (and probably an instruction from little Sister!) to capture a shot of Cheryl coming across the finish line.

For the 145km BUGs the ride out of Torquay was predictably chaotic but after around 5km the peloton started to string out and the speed increased.

For the first 60km we were “blessed” with a headwind. Headwind (*noun*) “a wind blowing from in front, opposing forward motion”. Then it decided to rain for, fortunately, only 15 or so minutes.

Our main food stop was at Deans Marsh where we could enjoy banana bread, lollies, energy bars, and bananas. Topping up water was also important.

From Deans Marsh it was straight onto the Benwerrin Climb. This is 12km in length with an average gradient of 2.5% and a maximum of 18%. The 2.5% is misleading as there are some easy false flats but you are often climbing at 5, 6 and 8%’s.

And after the summit? A thrilling 10 km descent down into Lorne. As you get close to Lorne the view of the sea is truly magnificent and is a huge reward for the climb.

So after 95kms all that remains is Lorne to Torquay. OMG all 50 kilometres of it.

Lorne to Torquay along the Great Ocean is truly spectacular and this picture of Laurie, Anna, Andrew and Jacques proves this.



What it doesn't show is how "lumpy" it is. Whilst beautiful it is quite a tough ride.

With everyone safely back at Torquay, showered, changed it was time for everyone to meet at the boy's house for a few celebratory drinks before dinner.

The feeling of elation and achievement is hard to describe. Whilst proud of our own achievements the feeling of overall pride for all in the group was undeniable.

It was very special for us to enjoy together.

Unfortunately we neglected to get a full group shot but this sums up the "thumbs up" vibe. OK a bit subdued but nearly 11pm and after a big day!!!!



And a "words fail me" moment



Finally we head to our group dinner at the Torquay Pub.



A great meal, some more drinks it was back to the house for more reflection and some more drinks.

And stories of how well we rode grew bigger, bolder and better as the night went on.

What a way to finish a fantastic weekend and awesome ride.

Memories to be remembered.

Finally as e-bikes are allowed the 60km ride might appeal to some more BUGs.

If so, see you there 29th April 2023

The “RCAPRWRAWSS” BUG Adventure Ride to Buninyong and Ballarat

In November 2018, Allen Peacock, wearing his trademark red and white striped socks, led a fantastic ride to Buninyong and Ballarat.

I've been wanting do this ride again, so studied Allen's ride and copied it hence the name “**R**andall **C**opying an **A**llen **P**eacock **R**ide but **W**ithout **R**ed **A**nd **W**hite **S**triped **S**ocks”.



A picture from the 2018 ride. The Master and the Apprentice

Following is the April 2022 ride report.

A cool but sunny morning welcomed 11 of us at the meet point in Warrenheip. A welcome coffee was enjoyed and then we headed, in convoy, to the start point, Gong Gong Reservoir, where we meet up with 2 other rider's. Our Peloton numbered 13.

We followed a lovely bushland track, dappled sunshine, birds singing and those lovely bush smells. Our first bit of adventure was the tunnel under the Western Highway.

It is a cool looking tunnel, plenty of lights, shame they weren't turned on.



The ride route including optional Mt B climb



The tunnel under the Western Highway

Shortly after we turned onto the streets of Ballarat, thru another tunnel and made our way to the Eureka Stockade.



Don "tunnelling"



Battle of Eureka Stockade 3rd December 1854

Plenty of history in a beautiful setting which belies the battle that took place

'We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and fight to defend our rights and liberties!' The diggers' oath, 30 November 1854.

Before dawn on 3 December 1854, government troops stormed the diggers' flimsy stockade at Eureka Lead, Ballarat. In a fiery battle that lasted only 20 minutes, more than 30 men were killed. Charged with high treason, the diggers' leaders were all eventually acquitted. Within a year the diggers won the vote and the hated gold licence was abolished and replaced with a less expensive Miner's licence.



Peaceful vista



The pike was one of the weapons the Miners had

And a group photo was needed.



From L to R: Brett, Glenda, Ralph, Don, John, Laurie, Cheryl, Jacques, Jean, Terry, Rodney and Brian

A quick descent down Eureka Street led us onto the Canadian Creek Trail. A meandering trail which takes us past Sovereign Hill, new residential areas and most importantly leading to the downhill into Buninyong in time for lunch. This was a most welcome stop.

Buninyong is home to the Australian Road Nats, a cycling event that crowns Australia's Male and Female National Road champions for the coming year.

And a chance to copy the ride up the Midland Hwy, Mt Buninyong Road and thru Federation University was accepted by most.



Top of Mt Buninyong Road



Glenda cresting the top of the climb

Regrouping we continued on and an opportunity for another group shot was too good to pass up. The view is actually more expansive than the photo shows.



looking West from Whitehorse Road, Mt Clear

Down the hill, a shimmy to the right and we head onto the Wallaby Track. Running alongside the Yarrowee River and thru dense forest, I felt like “Robin Hood riding thru the Glen”.

In an election year was it inevitable that we would stumble across a Politician?

Yes, of course we did. Catherine King, Federal MP for Ballarat. The colour of the jacket indicates her Political leaning, but why she was on the Wallaby Track?

We gave Don the challenge to find out, but to no avail.



Next destination was Lake Wendouree adjacent to the Ballarat Botanical Gardens. Host of the 1956 rowing events and a haven for birdlife it attracts people like a moth to a flame and is simply another jewel in Ballarat's crown of history, architecture and natural beauty.

The lake was originally known as Yuilles's Swamp and supplied domestic water to Ballarat in the 1850's and 1860's. After the Ballarat Botanical Gardens were laid out in the late 1850's, in the 1870's improvements were made to make the lake an aquatic venue.

The surface area is 2.38 km² and the average depth is only 2 mtrs

The name Wendouree comes from a local Aboriginal word wendaaree, which means 'go away'.



1956 Olympics Rowing & Canoeing Memorial



Lake "Wendaaree"

We rode clockwise around the Lake and it was time for us to 'go away' and head back to Gong Gong Reservoir. Down Mair Street, another tunnel, a zig right, a zag left



Laurie "tunnelling"

and we find ourselves back on another section of the Wallaby Track.

Getting closer to the finish the Peloton was starting to split into echelons. Think this was due to our riders soaking up the last few kilometres of the beautiful trail rather than wind.



Riding past some locals, who I think were maybe thinking “come one you lot “wendaaree” from our paradise” and before we knew it we were back to where this fantastic ride started.

The general consensus was overwhelmingly positive and I hope we don't have to wait another 3 and a half years to do it again.

We saw bushland, history, architecture, coffee, pastries, Mt Buninyong climb, some fast downhills, happy riders, toilets, a big, but shallow lake and took away great memories.

Thanks to all the riders who joined in, embraced all the new sights, took on the Road Nats challenge, and were so supportive of my leader role.

Also thanks to Jacques for being the Lanterne Rouge Guy and taking many of the photos.

And finally thanks to Allen for coming up with this ride back in 2018. I feel privileged to have been able to take a group on a ride that I absolutely loved.

Over and Out, Randall (or Coogee or Ben, depending upon circumstances !!!!)