

October 2011

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RIDE THE TRAIL IN A DAY



It augurs well that the weather gods did the Rail Trail committee a special favour on Saturday October the 1st, for the 'Ride the Trail in a Day'. Ominous weather forecasts of well below average temperatures, showers and hail had volunteers solemnly carrying extra warm clothes, blankets and instructions to watch out for signs of hypothermia in riders.

Instead, by the first rest point riders had stripped off their outer layers and continued to ride the Trail in near perfect riding conditions; cool, dry and windless: however only moments after the last rider was safely in the bus to go back to Bairnsdale, sheets of cold rain started to sweep across the landscape. Folks, maintain your homage to the weather gods, and start working on the AFL date setting gods.

In spite of clashing with the AFL Grand Final, the ride attracted 54 entrants, nearly all from well outside the area. Riders from Sydney, the ACT and the NSW south coast made up about a third of all entrants, who appreciated the option of a morning

bus to take them from Orbost to Bairnsdale, allowing them to finish their day in Orbost, the closest point on the trail to Northerners.

Without doubt, our outstanding crew of competent, friendly locals were the key to the great feedback we had from riders. "I loved the friendliness of the marshals and helpers – the best and most memorable part of the ride – thank you!" was just one of the written feedback comments about the crew, and many more compliments were paid during the day.

An obvious point for improvement was clearer signage around Nowa Nowa to direct riders to the lunch stop, which will be attended to next year. Lunches got very favourable comments – thanks to Nowa Nowa Pony Club who did an outstanding job for us.

The long distance some were prepared to travel for this event demonstrates the 'pulling power' that the Trail has in bringing visitors to this area. We look forward to building on a great event in years to come.

Liz Mitchell

See Photo Gallery Page 2



Riding through Colquhoun Forest



Eddie with the "sag wagon"



Vicki and Andrew at Nowa Nowa for lunch



Cyclists under the timber bridge at Wairewa



Loading the bikes at Orbost



Gus taking a break at Nowa Nowa

ROGUES' GALLERY

President's Report 14th August 2011

The years are passing quickly and here we are at the 7th AGM for the FEGRT.

Our small but dedicated committee and friends continue in their support of the EGRT Committee of Management by assisting with maintenance, improvements and promotion of our treasured trail.

We continue to see an increased usage of the trail with walkers, cyclists and horse riders enjoying the safe and scenic journey in harmony with each other.

Local businesses are reaping the benefits of our work with increased patronage and new businesses are appearing along the way which will further encourage locals and tourists to venture along our path.

The Tostaree fire briefly dampened our spirits when we viewed the destruction of the beautiful Hospital Creek Bridge, Partelli's Crossing Toilet Block and other features along the trail. The restoration work done by DSE and others was inspirational in the speed and quality of the work which saw the trail closed only briefly. The regeneration of our forest is now a draw-card for tourists.

The work around Nicholson River Project with the partnerships with Landcare are seeing great results with positive community feedback.

The first 4 Story Boards at the Orbost end of the trail have been installed on the Orbost link and 2 more are well underway thanks to Marlene, May and the sponsors with others also planned.

Eddie, Vicki and Geoff with some help from DSE contribute tireless hours between Nowa Nowa and Orbost keeping the trail clear.

We're looking forward to the installation of the railway signal at Burn Rd with the help of the Orbost local community.

Keith continues to contribute many hours to maintain and improve the EGRT website which is viewed by people around the world and assists many with planning for their trips.

Marlene remains the mainstay of the Trail Mail which is our communication with members and the community. We encourage other members to contribute articles to provide our readers with an ongoing informative and enjoyable newsletter.

Sue, thanks for your ongoing work as Secretary.

Again I thank Michael for his tireless work in so many aspects of both the FEGRT and COM EGRT

To all the other friends and adjoining land holders not already mentioned who assist with promoting, maintaining and improving the trail. I thank you too.

2010-2011 has been a great year and we're now looking forward to 2011-2012 with the Ride the Trail in a Day on October 1st. Hope to see you all there.

Janice Preston

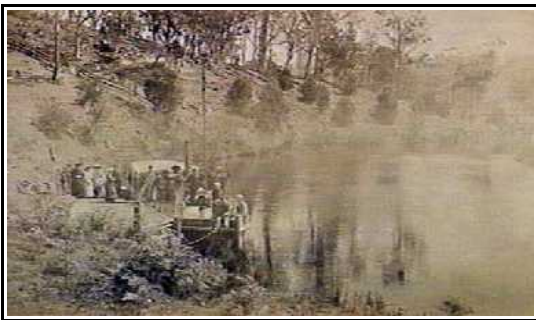
The Maize Crates At Mossiface

Looking at Mossiface today, it's hard to imagine that this little backwater once was a thriving and very prosperous area.

The Aboriginal name for 'Mossiface' (a tiny settlement 2.5km west of Bruthen), is marlung-dun, meaning mussel shell.

Mossiface was named by Andrew Prott, an early settler, who called his property "Mossiface".

Early steamships used to travel up the Tambo River to this little town. The port in Mossiface was built in 1887 and had a receiving shed and a 2 ton crane. There was some discussion by the then Shire of Tambo, to rename the port Port Bruthen, but this did not eventuate. Batten's Landing, situated near the hop kilns, was big enough that 4 boats could tie up waiting to transport goods to Omeo and Bruthen, and timber to Melbourne.



Batten's landing in the 1880's

By October 1913, the rail had reached Mossiface. Early in the next month the train had entered Bruthen. Mossiface Railway station and siding was opened on Monday 10th April 1916. It closed in 1954.

The first maize grown in Bruthen was reportedly grown by Charles Seehusen who bought the seed from Richard Goodman from his garden in Bairnsdale. However, an article in The News 14/1/1977 states that maize was first grown at Bruthen by a Chinese settler, father of Billy Ah Chow. Crops were planted in mid-October immediately after ploughing, the early system being to broadcast by hand. The use of an American machine soon led to the



sowing of the maize seed in rows and weeding was also improved upon by the introduction of a horse-drawn harrow.



As it stands today

. Early in the 1890s, maize cribs were built on properties as growers of large crops copied this American method of storage. These cribs were 2-3 metres high and about 1.5 m wide with wire netting sides, and were about 7 metres long. Large crops required efficient storage. Even recently new cribs have been built to the same design, but this one may be the largest and best example to be found in East Gippsland.

The shelled cobs were shoveled into the crib through openings at the top. The maize was left in the crib for about three months to dry prior to being bagged and sold.

After the phasing out of hop-growing in the early 1900's, maize became the major crop on the Tambo River flats for many years. Around 1914 the price of maize was falling too low to be profitable and Orbost began to replace the area as the maize centre.



Next issue : Nowa Nowa

This photo shows a meeting of the residents at Giles St Wiseleigh near Bruthen who are planning to upgrade the area around Giles St.



Giles St Upgrades

The group, made up of friends and neighbours living nearby has been maintaining the area the section from Giles St to Swan Reach Road, west of Bruthen for some time. It was at a communal barbecue that it was decided to extend their commitment by adding a picnic table and story boards depicting the history of the Wiseleigh area.

It is pleasing to see such a strong community involvement in improving the facilities along the trail.



Why Do They Do It?

In recent months there have been two attacks on locks and chains fitted to gates on the trail between Burn Road and Bruthen.

It seems senseless vandalism or by someone with a grudge against the existence of the trail. Several locks have been destroyed or stolen and metres of chain cut or removed.

Keeping gates at roadways locked is protection against visitors being hit by passing vehicles, and to restrict illegal access.

Michael Oxer

Photo shows damaged gate panel & locks/chain removed.



LANDCARE GROUP TAKING ON RAIL TRAIL PROJECT

Newly-formed Newmerella Landcare Group has decided to look at revegetating the area at the rail trail head in Orbost. Kerry Seaton, C.O.M. says that the group has begun grant applications and Friends are looking forward to working with this group.

More next issue.



To The

RESCUE

Recently, Michael, Andrew and Kerry were on a survey run from Bairnsdale to Siberia Track checking out the heavy black wattle growth, when they came across two riders in difficulty.

The pair were on the side track to Dirty Hollow Creek contemplating a snapped dérailleur. Our heroes managed to transport Ian with his dead bike back to Bruthen while his mate rode on to Bairnsdale to retrieve the car.

Ian sat in the sun at Bruthen reading the paper while waiting for his friend.



A few days later, Michael received this grateful email:

From: Ian Peterson
<ie.peterson@netspeed.com.au>
> Date: 8 September 2011 3:42:04 PM
To: eastgipprailtrail@wideband.net.au
Subject: Many thanks

For Michael Oxer

Hi Michael,

I'm the bloke who you kindly saved from a long walk on Tuesday on the rail trail near Bruthen. I wanted to thank you and your colleagues again for your very kind assistance and your knack of arriving at precisely the right moment! I really appreciated it.

We spent the following day doing some walks around Nowa Nowa as a substitute and had a very enjoyable time. We'll be back to do the Gippsland rail trail properly later this year. It's a great set up and a credit to you and your team.

Regards

Ian Peterson

Finally The Storyboards Are In !

This article was published in the Snowy River Mail July 13:

"Because of the generosity of several Orbost community groups, Friends of East Gippsland Rail Trail have been able to install four story boards along the trail.

These boards describing the history of the Bairnsdale to Orbost railway will enhance the experience of trail users. Locals will also be able to access the signs from Burn Road.

The boards, designed by May Leatch, have been installed by the Shire Council under the organisation of Danny Thorpe. The wonderful photos used in illustrating the brief histories were provided by The Orbost & District Historical Society. The four boards have taken more than a year to prepare and install. Research and formatting have been thorough and Friends of East Gippsland Rail Trail are convinced that these boards will be welcomed by locals and tourists using the trail.

The first board has been placed at the site of the old Orbost railway station and was sponsored by The Orbost & District Historical Society. The Orbost & District Chamber of Commerce & Industry sponsored one near the low level timber viaduct spanning the river flats. The other two boards have been placed at the head of the rail trail near the shelter shed and plantings. One describes the building of the line and was sponsored by the Orbost Information Centre and the other explains the closure of the line. It was sponsored by the Friends of Orbost Opportunity Shop.

These four boards are the first of many to come. Four more local businesses : Santos, VicForests, Snowy River Cycling and Orbost Web Services have also pledged sponsorship. Friends are working on these boards and hope to have them installed before the end of this year."

Checking out the sign at the old station site.



Grant and Jeff installing the boards at the car park.

A further sign board at Newmerella has been added to the trail. This board describes the flora you are likely to see in the remnant rainforest along the cutting between Newmerella and the Burn Rd exit.

SANTOS sponsored this board.



The sign next to Rosie's seat.

Sarsfield CFA Get Fired Up



Volunteers from the Sarsfield CFA Brigade have provided valuable assistance with controlled burns over the last year, dealing with trash heaps prepared as part of fuel reduction clean up work conducted by the trail volunteer management committee assisted by crews from Bairnsdale Community Correctional Services.

Without this sort of local support it would be very hard to keep this trail in reasonable shape.

Michael Oxer

There is more to this trail than an easy pathway, big trees and wonderful rivers. Take the time to look at the ground, move quietly and keep a sharp look out and some amazing little critters can catch ones attention. This small lizard was spotted taking in the morning sun near a vegetation clean up site. It was about 12 cms long and quite unfazed by a close up camera.

The Little Things You Can Miss



This Spring there are many small flowering plants to be found so it is worth pausing along the way.



Enjoying a rest after a long hike!

Great Spot For A Seat



The Nicholson River Landcare Group has carried out a major planting of indigenous species on the north side of the Trail immediately east of the Nicholson River bridge.

A new side track has been installed with access under the bridge abutment. Part of the project included this seat, which has views across the river.

Bird nesting boxes have been installed to complement the already high variety of birds at this locality. The additional paths are part of the Nicholson Walks Project.

Michael Oxer

Meetings and Activities

MONDAY NOV 7TH

5PM for ride and 7PM for meeting.
Nicholson jetty. Barbecue provided

SUNDAY NOV 20TH

Meet Waygara Rd – near old mill site at 9am. ride through forest tracks and rail trail -approx 25km



Further information contact secretary, Sue Peirce.

Ph. 51568228

or email : peirces@wideband.com.au

Friends On The Trail



At Nicholson.....



.....and at Orbost

RED BELLIED BLACK SNAKE : *Pseudechis porphyriacus*

The red-bellied black snake prefers swampy, moist areas around creeks, rivers and lakes. Coming in to summer, Red Bellied Black Snakes are sometimes seen along the East Gippsland Rail Trail especially in the vicinity of the numerous rivers, creeks and dams.

The common name originates from the snake's jet black back and pink/red/crimson colour of its belly.

Red-bellied black snakes are also called the common black snake. They prey on rats, mice, frogs, lizards and birds, as well as fish and eels, as they are good swimmers. They also eat other snakes, including those of their own species.

Red-bellied black snakes commonly grow to 1.5 metres in length and can grow as long as 2.5 metres.



Red-bellied Black Snake

Photographer: Peter Robertson.

Red-bellied black snakes are mostly active during the day and warm evenings, and are not particularly aggressive. When threatened, they will flatten their bodies, recoil into a striking position and hiss loudly, but will usually attempt to escape if possible. The red-bellied black snake, while still dangerous, is somewhat less venomous than many other Australian snakes.



First aid treatment for snake bite:

Calm the victim.

DO NOT WASH THE VENOM OFF.

Apply a broad pressure bandage over the bite site.

Apply a second firm bandage from the fingers or toes and moving up the limb.

Immobilise the limb.

Call 000

References:

Australian Venom Research Unit: University of Melbourne
Museum Victoria
Chambers Wildlife Rainforest Lodges
St John, Emergency First Aid

Janice Preston