



# The Trail Mail



## RIDE THE TRAIL IN A DAY

Saturday November 11

**Circle this date on your calendar. This is the day, you'll be riding from Bairnsdale to Orbost along the spectacular East Gippsland Railtrail!**

As we all know, riding with a group of bike riders is such a good way to spend a day. It's easy to travel longer distances having buddies around, so 100 kms is achievable, as well as providing security in case of bicycle or rider breakdown. This is your chance to achieve the full distance.

We need at least 80 cyclists to make the venture viable. The cost will be less than \$30 and will include transport for you and your bike to/from Orbost or Bairnsdale. It will also include morning tea at the Bruthen Hotel. Lunch at Nowa Nowa will be at your own expense but you can pre-order a cut lunch as an optional extra.

There are plans to make this ride an annual event – alternating with Orbost as the starting point.

With your support this event could become a “must do” for every cyclist. Tell other riders and begin your own training now.



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## OUR BUSINESS FRIENDS

Below is a list of our sponsors. These businesses support the East Gippsland Railtrail financially and in other ways. As Friends try to support them with your custom. Check them out on our website for their services, location and other details.

Accommodation Friends	Commercial Friends
Beachside Loft Eagle Point	Bicycle Passion Lakes Entrance
Bruthen Inn	Dungey Plumbing
Chestnut Hill Country Retreat	Lake Whadie Cafe Bairnsdale
Marlo Caravan Park & Motel	Open Vision Australia
Mingling Waters Nowa Nowa	Orbost Chamber of Commerce
Mitchell Motor Inn Bairnsdale	Orbost Tourist Information:Jaid
Nicholson River Holiday Park	East Gippsland Insurance & Orbost Travel Centre
Nowa Nowa Hotel Motel	Robyn Bourke CPA
Orbost Country Roads Motor Inn	Tambo Nursery
Stringybark Cottages Sarsfield	
Tambo Park Cottages Swan Reach	
Waterholes Guest House	
Yelens Studio & Accommodation	

## Community Small Grants Program

Unsuccessful again! We applied for \$1300 to buy materials to build two information shelters on the trail – copying the one installed at Bumberah. But its not to be, we were informed that 90 applications had been received for \$257,337, and the Shire only had \$39,710 to distribute.

The next round of the Shire's program will be in August 2006.

The council did inform that there is an *Easy Grants Newsletter* which can be accessed at the Council offices and libraries.



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## Friends Bike Ride April 30<sup>th</sup>

The weather was threatening rain and on the coolish side as 15 cyclists gathered at Nicholson Jetty, so with the promise of a hill after lunch we set off up the steep access to the rail trail from Nicholson river – making mental note to let the shire know the poor state of this track. As always in a group ride, a couple of faster riders emerged, Ernie and Ian, to lead us to Bumberrah shelter. Along the way Janey met us and then we were 16. At the shelter Gary and Eddie appraised the design as we have an application for funds from the Community Grants to buy materials to make some more. Michael replenished the brochures and disturbed several huge huntsman spiders taking up shelter in the notice board.

At Kettle's Lane we met the road and pushed onto Johnsonville and had a bite to eat beside the Tambo before tackling the hill – not that bad really, and wonderful downhill run (Keith registered 49kph). The views along the river and the valley were most enjoyable and we met again at the Tambo River crossing. Our forward scouts had superior local knowledge to the ride organiser and improved the route which extended a few kilometres but avoided a steep uphill, so was favourably received.

We then feathered at the trail and set off for Nicholson along the trail arriving back about 2.30pm – the cyclometers having clocked up 44.5k. We were unanimous in stating the conditions were perfect – no wind, overcast and cool enough to enjoy the exercise.

*Sue Peirce*

### June 4 Working Bee at Bairnsdale

This achieved weed chipping, grass mowing & brush cutting the front fence line, plus removal of some of the Pittosporum. Still a lot to remove. Thanks to Robin and Michael.

And many thanks to all the helpers who give a hand along the way helping to clear fallen branches from the trail.

*For bigger obstructions please call 51568228 with accurate details of location.*

## Take your seat please!

Thanks to an effort by the Mitchell River Rotary Club who have designed and made a number of concrete framed timber slat seats for use in parks, and beside trails etc, the Rail Trail will be purchasing 5 such seats for placement at key points, either as resting stops or where there are particularly interesting and scenic spots to rest a while and watch for the local wildlife.

The seats will cost about \$220 each, and the Management Committee is keen to hear from any local businesses and especially from any of our Business Friends, about getting sponsors for at least some of the seats. They would have 'naming rights' by way of "Donated by.....".

*Please contact Michael on 5156 8228.*



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## Bicycle Victoria promotion of EGRT next August.

The August edition of 'Ride On', the BV member magazine, will highlight our Trail with a centre fold map and information to encourage visits from some of BV's more than 40,000 members! We have been scratching to find suitable photos for this sort of promo publication. If a Friend is keen to assist with setting up and taking high quality photos of Rail Trail action, please give Michael a call on 5156 8228 or email via the web site Comments facility.

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## Help needed to develop a set of Trail Notes.

We will soon add details of a Trail Notes development project on the web site. Members are invited to contribute notes on any interesting aspect of the Trail. The Notes will be provided as PDFs on the web site, so that updates can be done quickly and cheaply, with the Trail divided into several sections. Interested? Email information to michael@oxer.com.au Text can be in any format but any photos need to be sent as separate items (if emailed), or as prints. Hi res pics are NOT needed for this project.

## Web site Statistics

| Month    | Unique visitors | Number of visits | Pages | Hits  | Bandwidth |
|----------|-----------------|------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Jan 2006 | 921             | 1222             | 6404  | 93670 | 579.56 MB |
| Feb 2006 | 412             | 654              | 3182  | 19143 | 131.59 MB |
| Mar 2006 | 442             | 632              | 3021  | 15322 | 345.46 MB |
| Apr 2006 | 397             | 607              | 2907  | 14670 | 300.42 MB |
| May 2006 | 322             | 515              | 2632  | 10255 | 236.23 MB |

*Check out the website for information on Friends' activities.  
See who our Sponsors are.  
Read comments from railtrail users.*



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## Working Bee at Nicholson



Monumentally scary weather reports – however six noble volunteers turned up and spurred on by the enthusiasm of Alex we started removing dead black wattle and lo and behold the rain lifted, the wind dropped, so we managed 2 hours of work making two big piles of dead wattle for burning as well as some firewood. Boxthorn was apparent and this was cut and poisoned. Some smilax also removed. Although we have made quite a difference with the wattles, and it is good to see eucalypts and boobialla and tree violets regenerating in this area, there are still plenty more dead wattles close to fences which need to be removed.

Norman and Lindsey volunteered to return and do the planting we had hoped to do when the weather was more promising, and then worked hard stacking the dead wattle – so double value from them!

Weather not suitable for BBQ – but we achieved a lot and enjoyed the close look one gets at the vegetation when up close!

Adjoining landowners had volunteered to continue the program of removing dead black wattle along the trail and this has been done – so much was achieved.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### SUNDAY JULY 2<sup>ND</sup> AT BRUTHEN PUB

The second A.G.M. Of the Friends of the EGRT Ass. will be held at 1 pm at the Bruthen Hotel. All members are welcome . Nominations for the committee will also be most welcome. If you could offer some time and skills to assist our efforts, please call Janice(51555573) or Sue (51568228). We need assistance with contact persons for rides.

A nomination form is available on the web site.

#### Agenda:

1. Attendance
2. Minutes of previous AGM
3. Business arising
4. Treasurer's report – John Websdale
5. President's report – Janice Preston
6. Election of Office bearers
7. President;Vice-President;Treasurer;Secretary
8. Special Business

The Bruthen Pub serves lunch until 1.30. This is also opportunity for a bike ride–from both ends of the trail to get to Bruthen by 1pm.

**See details in Ride Calendar.**



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## How It All Began

The Bairnsdale – Orbost railway began operation in 1916. The railway had reached Sale from Melbourne in 1878 and arrived in Bairnsdale ten years later, 1888. Planning for the extension to Orbost began in 1890, but construction was delayed because of bickering by local residents concerning the preferred route! Railway surveyors advocated two lines beyond Bairnsdale – one via Bruthen and the Tambo Valley to Omeo, the other via Swan Reach and Colquhoun to Orbost, then on to Bendoc and the border. With all the argument and feuding between the warring factions, by the end of 1891, the Parliamentary Railways Standing Committee gave up in despair of trying to reach any agreement and abandoned the idea altogether.

Most debates concerned a bridge across the Tambo. There was only money for one bridge. Bumberrah residents demanded the bridge be built at Swan Reach while Bruthen residents had other ideas. The most favoured plan was a road-rail bridge somewhere but this idea was rejected because of the disagreement. For years nobody got a bridge – or a railway.

At Lakes Entrance, shipping interests weren't in favour of any kind of railway. Even when, in 1895, Orbost was excised from the Tambo shire, the council in Bruthen still was not a harmonious one. Relations between Bruthen and Bumberrah were very strained and this inhibited the development of the Tambo Shire.

*Next Issue: Physical Difficulties of Building the Railway*



Enthusiasm for the railway line was rekindled when Delegate was mooted as the future federal capital where a railway via Bruthen and Orbost could link the two state systems. In 1906, after an absence of 15 years, survey parties began re-investigating the Bairnsdale-Orbost line. The Railways Standing Committee recommended the 97 kilometres of line go ahead.

The Bairnsdale-Orbost Railway Construction Bill became law on December 22, 1909.

It was still not smooth sailing as Tambo shire residents were most unhappy with the valuations and compensations for easements through properties. Johnsonville and Swan Reach residents were not helping things along by wanting the line brought closer to their settlements while Sarsfield was still pushing for a direct line from Bairnsdale to Bruthen via their township. Orbost residents were quite contented with the proposal and steered clear of the quarrelling!

At last the first sod was turned at Mossface on January 9, 1912, the government sticking to the original route in the 1890 survey.



*This photo shows a construction gang working on the Bairnsdale – Orbost line in 1914. The foreman is overseeing the work. It seems as if the men have posed for the photographer.*

## **Link to Orbost C.B.D.**

Recent very encouraging news is that the East Gippsland Shire Council has energetically assisted in securing Victorian Government funding to install an on-road link from Burn Road at Newmerella into Orbost township.

The former railway line stopped on the west bank of the Snowy River! Council and the Rail Trail Committee are contributing part of the estimated \$120,000 required for this critical link. It should be completed within the year.

This is great news and should certainly help potential railtrail users negotiate the route out of town. Most visitors to Orbost have no idea where the trail head is, although some finger signs have been added to several sign posts between the highway bridge and the trail head.

The trail will link up with the existing track beside the river on the Marlo Road. Next step is a cycling track into Marlo!



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## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2006

### RIDES

|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 11/06/06 | Bairnsdale to Nicholson Starting at 10 am at start of the rail trail in Bairnsdale, opposite Howitt park. This will be an easy 20 kms total on the bitumen to encourage our family and less confident riders. Dust off the bike, put some air in the tyres and enjoy a gentle amble along the trail. There are even two new seats (courtesy of the Mitchell River Rotary Club), to enjoy a break along the way. One is in memory of the late Ron Rawson who was one of the small group who floated the idea of the rail trail. We will have lunch at the Nicholson jetty (BYO). For those wanting to do more k's they can head to Bumberrah and return (an additional 20 kms, unsealed trail) | Sue<br>5156 8228                  |
| 02/07/06 | A.G.M. Hold meeting Bruthen pub. Ride to from Nowa Nowa to Bruthen or Bairnsdale to Bruthen. Leave Bairnsdale entry at 10.00 am – or Nicholson at 10.30 am approx. Leave Nowa Nowa at 10.00 am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | contact Michael<br>Oxer 5156 8228 |
| 27/08/06 | Bairnsdale area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Alan<br>5153 1454                 |
| 15/10/06 | Orbost area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Vicki                             |
| 05/11/06 | From Bairnsdale or Orbost to Nowa Nowa for Nowa Nowa Nudes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Janice                            |

★ Ride The Trail In A Day - November 11

### MEETINGS

July 2 – A.G.M. NOWA NOWA  
 August 14 – BRUTHEN  
 October 9 – NICHOLSON  
 December 11 – ORBOST

### WORKING BEES

**June 4** – Bairnsdale trail entry. Weeding and planting.  
**September 10** – Nowa Nowa  
**October 10** – Bruthen  
**Other scheduled working bees: check our web site for updates and details**

Check regularly at [www.eastgippslandrailtrail.com](http://www.eastgippslandrailtrail.com) for updates.