



The Trail Mail



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2006 President’s Report

What can I say!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

What an exciting year with the completion of the Rail Trail to Burns Rd Orbost. Well done to the East Gippsland Rail Trail Committee of Management for your vision, passion and perseverance to get the job done. What a great day we had to celebrate the completion in January. It was so exciting to see so many Friends take part in the ride and celebrations that day. We walked, cycled and rode horses and amazed the local community in the numbers who turned out at Nowa Nowa.

This year we have supported the Management Committee in lobbying the local council and governments, State and Federal to assist with a link from Burns Road to Orbost. We hope to see it completed in the coming year. Not only will the link, improve access for local walkers and cyclists, it will also encourage the broader community to consider our trail as a viable destination. The Orbost community will benefit from the tourist dollars as will communities along the trail as more and more people discover the beauty of our local area.

The website designed and maintained by Keith Law continues to be a great asset. An increasing number of members of the broader community are learning about our trail and contributing to planning for the trail with their comments and suggestions. Friends are able to keep up to date with what is happening and planned for the future. Thank you Keith for all your effort.

I thank Marlene Robb who has continued to produce the Trail Mail to keep all members informed of Friends and Rail Trail improvements and events. It is not easy producing an interesting newsletter, but Marlene has done a tremendous job. Thanks to all the Friends who have offered articles or suggestions to assist Marlene. A special thanks to Craig Ingram and staff, who assist with the printing of the newsletter.

It is important to mention all the Friends who assist with the maintenance of the trail, both at our organized working bees and also when the need arises to clean up branches and trees and assist with spraying of weeds and soil erosion and cleaning up of litter. Thank you to everyone who assists, and especially the silent helpers who assist for the love and beauty of the trail without expectation of credit. Thanks Eddie Slatter for keeping an eye on the Orbost end of the trail.

To all those who organize the monthly cycling rides for the Friends, thank you too. (Keith, Eddie,



The Trail Mail



Vicki, Sue and Alan.) This year we have organised a number of rides with a section of the trail incorporated in to the ride whilst exploring the greater area. For many of us, this has developed our knowledge of the local area whilst maintaining our connection with the trail.

A special thank you to the Friends Committee, Sue Peirce for her tireless work as secretary, John Websdale for your work as treasurer, and Michael Oxe for coordinating the membership and working bees.

It is more important than ever that the Friends of the East Gippsland Rail Trail assist the committee of Management to promote the beauty and benefits of the trail and lobby for funding for a Trail Manager to coordinate and supervise the ongoing improvement and maintenance of the trail. It is unrealistic and beyond the capability of either the Management Committee or the Friends to maintain the 100 km trail indefinitely.

In the meantime, we look forward to the coming year and especially to the Inaugural ride the entire trail length from Bairnsdale to Orbost in November, and to the development of Trail Notes to contribute to the knowledge and enjoyment of the trail users.

Well done Friends of the East Gippsland Rail Trail.

Janice Preston

Linking the rail trail with other shared pathways.

As walkers and cyclists we have an interest in having shared pathways to enjoy the cycling/walking experience. As rail trail users it is apparent that off road shared pathways to Marlo and to Eagle Point (a pathway already exists from Eagle Point to Paynesville) to connect with the trail would be very useful for locals and tourists. The East Gippsland Bicycle Strategy (1999) listed these two projects Marlo as priority 14, and Bairnsdale to Eagle Point as priority 35. In the review of the strategy in 2002 the Bairnsdale – Eagle Point connection was changed to low priority.

The Friends group wrote to East Gippsland Shire Council to request information on the progress of these initiatives.

The council has allocated \$210k for bicycle strategy implementation in 07/08 capital works.

No detailed engineering plans have been drawn up yet for the shared pathway to Eagle Point, this is required before funding requests to the Victorian government can be made.

The Council will seek input from the East Gippsland Bicycle Strategy steering committee and the council Recreation Planner, Al Campbell, has agreed to consult with the Friends group to discuss options for this project. If you feel this project is valuable for our community it would be useful to inform councillors of your interest.

Does anyone have news of the proposed Orbost to Marlo trail? The 2002 review said that 'Stage 1 was completed and to refer to Orbost Chamber of Commerce for details.'

As cycling grows in popularity across all age groups the development of trails is a great investment – keep encouraging the decision makers that this is the way to travel!

Sue Peirce



Ride the Trail in a Day

The entries are rolling in – remember to get yours in soon if you are intending to do this ride. Closing date is Oct 2. Entry forms and information on the website – eastgippslandrailtrail.com

Volunteers are required to assist on the day – if you feel you can assist please contact Sue or Michael on 51 56 8228, or send an e-mail to peirces@wideband.net.au Volunteers will be reimbursed for travelling or other expenses incurred. Once volunteers have volunteered details of roles will be worked out!

Location	Time	Role	persons
Orbost	6.45-7.30	Check registrations, forms, help load bikes	2
Orbost	2.00-5.30	Route marshall at Burn Rd to direct to Forest Park Assist with bike loading at Forest Park	2
Bairnsdale	7.00-9.00	Check registrations, forms	2
Bruthen	9.00-11.00	Route marshall – put up signs and direct off trail to pub, and back onto trail after morning tea Morning tea – check registrations assist with lunch hand out if pre-ordered	2 2
Nowa Nowa	10.30-1.30pm	Route marshall put up signs directing to Lunch stop, wait at Princes Hwy crossing to alert cyclists At lunch stop to coordinate any communications to ride organiser	2 1
Along route Vehicle/trailer and mobile phone	All day, starting at Bairnsdale at 9.00 am	Sag wagon - collect any cyclist or bike unable to be repaired- take to Orbost	

Rainforest Remnants

RAINFOREST REMNANTS

One of our members interested in vegetation conservation contacted Bill Peel who is employed by East Gippsland Catchment Authority to obtain advice on any remnant rainforest vegetation on the rail trail. Several areas were identified and this is the assessment.

1. Burn Rd near Orbost and Preston Rd, Newmerella. There are occurrences of endangered species, *Acacia maidenii* (Maiden's wattle).
2. On the western riverbank at Nicholson there is a small remnant of *Rapanea howittiana* (Muttonwood) along the water's edge and *Myoporum insulare* (boobialla). This area requires a considerable amount of weed control. The bank on the opposite side of the river is of fill and was not originally rainforest, but due to the reformation of the land into a bank, will probably become vegetated with coastal rainforest species (eg *Banksia integrifolia*, *Pittosporum undulatum* and seaberry saltbush) by natural means. This process could be accelerated by planting.
- 3 At intersection of Bairnsdale- Bruthen Rd
4. Along the Tambo flats near Bruthen.

To manage these areas of vegetation requires patience and persistence! First identify and remove/control the weeds using methods suitable for the site. Identify the non weed species and find out what other species are appropriate for the site. Continue to wage war on the weeds for a couple of years and see what comes up. If natural revegetation does not occur, or is taking too long then develop a planting program.

Several weeks ago a field day was held at properties near Lakes Entrance, Wyanga Park Winery and Goldsmiths in the Forest, to learn about rainforest restoration and look at the achievements made by these property owners.

A recent meeting was held to discuss the possibility to establish a Rainforest Conservation Management Network. Rainforest represents less than 5% of the remaining native vegetation in the region and as the rail trail has some it seems prudent to make an effort to restore.

We intend to follow up on this information and make a plan to look at one area next year.

A rainforest manual has been produced to assist with restoration.

Sue Peirce



Acacia maidenii



myoporum insulare



Rapanea howittiana

Ride To Bullamwaal

Alan organised this ride and as with his other rides, we were to explore an area that most of us had not previously visited. Again he chose perfect weather (does he have a direct line?) - ideal for cycling and still sunny enough to enjoy the scenery – a perfect, calm, cloudless winter's day.

We met at the car park in Bairnsdale and drove out to the site of the old boys' camp at Mt Taylor. This forest reserve is the site of an old forestry camp – at first in the depression years , a boys' camp for unemployed youths aged 15-18 - and then, later, a forestry camp.

From there, with the dank odour of the dogwood keeping us company, we pedalled uphill (2kms!) along a very corrugated dirt road to some wonderful views of “black cows and green grass” (thank you Keith and Mick). It didn't take long to reach the tiny “village” - more a location – of Bullumwaal where Sue was pleased to meet the only person she knew of in this area – the jam lady.

We rode past Perseverance Track and the old cemetery with its crumbling stone and wood headstones until we turned back to have lunch at the park in front of the Mechanics Institute. Here we were joined by a sociable, old, curly-haired, black dog who certainly didn't need Mick's offerings. We decided he must have been the town's guard dog and had just meandered across the road to check us out. It's just as well that he/she decided that we were friendly as I don't think this dog would have been capable of giving chase! While we were

eating our sandwiches, Alan gave us a quick history lesson.

Bullumwaal is an Aboriginal word thought to mean two spears representing two nearby mountains, Mt Lookout and Mt Taylor.

Originally called Boggy Creek, Bullumwaal was once the site of a prosperous goldmining town. There had been many gold mines in the area with the Beehive and Sons of Freedom mines being the most productive. There was also a thriving timber industry. In 1904 the population was 1200 with a hotel, churches, rifle club, state school and the Mechanics Institute. However by 1913 most mines were closing, the town declined and many houses were removed. Even though there was an attempted revival of the town, today there are probably only a handful of residents – including the dog.

The ride back to our cars was an exhilarating four or five kilometre downhill WOOSH.

A great ride once more.



Building the Line

Surveying the route from Bairnsdale to Orbost began in 1906. The track was to be sixty miles (100km) long and to cost 391,360 pounds or \$782 720.00 in today's currency.



In 1908 the Orbost and East Gippsland Railway League had written: "It may be mentioned that the line would cross four large coastal rivers and six smaller tributaries from which water power could be obtained. This could be used for the generation of electricity, and would furnish the the means of smelting the iron ores on the latest scientific methods. Referring to these streams, Mr E. H. Lees, A.M.I.C.E., F.R.A.S., a gentleman who has surveyed and explored the greater part of the country says, " As sources of supply for power stations they form ideal storages, combining steep gradients, large catchment areas of never-failing supply with an average rainfall of forty inches. The unutilised dynamical energy of the Snowy River alone, a few miles above Orbost, is equal to the present practical requirements of half the Commonwealth." (Prophetic?)

The first sod was turned on 9 Jan 1912 by Mrs Catherine Kilmartin on Roberts farm near Bruthen and construction began. It was a mammoth task, with bridges needed over major rivers such as the Nicholson and Tambo, and also for the many creek and gully crossings. In addition many large cuttings were required. Work progressed on the cuttings in various ways. Horses and ploughs, picks and shovels and dynamite and powder were all used to loosen the soil and gravel. This in turn was moved to the fills by horse and dray, wheel barrows (where it was too wet for the horses) and by skips which travelled on a temporary tramline downhill and dragged uphill by horse to be emptied. Wages were six shillings for an eight hour day and the men worked six days a week. Canvas towns sprang up along the way to house the workers. Water was carted by Mr Ern Hofen (from Newmerella) to some of the camps – in a square 400 gallon tank on a dray, taken from a spring in his paddock. Cattle were slaughtered in yards close to the line and the local butcher delivered the meat in a horse and dray – bread and milk were delivered in the same way. Sleeper cutters were employed to hew the sleepers

adjacent to the line as it progressed. These were of box, ironbark or stringybark species, size 9' x 9' x 4½" - smaller than the present size. Where possible they carried the sleepers or dragged them with a sleeper hook to stack beside the line preparatory to loading. This saved them ninepence, which was the rate charged by the carriers to cart them with wagons and six horse teams. Carl and Sav Ostler were carriers at the time.

Engineering feats in the construction of the line included bridges over the Mitchell, Nicholson and Tambo Rivers and the trestle bridge near Nowa Nowa. The flood plains at Orbost presented a particular problem for the engineers. This was overcome by building an impressive viaduct which has remained a feature of the maize flats for many years. The viaduct across the flats (largest such structure in Vic) was built in 1916. Locals, Alf Joiner and Archie McDougall cut the piles and they were carted to the site by bullock wagon driven by Dan Joiner. The railway camps, particularly the one near Nowa Nowa, developed a reputation for lawlessness with brawling, sly-grogging and thieving occurring frequently. Tales of these nefarious activities were frequently relayed to the local press. More than once Constable Goddard and Constable Ryan had to arrest drunken navvies at the local hotel at Nowa Nowa and chain them to the verandah posts nearby or lock them in the stables before conveying them to Cunninghame (Lakes Entrance) to be charged and place them in the lock-up. One man, chained to a guard post, managed to pull it out and he walked with it to Bruthen to have a friend take it off for him. (There was one recorded tragedy. J. Carroll, one of the contractors, his son and Jack Sullivan, a powder monkey (the one who set the explosives) were blown up when they attempted to dig out a charge of powder which had failed to explode previously.)

The line had taken 4 years to complete using all manual labour.
Next issue: The line opens.

Bicycle Rides

Date	Location	Contact
15 Oct 06	Meet at 10 a.m. At Forest Tech for ride on forest roads and rail trail Approx 50 km.	Mick Brady 5154 8547
5 Nov 06	From Bairnsdale or Orbost at 9.30 to Nowa Nowa for Nowa Nowa Nudes	Janice

★ Ride the trail in a day November 11

Meetings

October 9 – NICHOLSON

December 11 – ORBOST



Working Bees

October 10 – Bruthen at 10 – tunnel and section to bridge

Check regularly at www.eastgippslandrailtrail.com for updates.

Web site Stats

Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits
Jan 2006	941	1222
Feb 2006	442	654
Mar 2006	442	636
Apr 2006	390	603
May 2006	322	516
Jun 2006	523	772
Jul 2006	532	799
Aug 2006	918	1468
Sep 2006	354	487

nowa nowa nudes 2006



outdoor sculpture commission + art show
+ sculpture + threadbare + 2 minute nude

This year's show will again be held at the Nowa Nowa Hall, with the opening night on Friday 3 November, 6.30pm. It is then open to the public all weekend. Join us in a ride there this year.

**3-5 November
2006**

The exhibition grows each year, and is now the richest, and possibly the most loved art show in East Gippsland.



Installing the table and seats near Simpsons Creek



Men laying rails on the Orbost Bairnsdale line. Some men sit on a rail truck, one man holds an auger, a young boy sits in the foreground and a horse can be seen on the right.