

February 2009

VIC ROADS WORKS AT NOWA NOWA

Nowa Nowa diversion works prepare for Princes Highway realignment.

During January there was some disruption to access just east of Nowa Nowa while a diversion was installed, relocating the pathway northward to avoid the Trail being too close to a major realignment of the Princes Highway. The new works have involved taking the path up into the side embankment with drainage culverts each end. The diversion is nearly completed, with the new route to the north of the old easement being prepared for sealing. Although the diversion is ramped up the grades are moderate and the sealed surface will provide a high quality pathway.

Trail users are asked to still take care when moving through this section and especially if machinery is in use. Please obey directions from work crews.



View of the diversion of the Rail Trail east of Nowa Nowa, ready for sealing.

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Thanks to Vicki, Eddie and Geoff for their efforts in spraying the trail for weeds.





Where did the train stop on its way from Bairnsdale to Orbost?

The stations after leaving Bairnsdale were : Nicholson, Bumberrah, Mossiface, Bruthen, Colquhoun, Nowa Nowa, Tostaree, Waygara and Orbost . There remains very little of these stations to indicate the hustle and bustle of a once busy rail system which carried passengers and produce such as beans, maize, potatoes and cheese and butter. For example at Orbost Station every Monday morning up to two hundred boxes of fish would arrive from Eden to be sent further along the line and once a month 20 trucks loaded with cattle would depart from the station. It also transported mail, parcels newspapers, timber and livestock. Except for the still used **Bairnsdale Railway Station** all of the other stations have been demolished or removed. Their sites are marked in some cases by signs. For others you need to search for clues such as platform mounds, old rails or the foundations of the old buildings. It is hoped that eventually all of the old stations will have information boards depicting their histories.

There was generally controversy over the location of each station when the line was first built. For instance , by October 1913, the rail had reached Mossiface and and early in the next month the first train entered **Bruthen**. The station had been placed about a kilometre from the town and this was a matter of concern. As well the need to have the railway cut across the main street meant the dismantling of buildings and the loss of recreation grounds.

The Colquhoun Siding opened in 1916 and was mostly used for loading timber logged in the Colquhoun Forest. A network of tramways from the siding penetrated the forest. A work camp was established there for sleeper cutters and labourers. During the depression an unemployment relief camp was also located there. This siding closed in the 1960's. Incidentally, Colquhoun was named after Colquhoun Cunninghame, sister of William Cunninghame, a local Scottish-born squatter, for whom Lakes Entrance was originally named.

Next Issue; The Sleeper cutters

In **Orbost** the station was built on the west bank of the river because there was not enough traffic

to justify the cost of a bridge, and the railway never crossed the river to the township.



Orbost Railway Station



Nowa Nowa loading facility



Site of the old Nicholson Station

Burn Road Trail End Gets a New Shelter.

Thanks to a grant from East Gippsland Shire Council, the Friends Association has been able to install a visitor shelter which includes a seat and notice board. With great support from Garry Watts (East Gippsland Shire Council) the site has been prepared and the shelter installed. A planting of suitable local species has been added to enhance the parking area which is located at the start of the shared (off road) pathway that starts at the end of the Trail and leads visitors across the Snowy River into Orbost.

More information signage and seating is planned for the site.



New shelter - a notice board has since been added to the back wall.



Before the planting - a 30cm deep lake!

Friends working hard at planting 200 native shrubs.



May and Michael keep working.

Sue takes a break to pose.



The hot weather took its toll and the "lake" disappeared.



Trail Notes Launched After Long Gestation.



After years of hard work the Trail Notes supplement is finally on the web-site. When Michael Oxer first suggested the idea of adding detailed descriptions of the trail route to the web-site all present at the meeting embraced the idea. However with no-one else quite realising what was required Michael eventually had to do the work himself. Unfortunately what began as a simple concept developed into a major opus!

Michael has produced a comprehensive set of files designed to make use of the trail a more interesting and enlightening experience. Valuable assistance has been provided by Brian Pollard, from western Victoria, who kindly typed the rough

notes into readable text. Brian's daughter had visited the Trail and he offered to help in some way. That offer was quickly taken up.

The Trail Notes are a supplement to the printed information and map brochure and are still a 'work in progress'.

As new material becomes available the Notes files will be amended and replace the current version. These Notes are only available as PDFs from this web site. Trail users are encouraged to download the notes and print as required. Because these files are updated from time to time version and production date should be checked. There may be a later version.

Trail Notes are referenced by the black numbers shown on the map included in the Trail brochure. Copies of the brochure are available at Visitor Information Centres (Federation Square and Southern Cross Station in Melbourne, Traralgon, Sale, Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance, Orbost) and from other locations in East Gippsland, or by request by post via the email Comments facility.

Trail users and Friends are invited to contribute notes, comments and observations via the web-site or to a committee member.

Where are we going? How will we get there?

Thanks to funding from the Shire Council under their Community Strengthening Demonstration Projects program, the Rail Trail CoM will prepare a Maintenance and Development Strategy (plan) to guide work over the next three years. Key elements of the planning process will include: local community involvement in the ongoing management and maintenance of the Trail, including Trail neighbours and the Friends Association, ways and means to gain ongoing funding for management and maintenance, building partnerships with relevant agencies both local and beyond the region, and succession planning for the management committee. The first stage will be a one day facilitated workshop for the Committee, with some special input from Council. Once the Strategy has been written it will be circulated to a wide group of businesses and organisations, inviting comment as part of a second stage. A consultation meeting might also take place. Part of the process might also include collating known data on economic benefits of rail trails. Local businesses getting turnover generated by visitors to the Trail will be encouraged to offer information about the significance of that stream.

Michael Oxer Sue Peirce

Bill Storer steps down after many years working on the Trail.

The 2008-11 Committee acknowledges and thanks Bill for his many years of untiring effort and frequent very welcome 'discoveries' of unexpected funding, through his role at DSE. Bill was in on the very earliest development of the Trail, and has acquired a most detailed knowledge of every kilometre, both in the early days following the removal of the former railway infrastructure then on through the more recent major addition from Nowa Nowa to Orbost, and many big upgrade jobs in between. This must rank as a magnificent legacy to East Gippsland, having played a key role in what is now the longest rail trail in Australia in a single local government area. It is not widely known (we need a sign to say so!) that the guard rail/fence on the Tambo River bridge was of Bill's design, as a pre-fabricated and quickly installed system. Our sincere thanks, Bill, for your many years of effort.

Michael Oxer

Bike Riding Maps

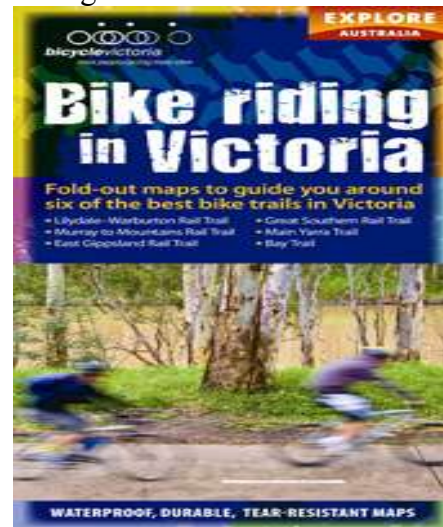
Bicycle Victoria, in association with Explore Australia Publishing, has created a handy pack of waterproof bike-riding maps that will guide you through six of the best riding locations around Victoria. *Bike riding in Victoria* contains six detailed individual riding maps, filled with information about the route, possible itineraries, history and tips on preparing for your ride.

The six routes described are:

- Lilydale–Warburton Rail Trail
- Murray to Mountains Rail Trail
- East Gippsland Rail Trail
- Great Southern Rail Trail
- Main Yarra Trail
- Bay Trail

Route descriptions

Each route is described in detail including cafes, transport options to and from the ride, accommodation options and places of interest. These maps are also a fantastic tool for planning your next trip, with information on preparing for your ride, suggested itineraries and a history of the trail and the region.



New Committee takes up the pen and chainsaw.

Last December all but one of the previous Committee signed back on, with two new members bringing most valuable skills and enthusiasm to the group. There are big challenges ahead during the next three year term, not least to try and secure assured ongoing funding for maintenance to ease some of big load on volunteer assistance. Meetings will be held bi-monthly (Feb, April, June, Aug, Oct and Dec, generally the 3rd Thursday). The retiring member was Bill Storer, DSE.

To share around the work load each Committee member has particular responsibilities under a portfolio system. Feel free to contact any member with either offers of assistance or any concerns about the Trail. New members include:

Jacqui Martin: Secretary (Trail neighbours database, RT Regulations liaison, Brochure updating local businesses), Business plan development), and

Michael McStephen : (Landcare & conservation management liaison, Biodiversity review, Bruthen area interests.)

Ongoing members are:

Andrew Sharpe: Treasurer. (DSE liaison, Licenses, Fire management liaison, Trail surveys coordination.)

Bob Yeates: (Media and publicity, Advocacy, economic development liaison, Events)

John Nelson: (Gardens on RT at Cameron Cres. liaison, Mitchell River Rotary contacts, Brochure distribution coordination)

Brian Gustus: (Fire management planning & liaison, Weeds. Bruthen area issues, DSE mapping / Km marker posts)

Michael Oxe: Chairperson. (Committee coordination / Policy development, advocacy, BTAs / Media / Shire Council liaison, Trail counters management, Web site & Trail Notes coordination.)

Bush Guardians Grant



Conditions were suitable for spot spraying of exotic grasses at Bumberrah and this has been done on two occasions. Themedata thatch has been collected and will be laid on the site after one more spot spray to control paspalum and Indian grass.

A working bee in early on Saturday morning in January before the flies and mosquitos emerged, cleared up 700 metres of damaged fence line near Bumberrah station. This included removing cut wire and barbed wire, cutting down dead black wattle on or near the fence line, brush cutting to enable the contractor easy access to do the repair job. This has now been completed and the fence reinstated. Thanks to Norm, Lorraine, Frank, Michael, Michael, Sheila, Gus, and Sue.

Nicholson Bridge Project

The good December weather enabled planting as late as Boxing Day! This was in an area where blackberry had been removed where it was trying to out - compete the exotic grasses. Since then several spot spraying sessions, watering sessions and blackberry removal have been done. Generally the plants are doing well and there is encouraging regeneration of native grasses.

Application For Funding

From

EGSC Community Grants



An application has been made to East Gippsland Shire Council for funding for new signs – a big version of the map for the new shelter at Burn Rd and Bairnsdale – so the map includes the Nowa Nowa to Orbost section. Also for two interpretative signs along the new section of shared pathway from Burn Rd to Orbost. The Friends' contribution – apart from our willing labour! - is to provide materials for a sign shelter to be constructed at Bairnsdale - this would provide information about the trail, brochures, maps, activities etc at Orbost and Bairnsdale.

Web Stats

The Rail Trail Website continues to be well supported. On average there are over 50 visitors per day with over 260 page views per day. This gives a great result for our business supporters who are promoted through the website. Over December / January there were a lot of hits on the pages for our accommodation friends.

Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages
Jan 2009	978	1599	8172

OUR BUSINESS FRIENDS

Bicycle Friends

Bicycle Passion

East Gippsland Sports



Transport

Perrys Bus Service



Accommodation

Beachside Loft at Eagle Bay

Bellas in Bruthen Bruthen Inn

Marlo Ocean View Caravan Park

Mingling Waters

Mitchell River Gardens Holiday Park

Mitchell Motor Inn

Orbost Caravan Park

Orbost Country Roads Motor inn



Snowy River Homestead B.&B.

Stringy Bark Cottages

Tambo Park Cottages

Tambo River Tourist Park

Travellers Rest Motel Bairnsdale

Waterholes Guest House

Business

John Florance Lake Whadie Cafe Le Cafe Bruthen

Nicholson River General Store Orbost Visitors' Centre

Robyn Bourke C.P.A.

Please support our business friends whenever possible.



Check regularly at www.eastgippslandrailtrail.com for updates.

Meetings

Feb 9th Orbost 7pm at Commercial

May 11th Nowa Nowa 7pm at pub

Aug 9th AGM & ordinary meeting at Bruthen
1pm at Bruthen Inn

Nov 9th Nicholson – short ride 5pm, then BBQ
and meeting at 7pm



Activities

Rides

March 7th Orbost to Buchan with SNOBS –
Keith

June 13/14th Gippsland Plains - Sue

Sept 27th Ride Mississippi trail from Bruthen or
Nowa Nowa or start of Mississippi
Trail - Sue

3Day Event

Gelantipy Wilderness Ride

Fri. 17 Sat 18 Sun 19 April

Contact : Wilderness Bike Rides

Ph. 51546637

wildernessbikeride@live.com

Buchan Weekend: MARCH Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th:

Every one is welcome to join us on this ride. **Contact:** Marlene Robb and Keith Law 03 5154 1232
Weekend ride Orbost to Buchan and return.

We will leave Orbost Forest Park at 9.30 am.

A comfortable 60 KM ride on the Saturday along the Orbost Buchan Rd, Stay over night at Buchan with a
65 KM ride on Sunday via Old Buchan Rd and the Rail Trail.

Make your own accommodation arrangements :

Buchan Accommodation: Motel 03 5155 9201

Hotel 03 5155 9203

Lodge 03 5155 9421

Cabins 03 5155 9494

New Toilet

Department of Sustainability & Environment has donated a secondhand (8 year old) toilet to the Rail Trail.
It is currently located at Log Crossing and will be removed to a site on the Rail Trail. Ideas for locating it
are welcome .

**Friends of East Gippsland Railtrail are extremely grateful to Craig Ingram's office which has supported our
group with the printing of this newsletter for some time now.**