



Banyule BUG Newsletter

December
2019

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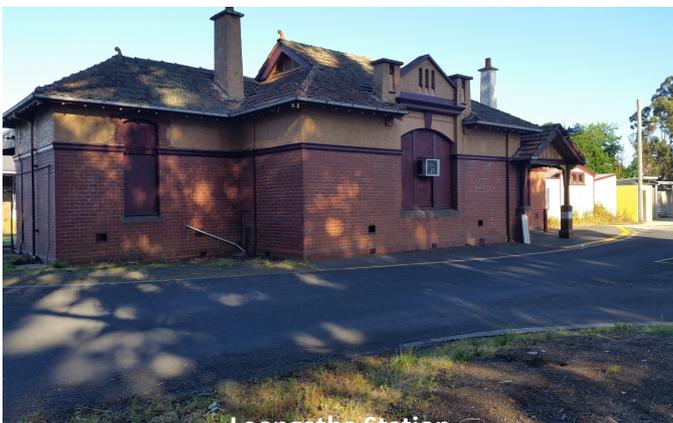
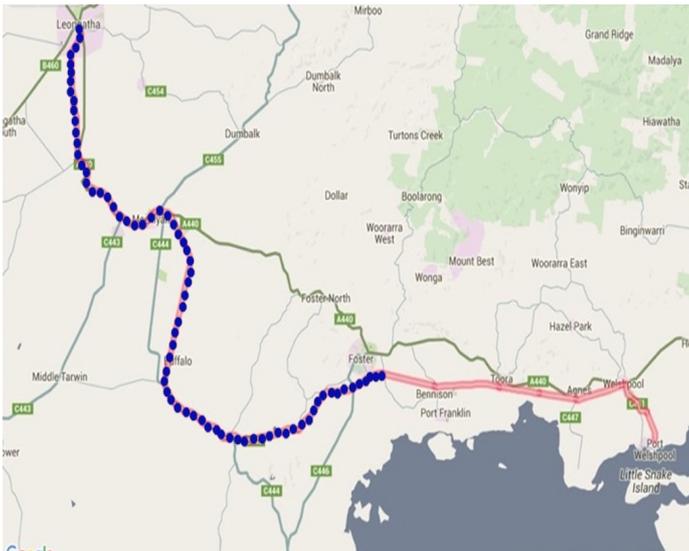
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Ride Report – Leongatha to Foster

October 30 saw six Banyule BUG cyclists gather at the old Leongatha Station and prepare to cycle from Leongatha to Foster for the first part of a two day event. The second was a cycle from Foster to Port Welshpool and back for a final night in Foster. The weather was perfect for cycling and the Great Southern Rail Trail was in excellent condition; firm smooth hard packed gravel. All the elements for a great two days cycling were in place – the ducks were all lined up. However, one of the ducks fell out of line.

About seven k along the trail, Allan Garbutt's bike had a major derailleur failure. It was unrepairable. It was decided that (I) would leave the group and walk back with my bike to Leongatha and effect repairs. Now walking seven k in stiff cycling shoes, in the heat is a daunting prospect for anyone. A number of passing cyclists stopped and offered assistance and words of encouragement and left. After about 4k, one of those passing riders was waiting at a crossroad, with his car and room for (my) bike. He had completed his ride to Leongatha and come back.

This was one of those “pay it forward” moments. His generosity will ensure that at some point in the future, his kindness will be repaid.



Leongatha Station



This two day event was beautifully organised by Gordon Bettenay and what follows is his report. Your very disappointed editor was back in Melbourne having his bike repaired.

Gordon...



Wednesday at 10.00am saw 6 of us leave Leongatha train station bound for a night at Foster. Three of us had already spent a night at Foster caravan park, (called Prom Caravan Park) and 3 had driven down from home that morning.

A 2km downhill meant we were to have a gentle introduction to the days ride. Unluckily for Allan his derailleur decided to give up after 6 years faithful service and we weren't able to fix it. A 7km walk was in store for Alan which certainly put a damper on the mood for a while.

Riding through rolling hills, tree lined tracks soon saw us jolly along again as we headed to Meeniyan for morning tea at "Bread and pickles" which for some meant a snack as well. We were lucky with the weather as a warm day was tempered by a breeze to keep us cool.

Off to Fish creek for lunch had a good solid climb with a great run down again into our destination. Lunch was at "The Paddock" newly relocated opposite the pub, more lunch with the day becoming hot, fortunately still with a breeze through the cuttings as these can be very hot on a still day.

A very solid climb up over the Hoddle range, great view at the top and an even greater run down the other side into Foster.

Carole set off for the motel with the rest of us in the prom park. Dinner was in the pub at reasonable cost, good food too!

Much frivolity in the community canteen at the park on return after saw several riders up quite late, good fun all round for everyone.

Thursday we were off to Port Welshpool earlier than planned because it looked like being a hot day. Six riders set off over mostly flat terrain with scrubby sides, trees and one snake sighted.

Morning tea at Toora "Latte Dah" with us being joined by Peter for the rest of the ride.



A flat run down to Port Welshpool getting hot by this time, lunch at the fish and

chippery opposite the fisherman's wharf was thoroughly enjoyed by all and then off to see the long jetty.



What a surprise! They've spent 11 million dollars on the jetty which is very much a tourist attraction with displays and now well worth a visit..

Off home into a hot strong north wind, hard work with much water splashed around when available.



Five exhausted riders (Fran got a very thankful ride with Elaine after too much sun to Port Welshpool)..returned to the prom park , Peter and Elaine left and the rest of us had a beautiful "home cooked" meal retiring early with a smile on our faces after a great few days riding.

We'll do it again next year....

Gordon Bettenay

[Here is a link to a video of the first 7k of the trail from Leongatha](#)

A Banyule BUG in Hamburg - 2019 Edition

Hello fellow BUGs. You may recall that last year I did the Hamburg Cyclastics whilst also visiting my grandson after a tour through Spain, Morocco and Portugal [refer BUG Blurb July and Oct 2018].

Well I did it again and I am very proud to share my results with you, but first I would like to share a bit of our trip with you, which I hope will be of interest.

Like last year prior to arriving in Hamburg we did a tour, this time a 20 day Trafalgar tour called Britain and Ireland Grandeur. Again we booked through Meridian Travel, who we can thoroughly recommend.

The tour took us from London to Plymouth, to Wales and Cardiff, over the Irish Sea and right around Ireland including Northern Ireland, back to England and up through Scotland and back to London via York. Phew.

Highlights, were, all of it actually, but we loved the Cornwall area, Looe and Polperro in particular:



Polperro



interesting use of an old bike and interesting menu



Liverpool, home of the Beatles and the Cavern Club:



The Beatles and an "old groupie"



Entrance



Atmosphere plus, a trip highlight

Dublin:



The oldest Pub in Dublin

Irish Philosophy

another Irish Religion

Edinburgh:



Edinburgh Castle, extraordinary cannon on the battlements a view from the castle

Edinburgh Tattoo:



well of course it rained

fireworks

bagpipes and highland dancers

But the real highlight was Northern Ireland and the towns of Londonderry [as the Protestants call it] or Derry [as the Catholics refer] and Belfast purely because of the relatively recent history of Northern Ireland it did not disappoint.

We did a "black cab" tour where we hear about The Troubles from both Protestant and Catholic perspectives which was absolutely fascinating.

At one point I said to them:

- Guys, 25 odd years ago you could have been pointing guns at each other?
- YES we could have and maybe we did, they said.

One word summed up my thoughts, chilling.

That night our walking tour guide, a lady in her mid 40's said on a number of occasions that she did not expect to live beyond her mid 20's such was the seriousness of The Troubles.



Black Cab and the wall

our message on the wall

*whether you stand, to the left
or right the
gun barrels face directly you!*

Well with the tour over we headed off to Hamburg and had a fantastic greeting by our grandson. We had a family dinner and this set a great tone for our whole visit.



View from our apartment towards Hamburg self-explanatory

Marlow welcoming Grandma

We did some sightseeing and one of the most fascinating was the Mahnmal (Memorial) St. Nikolai.

The memorial St. Nikolai is Hamburg's central place of remembrance for the victims of war and tyranny of the years 1933-1945. The former main church of St. Nikolai was destroyed during the air raids on Hamburg in 1943.



The memorial St. Nikolai and some views from the observation deck, to the Rathaus and the Port

area

There is a museum below St Nikolai which is a history of the bombing of Hamburg in WW2. This was sobering to say the least. If interested google "operation Gomorrah - bombing of Hamburg" and watch the video.

What a waste war is. Hamburg was strategically located; a home for a number of the SS so was a legitimate target. But so sad. Perhaps this is why the people of Hamburg are such a welcoming, friendly people today?

Hamburg in summer is great, so is the beer, people watching, relaxing and the plant life:



In the middle of Hamburg

wine hidden behind plant!

a biggie

So after family, beer, sightseeing, beer, exceptionally poor coffees, beer, it comes to this, The Cyclastics.

I picked up my hire bike on the Thursday and rode from the city along the Alster and some quieter roads to our apartment, a similar distance from Melbourne to Heidelberg.

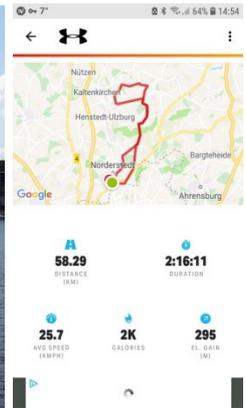
On the Friday I did a training ride to acclimatise and get a feel for the bike.



My hire bike



the Alster



Training Ride

I'll give a quick recap of the scale of the Hamburg Cyclastics:

It's the biggest bike participation event in Europe, close to 18,000 riders riding one of the three different distances on offer, the 60km, 100km or 160km. I was doing the 100km again this year.

As the Cyclastics is a UCI sanctioned event there is a race for the Professionals which covers virtually the same 60km and 100km routes with a couple of hill circuits thrown in making the distance around 220km.

For the 3rd year in a row Elia Viviani won just edging out our very own Caleb Ewan, who won in 2016.

I was riding with my grandson's step Dad, Dennis, his Uncle and a couple of other family members.



at the start with Dennis



waiting nervously

Like many bike events you are assigned a start block, based on your estimated speed, and start in waves over a period of around 45 minutes.

At 9:05 our block was allowed to go so we headed off through the streets of Hamburg and out into the countryside passing many spectators all cheering, blowing horns and offering encouragement.

I'm feeling really good and after about 40km's I'm averaging around 33kph, I'm hydrated, have my gels and magnesium tablets to assist with cramps.

I am also feeling very safe and aware of my surrounds however I see the results of a number of crashes, some looking serious, there were two riders with neck braces on, and many a bloody knee.

At the 80km mark I am still, to my surprise, averaging over 30kph, so with 20km to go this gives me an enormous boost. Last year at this point I was feeling it in my hands, feet and butt, however this year I have no problems.

We do a couple of k's on the Autobahn and then back into the Hamburg suburbs.

At about 95km I see the church spires where the race finishes and know not long to go now.

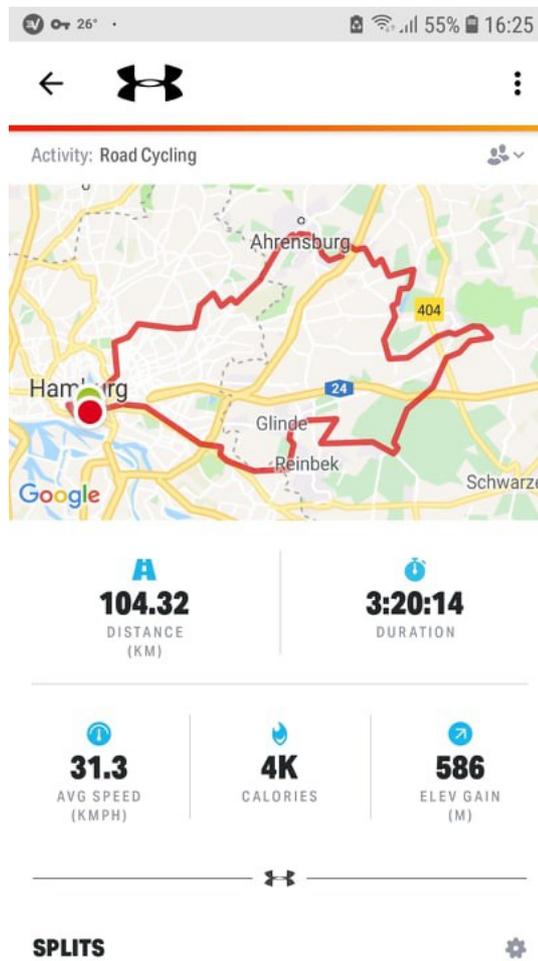
Into the city centre, along the bottom of the Alster, left turn down towards the harbour, skirt past the Mahnmal St. Nikolai and then onto the famous Monckebergstrasse towards the finish line.

Just before the finish saw my family cheering me on and over I went.

Around to the rider finish area, get my finisher medal and the straight to the Erdinger beer tent for a refreshing beer or three. Grabbed a few pastries and in seventh heaven. I did it.

Last year's event was 108.9km whilst this year the course was altered slightly and the distance closer to the 100km.

So last year my 100km time was 3:48:55 at an average of 26.21kph. This year, check this out.....



I am really proud of my results albeit Dennis finished about 5 minutes before me but given he is 15 years younger I can live with that, although it does give me ammunition for Cycclassics 2020, the 25th edition of this event.

I sincerely hope you found this interesting and if anybody would like some information on the Britain and Ireland Grandeur tour feel free to e-mail me at randalldehnert@gmail.com.

Interesting Web Sites

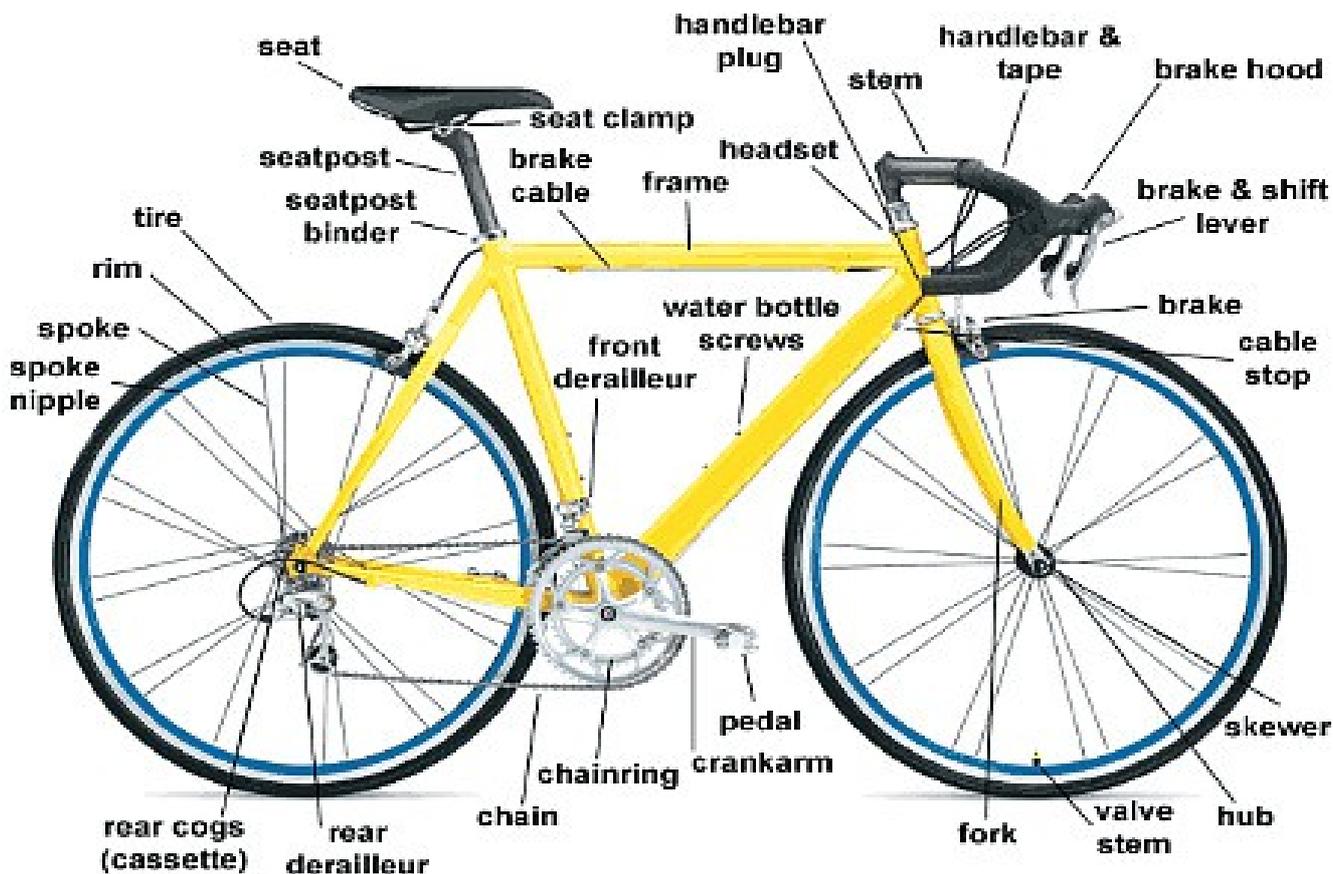
[New bike rules put families on footpats](#). This RACV site has a number of other bike related articles.

[After Spike in Deaths, New York to Get 250 Miles of Protected Bike Lanes](#)

[Study: Rail-trails inject \\$930M annually into Pa. economy](#)

[Tasmanian family travels 14,000 kilometres around Australia with two kids on tandem bikes](#)

It is always good to have a common frame of reference when discussing things. So, to help this process when talking about your bike. Here is a bike anatomy.



Birthday Celebration Ride



Banyule BUG cyclists on Friday 8 of November held a celebratory ride to Churchill Coffee shop in Mont Albert to recognise the 92nd birthday of Kelvin. Let me repeat that 92nd birthday.

Kelvin is a fit and regular rider with the 'Latte Group' usually on Fridays, but has been known to do the two rides each week. He takes part in all scheduled rides and distances. He is a popular member of our group.

This celebration event was organised by Sue and Peter, who put a lot of preparation into the planning, including a wonderful chocolate cake which was rich and creamy. We all had to cycle doubly hard on the way home to negate its calories.

An additional surprise was the inclusion of a 'mens choir – 'The Chordites'. Charles, who is a BUG member and rides with us on

Tuesdays, but never on Friday, is a member of this choir and they practise on Friday. It just happens that where they practise is just across the road from 'The Churchill Cafe' and once he heard about the gathering there, offered the services of the choir.)Talk about synchronicity of events meeting in time and place (Jung))They were very good and regaled us with three numbers including a memorable rendition of "You'll



Never Walk Alone” revamped as “You’ll Never Ride Alone”

There were some 30 BUG members present and it was a memorable and fitting celebration.

Happy Birthday Kelvin.

You can view a short video of Kelvin riding here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahtOYcr000E&feature=youtu.be>

Hear “The Chordites” serenade Kelvin with their version of “You’ll Never Ride Alone”.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmRwjXJK4YM>

And for those of you who missed it; Kelvin made the front page of the Diamond Valley Leader. (select back issues Wednesday 20th November, 2019)

[Diamond Valley Leader digital edition](#)

Ed.



*Merry Christmas to you all.
Safe riding over the festive season.
Have a safe, happy and prosperous 2020*

Collect and save your cycling stories from over the Christmas period and contribute them to our newsletter in the new year. Ed. allang@bigpond.net.au