



Hi all,

I hope you had a great Christmas. And let's hope that 2021 is not as "unusual" and a lot safer and less restrictive than 2020.

## **LINTON TO BALLARAT RAIL TRAIL**

**ATTENDEES:** 5000'S- Geoff and Frances. 3800's- Brian C, John Mc, Al, Brian P, Graham, Andrew and Charles. 2200 -, John G. 1700's- Ted, Don and John M. 650- Neil.

Phew ! What a turnout. It was great to see so many people turn up.

This has been the first run for a long time due to the Covid virus and associated restrictions. It was decided to do this run because the track is very quiet and congestion would not be an issue. A big welcome to new riders, people we have not seen for a while and our regulars. One person sadly missed was Peter S who did not attend due to a communication error.

It was decided to dedicate this run to Ern M. Ern was one of the original Solex Oz team and was still riding into his 80's. Sadly he passed away not long ago.

We all assembled in front of the Linton Larder café at the designated time. And perhaps because there were so many of us and we had not seen each other for a while the conversation flourished. The weather forecast was for early cloud, mid 20's and no rain. Perfect for a good, long ride. Soon we were on our way. The pace was good and all the bikes were running well. The track was in relatively good condition with not too much dust because of recent rain. Passing under the remains of a trestle bridge, huge embankments to keep the rail tracks in as low gradient as possible and further along crossing the Woody Yallock river on Nimons bridge one is reminded of all the hard work that went into the construction of this railway in 1883. This is all old gold mining territory here and the population in the 1800's was significantly more than now.

Our group got a bit split up around Nimons Bridge. After passing through Scarsdale there was a long wait at Smythesdale for the second group to catch up. It was revealed that Neil had starting problems - causing the delay. His bike never missed a beat after this. After passing through Haddon it wasn't very long before we started to see the outskirts of Ballarat. Soon after this we were all seated at "The Arch" café enjoying good food, drink and more flourishing conversation.



### **TECH TIP.**

One thing that has been an irritation with my Solex has been that it has always been a bit noisy around where the “ball joint” of the exhaust down pipe meets the muffler pipe. Ted, always being observant and helpful, then advised me of a fix he had learned from Brian Solex in New York. The fix would be provided by aluminium sheeting from an empty soft drink can. The advice being that after taking the muffler off the bike with the engine in the dropped position, place an aluminium strip about 20mm wide and just long enough to overlap itself inside the rebate of the muffler joint. Then push the joint back over the “ball joint” and bolt the muffler back into place.

I tried this on my bike a few days ago and was surprised as to how much quieter the engine ran.

So, a very big thank you to Brian and Ted. I'll now repeat the procedure on my black Solex.

### **OUR NEXT RUNS**

If all goes well, our next run will be in February next year. I have not finalised when or where just yet. If anyone has any ideas please feel free to contact me.

Don and Dee would like to host the March run which will be the Fish Creek to Port Welshpool weekend from 12<sup>th</sup> (optional stay at Venus Bay) 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. I have been privileged to have participated on this run and find the South Gippsland rail trail to be the best ride on our calendar. See below.

### **VENUS BAY/GREAT SOUTHERN RAIL TRAIL SATURDAY AND SUNDAY MARCH 13<sup>th</sup> AND 14<sup>th</sup> 2021**

This is an exciting weekend run that can optionally start on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> from Venus Bay (Don and Dee have kindly offered for people to camp, or bring a caravan, on their property). The main big event will be on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>. If people are joining us from Melbourne or elsewhere on this day we will leave Koonwarra at 11am otherwise 10 am. If you have any other queries about accommodation on the Friday night please contact Don or Dee on 0540644570 or email [doubled@ozemail.com.au](mailto:doubled@ozemail.com.au)

The starting point is at a small village called Koonwarra and the trail is called “The Great Southern Rail Trail” and it is blessed with panoramic views of lush bushland, temperate rainforest and pristine seascapes. The Great Southern Rail Trail winds its way through South Gippsland and the surface of the track is quite similar to the Queenscliff rail trail. There is very little traffic and virtually no public road riding. The ride would encompass riding from Koonwarra to Port Welshpool and return for overnight accommodation at Welshpool hotel/motel which is quite inexpensive and has excellent evening meals. The following morning after breakfast the return journey would take us back to Koonwarra. The total distance travelled would be 135 klms.

I hope you all have a great New Year and look forward to seeing you again soon.