



MELBOURNE TRAIL HORSE RIDERS CLUB INC.

Incorporation No: A0004356B

TRAIL TALK

August 2014

In this edition: Ride Reviews from the Pyrenees Weekend, Murrindindi, Queen's B'day, Maldon and Strathbogie Ranges.

Plus: Photos, classifieds and horsey fun!!!! 😊

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Rides coming up:

6 th September:	Macedon Pub Ride	Bruce McClean
27 th – 4 th Oct:	Mallee	Bruce McClean
18 th & 19 th Oct:	Ongoing ride Bunyip area	Tania Kirby
29 th Nov – 6 th Dec:	High Country	Gordon Lyttle
26 th – 31 st Dec:	Erica	Mitch Kemp
27th December	Presidents BBQ at Carigal Scout Camp Erica	



Pyrenees Long Weekend

By Lisa & Rio



There is nothing so good for the inside of a man as the outside of a horse. ~John Lubbock, "Recreation," *The Use of Life*, 1894

Most of us arrived Thursday afternoon/night to set up camp on a private property in Amphitheatre. Thanks to Katie's retired boss Phil we could safely have our horses there, before setting off the next morning. Some people who lived fairly close-by arrived Friday morning except Tania who must have got up "at sparrows fart" to be there on time. Well done Tania!

I can't blame anyone for not spending that night in their float because after we had been to the Avoca pub for dinner we came back to being wisely advised by Mitch "to rug up it's gonna be cold tonight". Sure enough on opening the float door in the morning there was a nice white cover of ice on the ground. Bbrrr, I had to break the ice off Rio's water, but the troops were prepared with a nice fire burning in half a 44 gallon drum.

After breakfast, making saddle-bag lunches, loading the back-up vehicles and saddling up we were off. It wasn't long before coats were shed as we warmed up. As usual, after a chilly clear night bought a beautiful clear day. The air was still fresh but riding in this beautiful country was awesome.

Each day we had around 20 odd riding out, including 2 new members, Leanne and Robyn. By the last day we had lost a few due to various reasons. Adam and Jacqueline from Mt. Cole and others from around the district joined us too. Thanks to Adam and Mitch for pre riding the area to make sure everything was A OK for us. Both guys as combined leaders did a great job.

We covered distances varying from around 25-35 km daily. Setting off between 10.00 am or 10.30 am each day as well. With plenty of different vegetation and sights along the way we had four great days of riding.

We had been told we would have a nice afternoon tea waiting at Elmhurst Recreation Reserve on our arrival on Friday. So, we opted for an earlier than usual lunch break to ensure our stomachs were ready for a feast. AND a FEAST it was..... *Hhmm now was it Linda F and Brian who seemed to disappear in the lead and be seated near the cakes and slices when we arrived? Having sampled one or two already! ?*

A kind local lady named Fay went to a lot of trouble preparing afternoon tea for us which was very much appreciated. A nice little thank you speech by Peter Eberhard and gift by Mitch on behalf of MTHRC was very appropriate.

With the use of the Reserves facilities including a kitchen, undercover area and showers it was a very civilised stay.

Next day we set off to Chinaman's picnic area. Here also, we had a beaut undercover area with an open fireplace inside. How cozy we were with tarps being put up over the open tops of the walls. If the weather had turned dreadful I was definitely "eyeing" off a place to lay my swag!

On our way we stopped off at Mt. Cole. for lunch. A hut up the top was a nice sheltered spot. The great back-up had arrived earlier, lit the fire inside, had the water on for a cuppa and lunch set out for us. We are very spoiled riders that's for sure.



Riding: The art of keeping a horse between you and the ground. ~Author Unknown

No hour of life is wasted that is spent in the saddle. ~Winston Churchill

What an awesome view we had, venturing out where hang gliders launch themselves. A big open space of granite we could walk the horses out to enjoy the view. Even puddles of fresh water for the gg's to drink!

Sunday saw us riding out again in fine weather stopping at Mt. Cole Reservoir, such a pretty spot for a rest. Then Adam our trusty (other) leader produced the most delicious home-made slices that a friend had dropped into camp the night before . Everyone needs friends like those! If you are ever in the area be careful around the edge of the water, you can sink quite deeply into the mud - just ask Peter Eberhard.....

Forward and onward to Mt. Buangor lookout, more spectacular views. Then a little way further down the track some of us ventured onto another lookout area where we could even see around the corner to Langi Ghiran. Even more great countryside and views.

Onto an area called Mugwamp Hut for a lunch break. Another hut with the fire burning and our back-up waiting with everything ready. We trekked on traversing some interesting challenges to keep our horses thinking and concentrating on what they were doing. A decline which was quite rutted, from what looks like torrential rain, was handled really well by all. A chance then to have a really nice canter to move us along. This was our longest day in the saddle coming into Smiths Bridge camp around 4.30 pm.

Sadly, like all good things, it came to an end. Monday with a few riders less we headed off for a shorter ride where we met Katie and Co. parked in an area off the road. Here we were fed and watered for the last time before being taxied back to our floats for our journey home.

~

Thanks to all involved with the preparation and carrying out of the ride, the back up crew, Katie with her tireless efforts to keep us fed. The kids who never complain and all the riders for their great company. AND mostly of all we must never forget our faithful neddies.

Lisa V.

Murrindindi weekend



We camped on Caroline Walsh's property along the Murrindindi River, Mitch and Bruce had found us a nice little spot in amongst the trees and not far away from a dam for the horse's water.

It was such a lovely spot, very peaceful.

Saturday morning brought us a nice sunny warm day and with 13 riders we headed out along the power line road, until we got to the Black Range forest.

We had a mixture of soft, rocky, and hilly tracks with plenty of opportunities for those who wanted a little canter.

We were met at the lunch spot by Katie, Riley and Peter who had the billy going and some yummy biscuits.

After a lovely lunch Katie got to ride Mitch's horse back, the tracks were more of the same with great views and a few steep declines which made the horses think a bit.

Saturday night some people headed to the pub for dinner as Yea was only 15 minutes up the road.

The rest of us stayed behind and got the huge bon fire going.

Sunday saw some people leave and some arrive for the ride. Today's ride was only fairly short about 16km and we had lunch back at camp.

The tracks around Murrindindi are fantastic, views and very horse friendly road surfaces.

Thank you to Mitch for organizing another wonderful weekend.



MTHRC QUEEN'S (CATH'S) BIRTHDAY LONG WEEKEND RIDE

By Cath:



The club's Queen's Cath's Birthday Long Weekend Ride augured well when we all headed off to a destination called 'Happy Days' at Tinamba, East Gippsland. And happy days they were; the sun shone, the accommodation was super comfortable, the company was excellent, the rides thoroughly enjoyable and the food fantastic and I would be remiss not to mention THAT SPA!

Ron and Leanda were helpful and welcoming hosts of their very comfortable bed and breakfast 'Happy Days'. There was nothing that we wanted for (except perhaps that thicker mattress for 'Princess and the Pea' Linda). Even most of the horses were happily accommodated in the communal paddock.

Sally Bass from the Maffra area led the ride on the Saturday and took us through some lovely and varied single track trails in the area of Mt Hendrick. The terrain and geography varied hugely from moist, mossy gullies and creek beds, up some steady, rocky climbs amongst the big timber, winding through dense understory and then out onto some spectacular rocky escarpments to take in the magnificent distant valley views. This was real 'photo opportunity' country. Rocks and boulders were the order of the day; climbing over them, winding around them, pebbles under hoof. This was quite a technical ride in that the obstacles and terrain necessitated taking much of it at a walk. We were blessed with plenty of sunshine, no wind and only a light shower of rain.

The group decided on a more varied ride pace for the Sunday, including the opportunity for some trot and canter on the wider 4WD tracks, so Susan and Katie's original ride got the nod. This turned out to be an excellent choice with some great variety, including the opportunity to be momentarily uncertain of our route. The correct terminology for this I believe is 'lost', but let's not be a stickler for detail.

A long canter up one of the soft going four wheel drive tracks was a joy for both horses and riders, everyone able to relax at their own pace. There were smiles all round. Lunch by the fire was enjoyed at Hugget's Crossing, a scenic camp ground with excellent access to the River so that the horses could have a well deserved drink. Again, we were blessed by a beautiful still and sunny day which made it an absolute joy to be out in the hills. Nothing like a bit of sun on your back as you wind your way along the trails and tracks.



Sue Baillie was out on her sweet, young Arabian 'endurance horse to be' for the first time in a large group and both horse and rider seemed to take a real liking to my horse, Buddy's spotted rump.

Susan's cooking was up to its usual standard by all accounts (I haven't been on a club ride for a long time). We were spoilt with individual chocolate 'volcanoes' on Friday night, sticky date puddings on Saturday night and delicious fruit cake to completely finish us off on the diet stakes. Kidding of course ... what diet?

Saturday night's meal saw us fill two tables next door at the Tinamba Hotel which is renowned for its gourmet 'grub'. It certainly lived up to expectation; my steak was one of the tastiest and tender I have ever eaten.

On returning next door, it was time to crank up the spa. Now a couple of the girls had given it a 'warm up' the night before, but it was time to give it a complete work over. With 8 of us committed to the task, the music was cranked up and the bubbles flowed, both in the spa and in the bottles that were rapidly being emptied. A small team of back up staff was called in to locate reinforcement bottles on demand; we loved your work! Several photo opportunities were enjoyed, but I knew we were in trouble when Ron our host grabbed his camera – fame but not fortune, here we come. Sure enough, Linda as Chief Mermaid is now the MTHRC pin-up girl on the Happy Days Face book Page. Much raucous squealing was heard as invariably we dared one another to jump into the ice cold pool next to the spa; no sore muscles the next day, just like all good athletes.

As ever, there are always a few important thank-you's that are worthy of mention. Firstly to Katie for making all the bookings and arrangements for the weekend, both Susan and Katie for the pre-ride investigations and ride plans and Mitch for the vehicle back-up and fire lighting at the Hugget's Crossing camp area. Without the combined efforts of all who contributed to the weekend's success, we would not have had the pleasure of enjoying it. Well Done!

As those that came along on the weekend know, it was my birthday on the Saturday 7th and it was a lot of fun to share it with the group. It was indeed my Happy Birthday at Happy Days.



WORKING TROT MEDIUM TROT EXTENDED TROT WHOA DAMMIT

Maldon Games Weekend By Rose & Ash



After a very enjoyable Sat participating in the Games Day (with varying success) Sunday morning dawned quite mild (the weather for the weekend was much better than predicted)

Six of us headed out hoping to get a chance to ride/race alongside the Maldon Steam Train. We just moseyed along, ponies relaxed enjoying the unexpected sunshine, chatting a mile a minute when we heard the first Toot Toot announcing the arrival of the train, as we were alongside the track we prudently moved to a safer distance and turned to face the approaching train as a couple of our horses were getting a little jumpy, well as soon as that big cloud of steam appeared Susan's Spud decided Noooo don't like that which set my boy Ash off which then affected Beauty (chain reaction) Lisa's Rio was as steady as a rock as were Haley's Licorice & Jaclyn's Dirty!!

Um no definitely not racing that Train.

Continuing on as we settled our steeds a couple of us hoped to finish our trail ride without meeting the Monster again. Susan & Lisa went for a canter ahead and Katie, myself, Haley & Jaclyn were back to enjoying a quiet amble when of all things a very very noisy Vintage Car came up the track behind us! Luckily the Driver stopped and turned the car off as Ash tried to make for the Hills with Beauty not far behind! Licorice & Dirty (who'd been giving Jaclyn a bit of a hard time) stood no worries. What an eventful ride as then another train approached, further up the track Spud had also had enough he'd been very good with the car But just as the Train approached the driver decided to Toot hello that was enough for Spud!!! It turned out a very eventful ride with the horses settling down eventually and we made it back to camp for a delicious Lunch from the leftovers of the Spit Roast dinner. It was a really great weekend which everyone enjoyed; cant wait for next year gotta race the Train!!!!!! LOL

Maldon Games Weekend RESULTS!!!!!!



Trail Class Challenge

- 1st** Katie & Beauty
- 2nd** Jaclyn & Dirty
- 3rd** Sue & Spud
- 4th** Hayley & Licorice

Keyhole Race

- 1st** Jaclyn & Dirty
- 2nd** Lisa & Rio
- 3rd** Hayley & Licorice
- 4th** Katie & Beauty



Bending Race

- 1st** Lisa & Rio
- 2nd** Sue & Spud
- 3rd** Katie & Beauty
- 4th** Rose & Ash

Flag & Barrel Race

- 1st** Jaclyn & Dirty
- 2nd** Hayley & Licorice
- 3rd** Lisa & Rio
- 4th** Sue & Spud



Clover Leaf Key Hole (Barrel Race)

- 1st** Jaclyn & Dirty
- 2nd** Lisa & Rio
- 3rd** Katie & Beauty
- 4th** Sue & Spud

Walk, Trot & Gallop Race

- 1st** Rose & Ash
- 2nd** Hayley & Licorice
- 3rd** Katie & Beauty
- 4th** Jaclyn & Dirty

Congratulations to All!!!!

Strathbogie Weekend **By Sue Bailie & Rocket**

Well, What a great weekend!

There was Brian, Bruce, Gordon and Linda, Chris Egan, Gary, Dot and Bill, Michelle, Bernie and Barb, Sammy and Sue and our mob of trusty steeds.

Gordon lead us out on some dirt roads and beautiful tracks then we meet Chris at lunch time in the middle of nowhere, with hay bale seats and a lovely warm fire. Chris led the afternoon rides thru the scrub over ditch and dale, this way and that, and I had no idea where home was. I think we all felt like Pony Clubbers on hoon ponies. Hardly caught sight of Michelle or Gary darting through the bush. Bernie's lovely stock horse Blackie was a handful, but smiles all around, and plenty of entertainment.

This was followed by a nice hot shower and a delicious restaurant meal, celebrating Bruce's birthday after some fine persuasion with Linda and Gordon.

Next day, Barb rode Blackie, who was an absolute lamb, so we thought we'd have a little fun and secure a good horse for her. She and Chris swapped horses as we rode into camp and we all said to Bernie what hard work he'd been, and maybe he should sell Blackie, virtually unridable, that sort of talk. Barb offered him a dollar and we all witnessed the best horse sale of the year!

Dotty is back to her old self, cantering along the trails, and getting her horse fit for the Mallee. Lovely to have Dotty and Bill back on a club ride. Sammy rode her Dad's lovely quiet stockhorse, relaxing on a cruisey horse instead of her spirited eventers. Sue and the playful Rocket rode drag and got a buzz out his first time night-lining.

Thank you to Gordon and Brian who organized such a great weekend and to Chris who led us and will hopefully come to a club ride again. A venue well worth returning too



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Wanted:

Mid week riding buddy/carer for mature lady with mild Alzheimer's.

We are looking for someone to go riding regularly - once a week near Donnelly's Weir, Healesville. Rae is a competent rider whose main independent joy is her ability to still ride her horse Beau. As her Alzheimer's is progressing, she needs a little bit of help tacking up and negotiating the trail. She's delightful company and 24yo Beau is very steady out with other horses. I take Rae riding on weekends but she's missing out mid week and no one else in the family has horse skills. We'd appreciate finding someone who would be able to commit to regular rides. Payment or possibly agistment for one horse at Rae's property is an option. Contact Kim Lovely 0406035243.



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Hope you enjoyed this edition of our Trail Talk. See you out and about on the trails.

Katie Kemp
Secretary of MTHRC