

Summer 2014

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Vic. Government MPs Visit O'Grady's Bridge Wairewa Road



The committee has approached the organisation in Wodonga which has been working on rebuilding several timber bridges on the High Country Rail Trail, with a view to getting some advice and guidance assistance as to whether and how O'Grady's Bridge might be brought back into use for the trail. If this could happen on a realistic time frame and at achievable cost, it would be an asset not only for the trail – what an experience it would be riding a bicycle or walking over it – but as a wider tourist attraction for the Tostaree and Wairewa area. Anyone interested in being involved as part of a working groups for this project can contact Michael, 0419 583 482 or email via the web site contact option.

Late last year members of the Victorian Government Standing Committee inquiry into Heritage Tourism and Ecotourism, when visiting the region to explore possible iconic tourism locations, called by at O'Grady's Bridge, which the last issue of the trail information brochure notes as 'an exemplary example of timber railway bridge construction'.

Now approaching its centenary (in 2016), this bridge is nearly as big as the derelict Stony Creek structure but is still standing, in good condition as far as we can tell, has a gentle curve and rises from west to east. It is now featured on our new trail letterhead paper as a water mark picture.



The Trail Mail

Congratulations Michael!



Michael Oxe

Bairnsdale Australia Day
Citizen of the Year
2013

Works at Nicholson bridge.



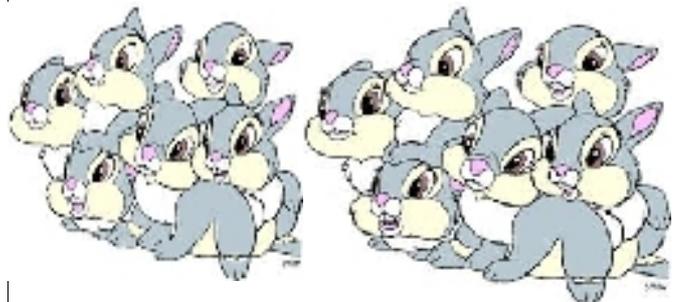
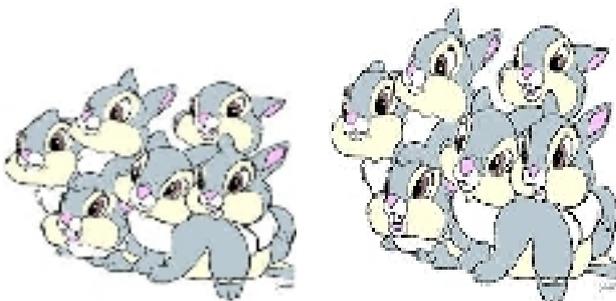
NRLG have also applied for funding to carry out a second rabbit control operation, using a gas gun explosion system to destroy warrens and burrows.

Thanks to several significant grants last year, Nicholson River Landcare Group (NRLG) has been able to carry out some major works on the Trail each side of the Nicholson River bridge, in addition to a rabbit control program.

The informal path going north on the west side is being reconstructed using a crushed rock mix from Whelan's Bruthen quarry. This material packs down to a very hard wearing surface. The same material will be used to rebuild the side tracks on the east side. Over 80 tonnes of this material was stockpiled on the trail reserve late last year. Before these track works can be completed more needs to be done to remove and stack existing excess vegetation. Other items to be completed include: further tree planting, installation of direction signs, an interpretation board, and construction of a new path from the south abutment of the timber bridge.

Michael Oxe

Rabbits will recolonise an empty warren.



A Grand Entrance

Thanks to a magnificent effort by ten local businesses and volunteers, with donations of engineering plan preparation, welding, materials, building skills and more, the Trail now has a very distinctive building to mark the western entrance.

Thanks also to a nearby neighbour, extensive vegetation pruning and mulching has made a great difference to the visual aspect nearby. Work is now in hand to make use of a grant last year from the Department of Transport, Planning & Local Infrastructure

for construction of two more shelters, intended for Bumberrah and Partellis Crossing.

Discussions are being held with TAFE Advance with a view to gaining assistance with this project. If volunteer help can stretch the grant money far enough we might end up with a total three additional shelters.

Meanwhile, once the trail logo signs and an honour board have been installed at the new shelter there will be a simple formal 'opening' event to mark this important milestone.

Michael Oxer

New shelter at Bairnsdale



Bruthen Landcare attacks

weeds

and plants grasses.



A very encouraging effort by this group has been removal of weeds near the Tambo River bridge, laying of heavy weed mat and planting with native grasses. The location is the link between the trail and the Bridge to Bridge riverside access track. The plan is to extend the treatment along an embankment towards the tunnel and integrate it with a path to the river. As the photo shows, another planting carried out with the Bruthen Primary School, near the start of the Bullant Track, has provided another improvement to the trail on the bridge to tunnel section. The group hopes to continue their efforts when funds become available.

New Direction Signs.

The trail committee last year adopted the Shire's direction (way finding) signs style guide, which uses black text on yellow coloured 'blades' mounted on black steel posts. With DEPI assistance the committee is now able to produce these signs as required. The first examples are being installed as part of the Nicholson River Landcare Group's project. Local businesses located near the trail will be offered an opportunity to have a direction sign installed indicating their location. This arrangement will be on a three year rental basis. Information and an application form will be sent in the near future to a number of local businesses.



More photos of the new shelters.....two redheads



Shire involvement with the Trail.

An outcome of the East Gippsland Cycle Tourism Action Plan, which nominated the rail trail as high value infrastructure, has been Shire interest in finding a way to assist protecting that value. Last year the Shire funded an infrastructure asset and condition survey, carried out by Ethos NRM Pty Ltd last year. The result is a comprehensive report titled the Operational Works Plan. The Shire also allocated \$20,000 in the current budget year for use as co-funding to seek other grants. Following a series of discussions between the committee and Shire, an application process is under way with Regional Development Victoria for funds to carry out upgrade works on the Bruthen township

section. The significance of this development cannot be underestimated because of the longer term potential for establishing a long term plan for caring for the trail, and moving beyond the present situation where the management committee has extremely limited capacity to carry out essential works due to lack of a planned maintenance and development budget. DEPI has notified the committee that the current term of appointment is until October 6th this year, by which time we should have a clearer understanding of the management structure, especially if the Shire becomes more formally involved, or DEPI make changes for management of a rail trail.



Some places are simply locations with a tiny or non-existent population.

They may have been more populated at one time but over the years people have moved on, schools and hotels have gone and shops have closed. There are a number of small such communities close to Bruthen.

In 1859, what eventually became the Bruthen township, was laid out. It was originally named Tambo as there was already a township named Bruthen between Sale and Port Albert. The name, Tambo, did not last long and the town of Bruthen began to grow.

To the south of Bruthen, the township was beginning to develop. When a post office was opened just south of Bruthen the small township of Deep Creek began.



In 1911 the name was changed to Wiseleigh, named after the local M.H.R. G.H. Wise. According to Howitt the Aboriginal name for Wiseleigh was *Nyellung*.

There is some dispute over the origin and meaning of the Aboriginal name, **Tambo River**. It is most probably a Jaitmathang word the meaning of which has been lost. It certainly does not mean cliffs (as found along the river at Upper Tambo) and just possibly means fish. According to the missionary Rev. F.A. Hagenauer the Gunnai word for the Tambo was Berrawan.

References:

Place Names of Victoria - Les Blake

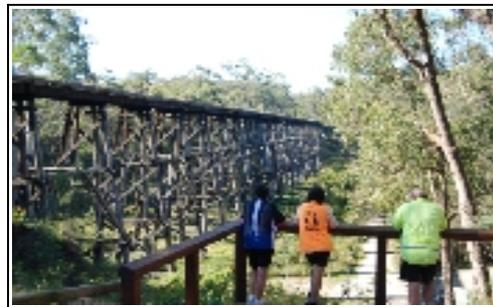
More Colourful Tales of Old Gippsland - John Wells

Names Around Gippsland Lakes by P.D. Gardner.

A further 11 kilometres from Bruthen is Sarsfield.

Sarsfield was named by Sir Charles Marshall after a General Sarsfield who was supposedly a distant relative. Patrick Sarsfield was a mercenary who fought for James 11 in Northern Ireland in 1690 and became a "favourite hero of the Irish national tradition". Marshall's Inn was some distance upstream from the current crossing and the Aboriginal name for this site was *Darrdong*. The Aboriginal name for current day Sarsfield was *Turt-toong*.

Stony Creek Trestle Bridge in the Colquhoun State Forest



Colquhoun parish was named after Colquhoun Cunninghame, sister of William Cunninghame, a local Scottish-born squatter.

The **Colquhoun State Forest** is located between the towns of Bruthen, Swan Reach, Lakes Entrance and Nowa Nowa. The Discovery Trail, Stony Creek Trestle Bridge and Log Crossing Picnic Area in Colquhoun State Forest are easily accessed via the rail trail. **Mississippi Creek** (on the discovery Trail) was possibly named by, or after, one of the skippers of the early lakes boat trade. Stone for the Lakes Entrance wharves was also quarried in the headwaters of this creek and despatched to the port by tramway and barge.

Bumberrah is named after the Aboriginal, Bumbirah, also known as Jimmy Bumbirah and King Jimmy. Described by the Lake Tyers missionary Rev. Bulmer as "conceited" and "intent on following the ways of the old people", Bumbirah was "as good as specimen of Aboriginal as I have ever seen in Gippsland". Bulmer failed to convert Bumbirah to Christianity and when he once asked him what would happen if he were to die unexpectedly he replied that "then I will look to Christ quick".

Next Issue: O'Grady's Bridge at Wairewa

The Trail Mail

Tambo Equestrians Ride The Trail

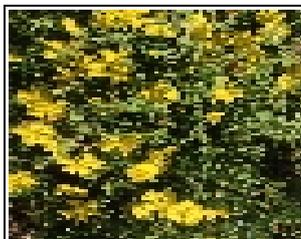


Tambo Upper Trail Riding Club members regularly ride the East Gippsland Rail Trail during their monthly rallies. The trail offers a great, safe, scenic corridor which enables the riders to access more remote bush areas. Recently the club rode a 2 kilometre section of the trail at Nowa Nowa (*pictured*) whilst riding a loop from Gully Rd to Fairweather Track and back through the township. Other sections of the trail included

in recent rides were at Tambo Upper and in the Colquhoun Forest at Lakes Entrance. Horse riding clubs are encouraged to include the East Gippsland Rail Trail in their bush and trail rides. Walking pace is recommended due to the hardness of the trail surface and to assist in preserving the trail and minimising impact on the surface which is also used for bike riding and walking.

St John's Wort seems a strange name for a plant but it is now on our list of essential works because it is highly invasive and getting a hold on the trail reserve. Noticed last year just east of the Nicholson River, it is 'doing well' east from Stephenson Road and further along towards Kettles Lane.

Pretty yellow flowers, serious noxious and 'declared' weed.



Last year a major effort was mounted to spray as much as could be easily reached, with excellent results. Next flowering season an even bigger effort will be required, with much of the weed now spreading onto steep embankments. A call for help will go out to Friends (and other helpers) at the appropriate time.

Stay tuned.

Meetings and Activities

High Country Trail

May 30th, 31st June 1st

This railtrail goes from Wodonga alongside Lake Hume to Shelley [the highest railway station in Victoria].

Tallangatta is located along the trail and it is proposed to stay here and ride out in either direction on different days.

Wodonga to Tallangatta is 35k and Tallangatta to Mitta River is 8km, Shelley another 33k - 'under construction'. This will need some investigation. Late autumn is a great time of year - could be chilly - so be prepared with gloves, warm socks etc.

Tallangatta is ~ 270k from Bruthen, via Omeo.

Contact Sue Peirce if you are interested in this weekend. 556 8228, 0419 288 722 or peirces@wideband.net.au



Costicks Weir - there was a track from the trail to this structure - but sadly it's now very overgrown. A working bee will be organised to restore this track - a sign and some information may be useful.

O'Grady's Bridge - this spectacular bridge at Wairewa needs to be restored as part of the trail - a ride will be organised to check out this feature later in the year.

Meeting dates for 2014

May 19th Nowa Nowa

July 20th Bruthen - AGM and Ordinary meeting

Nov 10th Nicholson



an important sponsor

Bullant Brewery has taken out the first Corporate Membership of the East Gippsland Rail Trail.

CFA volunteers clean up at Bruthen.

After several years in the planning, a major fuel reduction burn was carried out on the trail reserve through the township area late last year. Brigadesm Bruthen, Mossi-Tambo and Sarsfield joined forces to carry out the two day controlled burn. This has opened up the possibility of further burns to improve grassland growth, as well as other fuel reduction and trash heap burning.



Michael Oxe

YELLOW TAILED BLACK COCKATOO

Calyptorhynchus funereus

In recent months we have seen a large number of Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoos as we move along the East Gippsland Rail Trail.

The Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo is a large cockatoo, clearly distinguished by its mostly black plumage, yellow cheek patch and yellow panels on the tail. Body feathers are edged with yellow. The female has a larger yellow cheek patch, pale grey eye-ring (pink in males), white upper bill (grey-black in males) and black marks in the yellow tail panels. Individual cockatoos may measure up to 68 cm but are more commonly 55-65 cm in length.

The Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo is found in south-eastern Australia, from Eyre Peninsula, South Australia to south and central eastern Queensland favouring eucalypt woodland and pine plantations but also seen in other habitats including heathlands, rainforests and alpine areas.

In flight, Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoos flap with a distinctive slow, deep wingbeat. They are often seen flying in pairs, or trios comprising a pair and their young. Outside the breeding season they may coalesce into flocks and it is not uncommon to see them in groups of 20 or more. Groups of up to a hundred have been reported.

They are generally a nomadic species and migrate locally according to food availability. Major food sources are seeds and nuts from native trees such as Banksia, Eucalypts, Hakea and Xanthorrhoea. Pines in plantations and elsewhere are also a favoured source of food. They also search and consume wood boring insects.

Bibliography

2008-2012 : Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo - Parks and Wildlife Service Tasmania

Australian Museum

Wikipedia

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos are



diurnal, raucous and noisy, and are often heard before being seen.



Range of the yellow-tailed black cockatoo

The red area shows the range of ***Calyptorhynchus funereus***.

The green area shows the range of the sub-species ***xanthanotus***.

Janice Preston