

## PERFECT ride from Strathalbyn on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021

Finally the weather was perfect for a PERFECT ride, our first since October 2020!

It was good to have Alan C. and Peter H. along for the ride.

After completing all of our COVID requirements, pre-ride briefing and re-checking that the car doors were indeed locked the thirteen of us made a slow start from the Strathalbyn Railway Station.

South onto Milnes Road/Dry Plains Road and out past the Racecourse before turning west off of the bitumen for the first of many encounters with the railway lines running south to Goolwa and Milang.

A shallow climb up Tucker Road to the Strathalbyn-Goolwa road became a steeper climb once it was crossed and we soon made a short stop at the no longer used Wesleyan Methodist Church at Sandergrove (1867). We waved to the surveillance cameras cleverly hidden in the small bell tower!

It was noted that there were a large number of the Tucker family interred in the adjacent church cemetery and surmised that the well-to-do Mr. Tucker had likely gifted the land the church is built on and also financed the majority of the building works!



*Wesleyan Church: Is someone looking down on us?*



*Sign, sign, everywhere a sign.*

having missed the start!

Fourteen of us single filed the short stint on a quiet bitumen Finniss-Clayton road before turning north on to the flat plains roads to Nurragi Station on the defunct Milang railway spur. We split the group here with half riding the abandoned railway line (Nurragi Trail) with it's frequent bike lifting stiles while the rest (mostly e-bikers) took the gravel roads to our rendezvous point with the trail riders. An entertaining game of avoiding the numerous deep ruts on a road marked "Dry track only" then a gallop past the Racecourse completed the loop as we sped back into Strathalbyn to end an enjoyable 55km ride.

The debrief in the Terminus Hotel beer garden confirmed that Peter H. would lead next month's ride and it would be starting from Roseworthy. See you there!

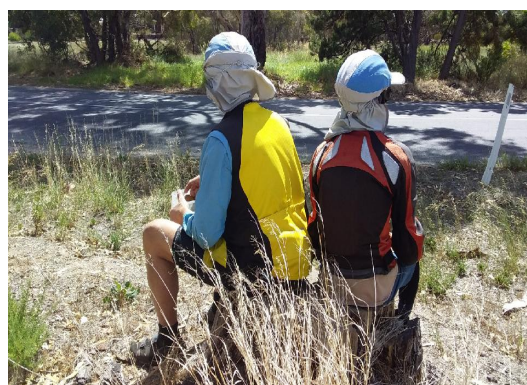
The turn on to Haines Road that gives access to Bullock Hill Conservation Park had been signposted and blocked for vehicle access since our last visit.

Having plenty of points left on our bicycle licenses we took the turn and braved a rough, debris strewn two rut track with numerous sandy stretches that tested our soft surface technique and resolve.



*Haines Road: In a rut.*

After a couple of fast and long downhill sections interspersed with climbs we sailed into Finniss for lunch at the highly recommended General Store. Kevin B. joined us for lunch



*Finniss: table for two!*